

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

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ABSTRACT

Policemen, in recent times, are being victimized by public as indulging in improper use of force on suspects and public as well. This study aimed to explore the causes and reasons for the use of force by policemen. The research method was qualitative and the participants were five policemen, each representing different hierarchy in the police department. The data was collected by interview method. Phenomenology was the paradigm and the analysis was thematic. Triangulation was employed to identify the common themes. The study highlights three themes. The first theme represented high stress levels where long working hours, no weekly off and holidays, difficulty in fulfilling basic needs and pressure from higher authorities made the police vulnerable to use force. The second theme identifies maintaining law and order as the reason for the use of force. This theme also describes specific situations in which the use of force would be considered appropriate and legal. The third theme identifies self defence as one of the causes for the use of force by policemen.

Keywords: Force, Stress, Self defence, Phenomenology, Policemen.

Force, in general, refers to power, violence, compulsion, or constraint exerted upon or against a person or thing. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) in its study *Police use of force in America 2001*, defines use of force as “the amount of effort required by police to compel compliance by an unwilling subject” (ICAP,2001). The ICAP also identifies five components of force – physical, chemical, electronic, impact and firearm. To some people, the mere presence of a police officer can be intimidating and seen as use of force. However, there is no single, universally agreed upon definition of use of force. The use of force by law enforcement officers becomes necessary and is permitted under specific circumstances, such as in self-defense or in defense of another individual or group. But no universal set of rules governs when officers should use force and how much.

Many law enforcement agencies use their own established definitions of use of force. Official definitions provide police officers with criteria that are helpful in determining whether it is appropriate to use force and the parameters for the type of force to use in particular situations. The definitions are outlined in agency policies and guidelines and are often referred to as the

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Received: July 10 2017; Revision Received: August 5, 2017; Accepted: August 30, 2017

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

“Use of force continuum” (Terrill & Paoline, 2012, p.8), which ranges from verbal and physical restraint, less-lethal force, and lethal force. (NIJ, 2012).

In Indian context, one has to understand the criminal justice system in order to understand the organization and working of police.

Criminal justice system

The criminal law consists of the substantive law contained in the Indian Penal Code(IPC) as well as the special and local laws enacted by the central and state legislatures from time to time and the procedural law laid down mainly in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (Cr.P.C) and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872. These laws act as the base for the process of criminal justice in India.

The National Police Commission has recommended ‘Code of Conduct for police’ in 1960. This has been accepted by Government of India and circulated to all state governments. Some of the code of conduct seems to uphold the duty of police and fits well into the context of this research study. These codes describe the context of use of force by police. The codes are:

Code of conduct 3. The police should recognize and respect the limitations of their powers and functions. They should not usurp or even seem to usurp the functions of the judiciary and sit in judgement on cases to avenge individuals and punish the guilty.

Code of conduct 4. In securing the observance of law or in maintain order, the police should as far as practicable, use the methods of persuasion, advice and warning. When the application of force becomes inevitable, only the irreducible minimum of force required in the circumstances should be used. (Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, n.d , pg. 25-26) Along with these, the United Nations also has offered code of conduct for law enforcement officials; of which, article 2 & 3 talk about the use of force.

Article 2. In the performance of their duty, law enforcement officials shall respect and protect human dignity and maintain and uphold the human rights of all persons.

Article 3. Law enforcement officials shall use force only when strictly necessary and to the extent required for the performance of their duty. (Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, n.d , pg. 25-26)

There are different types of force which Indian Police resort for crowd control which are outlined in the police manual. The force is progressive, they are:

- 1. Tear smoke** is the first step. If this is likely to serve no useful purpose, then police resort to lathi charge.
- 2. Lathi Charge.** This is used when the crowd is large and has refused to disperse after suitable warning.

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

- 3. Firing.** If the crowd fails to disperse through lathi charge then the competent officer may order firing after fullest warning. Firing should cease the moment the crowd shows signs of dispersing.

In all these stages, all help should be rendered to convey the wounded to the hospital. An accurate diary of all incidents, orders and actions along with the time of occurrence should be maintained by the police. (CHRI, 2005)

Despite these rules, there are some incidents which report that the police engage in improper use of force. Here the concepts of excessive force and unnecessary force have to be understood.

Excessive force refers to the application of more force than required where use of force is necessary. While, **unnecessary force** refers to the application of force where there is no justification for its use.

‘Uttarpradesh and Rajasthan top the list in excessive use of force by police in India’. This is quoted in the report of the National Crime Records Bureau by Mr. Heyns, special rapporteur of the United Nations on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. The report states that disproportionate use of force during demonstrations has caused many deaths in various parts of the country. It highlights that in Jammu & Kashmir, at least 100 deaths were caused due to excessive use of force against demonstrations in 2010. The report ends stating that the level of extrajudicial executions in India is a serious concern. Vulnerable persons, including women, are at particular risk of killing. (The Hindu, 2013)

The National Human Rights Commission’s (NHRC) statistical report quotes that between 1993 and 2008, 2560 deaths occurred during encounters with police. Of these, 1224 cases are regarded as ‘fake encounters’ by NHRC. (The Hindu, 2013).

Several factors are involved in deciding whether or not to use force, including the location of the encounter, the type of people involved, their mental capabilities, and whether or not drugs and alcohol are involved (Taylor & Woods, 2010, p.268). Likewise, there are several causes for the use of force – which can be in simple terms understood as violence, some of the causes being psychological, they include:

1. Aggression
2. Stress

Aggression

Aggression refers to the behavior directed toward the goal of harming another living being who is motivated to avoid such treatment (Baron & Byrne, 2003). There are two popular theories of aggression that well describe the causes of aggression, they are:

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

Frustration- Aggression Hypothesis. According to this theory, frustration leads to the arousal of a drive whose primary goal is that of harming some person or object. This theory has received support in recent research which suggests that aggression toward a source of anger may be displaced to other, innocent targets. (Marcus-Newhall et.al, 2000). This also brings in another theory – the displaced aggression theory. Applied to police officers, displaced aggression theory would suggest that an officer primed for a negative affect by a personal family conflict will be more likely to arrest, and less likely to show lenience toward, criminal suspects engaged in minor offenses (Johnson,2013).

General Affective Aggression Model (GAAM). This model, proposed by Anderson, suggests that aggression is triggered by a wide range of input variables which includes frustration, aggressive models, experience of discomfort etc. The theory also describes the role of traits that predispose individuals toward aggression. These variables can lead to overt aggression through their impact on three basic processes – arousal, affective states and cognitions.

Aggression can also be the result of physical or verbal provocation from others. Earlier provocations can cause individuals to ruminate the sufferings they have experienced at the hands of others, this could later lead to displaced aggression. Sometimes the arousal produced in one situation can persist and intensify emotional reactions occurring in later situations(Excitation transfer theory).

Aggressive Cue Theory. According to this theory, for anger/ psychological pain to be converted into actual aggression, certain cues are needed (Gross, 2010, pg. 453). These could be environmental stimuli associated either with aggressive behavior or with the frustrating object or person. A study indicated that uniformed men had higher scores of physical aggression than women, and women scored significantly higher on anger than men when not carrying any aggressive cues (Bensimon, 2014).

Stress

Stress refers to the physiological and psychological responses to excessive and usually unpleasant stimulation and to threatening events in the environment.

A pioneering stress theorist, Hans Selye(1993), proposes the effects of long term stress in a series of stages through his '**General Adaptation Syndrome**' or the GAS model. The three stage response to a stressor includes, alarm & mobilization, resistance and exhaustion. He states that during the exhaustion stage, a person's ability to adapt to the stressor declines to the point where negative consequences of the stress begin to appear. This includes physical illness, psychological symptoms in the form of an inability to concentrate, or even heightened irritability. In this stage people wear out and their physical reserves are used up.

As applied to police behavior, angry aggression theory argues that the chronic stress of police work along with the inability to respond to the actual sources of that stress increase both the

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

perception of threats and the aggressiveness of responses to perceived threats (Griffin & Bernard, 2003).

Work overload. The common condition of overwork is described as work overload by psychologists. This can be of two types: Quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative overload refers to the condition of having too much work to do in the available time. This is an obvious source of stress and has been linked to stress related ailments such as coronary heart disease. Qualitative overload refers to the condition where the work by itself is too difficult.

Burnout. The effects of job stress that result from overwork can be seen in the condition called burnout. Employees in this condition are emotionally exhausted, apathetic, depressed, irritable, and bored. They tend to find faults with all aspects of their work. The quality of their work deteriorates but not necessarily the quantity. This effect is most often seen in individuals who serve public/ people like teachers, doctors , police etc.

Thus, these are some of the aspects in the field of policing, which this research study plans to explore and understand.

Rationale

Policemen, in recent times, are being victimized by public as indulging in improper use of force on suspects and public as well. This of course, is a one-sided view. Through this study I planned to explore the causes and reasons for the use of force by policemen, thereby seeking to know their stand on this opinion of the public. The main aim of this study is to explore and understand the causes and reasons for the use of force by policemen. Thus, this research could help in conveying the actual reasons for the use of force by policemen and thereby change the attitude of people to a certain extent. It could also help in policy changes or, in planning necessary interventions for the police force.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The aim of the present study is to explore the probable causes for the use of force by policemen. It becomes easier for everyone to blame the policemen for the use of force and view it as unnecessary and inappropriate. On the other hand, there could be many underlying causes that could trigger the use of force. Thus, this qualitative study explores such underlying causes of the police use of force. Several research studies that highlight the probable causes for the use of force by policemen are listed below:

The study by Donner and Jennings aimed at exploring the link between self-control and police misconduct applying Gottfredson and Hirschi's General Theory of Officer Misconduct. It utilizes a behavioural measure of self-control to evaluate the extent to which low self-control predicts police misconduct. The sample size was 1935 police officers from Philadelphia Police Department. The results indicate that low self-control is related to police misconduct (Donner C M & Jennings W G, 2014).

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

The objective of the study by Shjarback and White was to focus on the relationship between departmental measures of police professionalism and violent outcomes between citizens and officers. The current study uses data from the 2003 Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics survey to examine the impact of five measures of departmental professionalism—(a) agency commitment to education (associate's degree requirement); (b) the number of hiring or screening standards; (c) the total number of training hours (academy, field training, and in-service); (d) female representation; and (e) agency commitment to community policing—on two indicators of police–citizen violence—(a) citizen complaints alleging excessive use of force and (b) reported assaults on officers—across 526 large municipal law enforcement agencies. Results from ordinary least squares regression analyses show that only departmental commitment to education was related to the police–citizen violence indicators, as agencies that require an associate's degree experienced fewer citizen complaints of use of force and fewer assaults on their officers (Shjarback J A & White M D, 2016).

Johnson conducted a research to examine the role of displaced aggression on arrest. Hence, the researchers of the study primed a sample of police officers for either positive or negative affects. The police officer participants were then presented with a vignette involving a drunken driver that contained details presenting only the minimum level of evidence to justify a legal arrest. The respondent officers primed for a negative affect were significantly more likely to indicate they would arrest the driver. This result held even after controlling for the officers' ascribed characteristics in a multivariate analysis. The results suggested that the officers primed for a negative affect by personal circumstances were more likely to take out their frustration by exercising their discretion to arrest for a minor offense (Johnson R R, 2013).

The research study by Brand and Stroshine examines the role of officers' background characteristics, job characteristics (patrol area and shift assignment), and arrest activity in explaining variation in the frequency with which officers use force. Analyses were conducted on 1,084 police officers employed in a large municipal police department. Use of force data were obtained from 477 official departmental reports from 2010. Results suggest that a small proportion of officers are responsible for a large proportion of force incidents, and that officers who frequently use force differ in important and significant ways from officers who use force less often (or not at all) (Brand S G & Stroshine M S, 2013)..

A study by Mendias and Kehoe aimed at identifying the relationship between engagement of policing ideals and the exercise of discretionary powers. The study focused on four poicing ideals namely, law enforcement, peace maintainence, procedural compliance and assessing whether the protagonist accepted the responsibility. Although an arrest was always warranted, the overall arrest rate was 56%, and only 10% of the officers always indicated an arrest. In justifying an arrest, law enforcement was ranked first on only 31% of occasions. Across arrests and nonarrests, the officers justified 66% of their actions using two combinations of ideals: law procedure and peace-procedure. Hence, the officers appeared to

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

exercise their discretionary powers using one of two cognitive schemas to appraise each incident (Mendias C & Kehoe E J, 2006).

The article by Smith et al, attempts to delineate factors that influence the daily discretionary choices of officers concerning the activities they undertake on a daily basis. By empirically examining the contribution of officer and community factors on decisions to engage in a variety of typical police activities, this article provides a more complete understanding of factors that influence the work-related decisions of street-level police officers. Using systematic social observation data on both community-oriented and traditional beat officers, multivariate models are developed to explain officers' daily activities. The findings reveal that neighborhood-level and attitude variables influenced community and traditional police officers differently. Overall, the individual-level attributes of officers did not influence activity choices of either type of officer. These findings are discussed in the context of community policing within the city studied (Smith B W, Novak k J, Frank J, Lowenkamp C, 2005).

Bensimon, in his research study focuses on the effect of aggressive situational cues such as arms and uniforms among Israeli security personnel. The study examined 259 security personnel who completed an aggression questionnaire (AGQ). The study aimed (a) to compare the tendency toward aggression of security personnel who carry or do not carry arms and/or wear a uniform and (b) to compare the tendency toward aggression of men and women security personnel who carry or do not carry arms and/or wear a uniform. The findings indicated no main effect for aggression cueing classification. However, uniformed men had higher scores of physical aggression than women, and women scored significantly higher on anger than men when not carrying any aggressive cues. The findings also revealed that in general, men security personnel reported much higher physical aggression than women, while women showed slightly higher means of verbal aggression than men (Bensimon M, 2015).

In a research study by Correll et al, it was found that both undergraduates and police recruits who did not get enough sleep- even by just an hour- had less cognitive control. As a result, they were more likely to act on bias and erroneously shoot at unarmed black targets in a video game. (Correll et al, 2013).

A research study by Klahm and Tillyer provides a thorough content analysis of use of force studies published in peer-reviewed journals between 1995 and 2008. The most commonly used explanatory factors are discussed in terms of their influence on police officers' decisions to use force during encounters with suspects. Based on the empirical evidence summarized, it appears that few suspect characteristics such as race/ethnicity, gender (male), demeanor, social class (lower) and intoxication are highly influential in determining use of force by police. Moreover, most of the variables used throughout the literature for assessing the officer characteristics seem to have a mixed relationship with or appear to be poor predictors of use of force by police. The study also offers possible explanations for the inconsistent findings and suggestions for future research in this area (Klahm C F & Tillyer R, 2010)..

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

Portland State University reports a detailed review of 40 scholarly related to police use of force. The report states that in most circumstances, the use of force is a last resort. In every one of those circumstances, the police are highly scrutinized on whether the force used was justified. This report contains information on several things including definitions and prevalence for use of force, suspects (receivers of the action), officers (main actors), patterns related to use of force, and implications that include best practices or prevention. The reasons for the police use of force include, but are not limited to, officer training and education, the suspect's actions before and after police contact, mental stability of the person who is in contact with the officer, and in general, the totality of the circumstances presented to the officer. This report shows that in most circumstances, officers used force when it was necessary. Unfortunately, it is not possible to show that every situation required force (Portland State University, 2012).

The research study by McElvain and Kposowa consists of data from 186 officer-involved shootings to examine whether race effects existed and, if so, would be eliminated or attenuated by controlling for officer gender, education, age, and history of shooting. It was found that the male officers were more likely to shoot than female officers, and college-educated officers were less likely to be involved in shootings than officers with no college education. Risk of officer-involved shooting was reduced as the officer aged. White, non-Hispanic officers were more likely to shoot than Hispanic officers; however, there was no significant difference between Hispanic and Black officers. Officers with a previous history of shooting were more than 51% as likely to shoot during the follow-up period as officers without a history of shootings (McElvain J P & Kposowa A J, 2008).

Johnson in his research study investigated whether mentally disordered suspects were more likely than non-disordered suspects to receive physical force from the police. Self-report data from the officers at two municipal law enforcement agencies was obtained. The findings revealed that mentally disordered suspects were significantly more likely to act violently, resist the police, and possess a weapon. After these characteristics were controlled, mentally disordered suspects were not more likely than non-disordered suspects to receive physical force (Johnson R R, 2011).

The study by Boivin and Lagace investigates the existence of protective factors that decrease the level of force used by the police. A total of 1,174 self-reported uses of force were analyzed. Multinomial logistic regression models were used to identify factors related to three possibilities: The force used by the police was lower than, equal to, or higher than the level of subject resistance. The analysis revealed that the impact of individual characteristics on the correspondence between officer force and subject resistance is negligible. Three general patterns of relationships were found. First, the presence of a weapon helps distinguish lower-than-expected force situations. Second, the presence of a single officer, resistance toward officer(s), conflict between the subject and another citizen, and subject intoxication have *linear* effects, that is, the effect increases or decreases consistently. Third, for every less severe level of force that was used, cases are more likely to be in the expected than the lower-

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

than- and in the higher-than-expected group. The analysis also suggested that police use of force could be better understood as a trichotomy where the force used by the police is depicted as lower than, equal to, or higher than the level of subject resistance (Boivin R & Lagace M, 2015).

The research study by Rydberg and Terrill examines the effect of officer education on three key decision making points (i.e., arrest, search, and use of force) by relying on observational data from two medium-sized cities. The results of the analysis indicate that higher education carries no influence over the probability of an arrest or search occurring in a police— suspect encounter. College education does, however, significantly reduce the likelihood of force occurring. The study also states that the results may be due to the amount of discretion officer’s exercise in pursuing these behaviors (Rydberg J & Terrill W, 2010).

The study by Klahm et al, has assessed the effect of exposure to police use of force on inmates’ odds of offending in prison using survey data collected from a national sample of inmates. It was found that, net of relevant controls, prisoners subjected to police violence were more likely to engage in assaultive and other rule violating behavior, especially those who did not resist police authority. Consistent with the cycle of violence hypothesis, the findings suggested that violence perpetrated by legal authorities produces similar effects to exposure to violence in general. Moreover, the study highlights that the consequences of police use of force are especially problematic when the recipient fails to perceive his or her treatment was fair, which supports the theoretical perspective on procedural fairness and legitimacy (Klahm C F, Steiner B & Meade B, 2014).

Thus, these are some of the research studies that are relevant to the current research study. Low self control, displaced aggression, maintaining law and peace, aggressive cues such as uniform, lack of sleep, officer’s training and education, the suspect’s action before and after police contact, mental stability of the person, the circumstances presented to the officer are some of the factors that are found to lead the police to use force. The above mentioned research studies are quantitative in nature, while the current research is a qualitative study. Hence, the current research, via qualitative method, explores the causes and reasons for the use of force by policemen.

METHODOLOGY

Research Question

What are the causes and reasons for the use of force by policemen?

Paradigm

The paradigm for this research study is phenomenology. Phenomenology is a philosophical perspective as well as an approach in qualitative methodology. “It is a school of thought that emphasizes a focus on people’s subjective experiences and interpretations of the world. That is, the phenomenologist wants to understand how well the world appears to others” (Trochim,

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

2003, pg. 159-160). It focuses on the study of an individual's subjective experience of something.

Settings

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather data. The interviews were conducted at the workplace of the participants. It was ensured that the place was quiet and free from distractions. Confidentiality was assured.

Population and Participants

The participants for the study were five in number. Each participant represented a different level in the hierarchy of the police department. The participants from different strata were chosen to help the researcher gain knowledge or information through different perspectives.

Data Sources and Collection Process

Interview method was used for data collection. The interview was semi-structured. The sources of data were the five participants. The participants were interviewed with voluntary consent. The interviews were also audio-taped.

Data Coding

The audio-taped interviews were transcribed and coded by the researcher. The transcribed versions were given to two experts in the field of psychology for identifying common themes as a part of triangulation.

Data Analysis Strategy

Thematic analysis was the data analysis strategy. Thematic analysis is one of the types of content analysis in qualitative methodology. Thematic analysis focuses on the identification of major ideas or themes in a document or set of documents. Here, the common themes among the interviews of five participants were considered based on the themes identified by the researcher and two independent observers.

Ethics

1. Every effort was made to make the participants understand the purpose of this research in detail.
2. It was ensured that the participants consented to the interview voluntarily.
3. Confidentiality was assured.
4. It was ensured that the place of interview was quiet and free from distractions.
5. The interviews were audio-taped with the consent of the participant.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the study is to explore the causes and reasons for the use of force by policemen. The objective of this chapter is to analyze the one to one interviews that were conducted. The questions in the interview broadly focused on the stress levels of policemen, the causes of

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

stress, use of force by policemen, circumstances under which force could be used, the reasons for the use of force.

Table 1 Demographic detail of the participants.

Respondent code	Gender	Age	Education	Designation
P1	Male	54	M.A	Assistant Commissioner of Police
P2	Female	36	B.A, LLB	Police Sub Inspector
P3	Male	42	B.A	Police Sub Inspector
P4	Male	58	SSLC	Police Sub Inspector
P5	Male	31	M.A	Police Constable

Since the method of study was qualitative, five policemen constitute the sample for the study. All the participants offered voluntary consent. All the participants hail from Karnataka and the interviews were conducted in the state language Kannada. All the participants were married and had a family to be managed.

The participants represent different hierarchy in the police department. Of the five participants, one of them was Assistant Commissioner, three of them were police sub inspectors and one of them was a police constable. Participants representing different hierarchy were chosen in order to gather data from different perspectives.

Of the five participants, one of them was a women police sub inspector. She was chosen as one of the participants to get to know her perspective and also to analyse if there were any gender related aspects that could add up to the causes for the stress as well as to the use of force by policemen.

The process of triangulation was employed to identify the common themes from the interviews. Of all the reports by expert analysts, three common themes emerged as the causes and reasons for the use of force by policemen. Some of the themes have sub-themes for their support. Certain themes which are not identified as common but are found to be important can also be considered, they are called outliers. One such outlier which explains the reasons for the use of force by policemen has also been identified.

The common themes that emerged are:

1. Stress
2. Maintaining law and order
3. Self defense.

Theme One: Stress

Stress was the common cause quoted for the use of force by all the five participants. Though some of the participants hesitated to admit this directly, the patterns in the interview clearly show the relationship between stress and the use of force. This pattern has been identified as the one of the major reasons for the use of force by policemen by all the three expert analysts. Stress seemed to exhaust the participants psychologically and emotionally. This exhaustion

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

led to the expression of anger which would eventually lead to the use of force. The excerpts from some of the interviews validate this factor.

P5 (31/03/2016):

“Police means stress, stress means police”

P3 (25/03/2016)

“In this (Profession), we have stress from public, stress from our officers, pressure from politicians, problems at home, duty risk – because of all this stress policemen get aggressive, so we end up shouting at whoever comes to us.”

“So policemen and stress are synonymous with one another. It’s the same job with two different names.”

P2 (25/03/2016)

“Here population is more, so more offences happen. In an year, around 700 new cases get registered. We will be investigating the old cases, plus we will have new cases. So this will definitely lead to stress in us”

Several factors were quoted by the participants as the causes for their stress. Some of the factors were identified by the analysts as those which could lead/ provoke the person to the use of force. These factors form the sub-themes.

Causes of stress in policemen

Long working hours. All the five participants opined that the long working hours was the main source of their stress. It was found that on an average each participant would work for about 12-16 hours a day without adequate breaks in between. The work is inclusive of routine tasks as well as non-routine tasks like VIP securities, mob control during protests, protection for special events etc. This, they agree, drains them physically and mentally and in turn makes them vulnerable to use force. This was well captured in the interview.

P1 (24/03/2016)

“We can work for maximum 10 hours a day, we can work for 12 hours too. After 12 hours of work, inefficiency, allegations, mishandling starts. The reason for all this to happen is stress.”

P2 (25/03/2016)

“Timings as in...we come for morning rounds, because chain snatching mostly happen at that time. We start at 5.30am and work till 9-9.30am. See, today I went home at 9.30am and I’m back by 11.30am. So just one and half an hour break, that’s it. I will be here till 10-10.30pm. It is my achievement if I go home before 10pm”

“ Stress is always there. We don’t express our anger that’s all”

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

P3 (25/03/2016)

“Now what has happened is that, work stress and special duties are too much. Police staff/force are also less in number. So we have to work day and night, from morning 8am to evening 8pm. That is more than twelve hours of work”

No weekly offs and holidays. All the five participants complained about no weekly off, despite having a provision for the same. Considering the strength of police force, which is lesser, and the number of cases being reported each day, the authorities find it difficult sanction leaves to the fellow policemen. This gives them no time to spend with family and friends, which naturally increases their stress. Interview excerpts of the same are quoted below.

P2 (25/03/2016)

“ Here, we have to work on Sunday too for the officers. So there’s no weekly off also”

P4 (28/03/2016)

“ Our leaves are not compulsory. Leave is not our right, it’s something like benefits”

P5 (31/03/2016)

“Getting leave is very difficult for us. Leaves are allotted to us, but they rarely grant us leave. If we ask for 4 days of leave, they grant us leave for two days. Sometimes they don’t grant leaves at all, especially when there is a cricket match or strike happening”

Difficult to fulfil basic needs. Four participants explained that fulfilling basic needs like food and sleep was difficult because of the nature of their work. It was found that because of the nature of their work the participants had no adequate sleep and could not eat on time. The participants would sleep for just 4-5 hours a day and this would add on to their stress levels. Interview excerpts of the same are quoted below.

P1 (24/03/2016)

“ If there is lack of sleep then there exists tension. Suppose, say I could not go home and rest, then you have come here, so that time I might yell at you. Policemen have mental pressure of this sort. That’s when they mishandle things, misuse power or they may manhandle people. The reason for all this is having no rest”

P3 (25/03/2016)

“Stress, no rest. No sleep and food at the right time. This definitely causes stress, so automatically we get angry and may yell at people”

Pressure from higher authorities. Four participants expressed that they faced pressure from higher authorities. This was one of the reasons quoted as causing stress which eventually led to the use of force. It was found that the higher authorities such as higher officials, ministers and politicians did exert pressure on the policemen and also interfered in their work in getting

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

their job done. This pressure seemed to follow a chain, where a superior police officer would be pressurised by the minister/politician; this would make the superior officer pressurise his subordinates ; the subordinates ,in turn, pressurise the lower level staff in the police station who would inevitably vent out this pressure by the use of force on the public or even on the accused. Use of force, in this context, could be clearly identified as the displacement of aggression. Interview excerpts of the same are quoted below.

P2 (25/03/2016)

“Despite doing 16 hours of duty, we still have to listen to their (Senior officers) orders. To add on to this, there is pressure from higher authorities. Once they order, an action should be taken, nobody should question them. They are senior officers, so we can’t question them”

P3 (25/03/2016)

“ As and when one’s climbs up the hierarchy, work load will be less, but responsibilities are more. So, due to such responsibilities they (Senior officers) have to put pressure on other policemen”

P3 (28/03/2016)

“To agree to that (Pressure from senior officers)...to openly say that is difficult. We can’t hide it too. Its better you understand it by yourself”

Interview excerpts showing displacement of aggression are quoted below.

P1 (24/03/2016)

“Now for example, I’m the ACP, I have some work to do. So, what I will do is, I will yell at a constable or ill give him too much of work or I might put him to trouble by taking disciplinary action. This will definitely stress him. But he would have been a lowest rank officer, he cannot show it on others. So what he does is that he will show it on his family once he goes home..this can happen in station too, like, either me or a station officer would have instructed him to get someone to station, so at that time he would have beaten that person up and then brought him here. Thus, sometimes it becomes excess at times. This happens when he cannot show his stress on anyone else.

P2 (25/03/2016)

“I beat them up every day. There is no day where I go home without beating them”

“If they lie to us, mislead us obviously we get angry. At that time we do what has to be done and get the truth out. Anyways we would be angry, so we take it out on them. By this, the truth will come out and my anger also will reduce”

The above mentioned factors clearly indicate the relationship between stress and the use of force by policemen. Thus, it is identified that stress due to long working hours, no adequate sleep, pressure from higher authorities, no weekly offs is one of the main reasons for the use of force by policemen. **Theme 2: Maintaining Law and Order**

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

Four participants described that they use force to maintain law and order. Maintaining law and order was another theme that emerged as the reason for the use of force by policemen. The participants described that maintain law and order was their main duty and using minimal force to maintain it was allowed by the police department. Here the use of lathi charge, tear smoke and firing to restore law and order in the society was mentioned. The participants also mentioned specific events/ situations where use of force is allowed and they are as follows:

To control mob during protests. Four participants agreed that force is/was used to the utmost extent in situations such as a protest. Whenever the mob gets aggressive and breaks the law the police are given the right to use force to get the situation back to control. But force can be used only as per the instructions of the superior officials. Interview excerpts of the same are quoted below.

P4 (31/03/2016)

“If there is violence or protests happening, then we have to use force to control them. It is necessary at that time.”

P1 (24/03/2016)

“Hmm.. what happens is that..suppose if there is a crowd or mob. That mob should follow our instructions. If they want to hold the strike in a ground, then they have to protest there only. We would have allotted time for that and they should finish it within the given time limit. But, they violate the rules, at that time we have to interfere. If they don’t listen to us then we use a minimal physical force to control them”

P2 (25/03/2016)

“If you ask when do we use force, then I will say we use it when a mob gets aroused/aggressive. It is permitted under section 128 of CrPC”

To avoid damage to public property. Three participants explained that force could be used to safeguard public property. For instance, to avoid damage to buses/ buildings during a protest, force can be used by the police. Again, this can be done only with the permission of a superior officer. Interview excerpt of the same is quoted here.

P4 (28/03/2016)

“Normally we can’t use lathi charge and tear gas just like that...when certain popular personalities pass away, there can be law and order problems. So, when there is damage to people or public property we use lathi charge and tear gas at that time”

To avoid violation of law. Two participants described that avoidance of violation of law by public is one of the main duties of police. Hence, use of force is allowed and is considered legal whenever it is used against those who violate law. Interview excerpt of the same is quoted below.

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

P1 (24/03/2016)

“ We are violent, cruel and show injustice only to rowdies. This problem happens only to criminals and law violators. If we treat them with respect, they will take advantage of it”

Thus, experts identify that police use force to maintain law and order in the society. This is most evident during riots and protests where the chances of damage to public property and attacks on common man are high. *Theme 3: Self Defense*

Four participants agreed that force could be used for self defense. Self defense was the third theme that emerged as the causes and reasons for the use of force by policemen. Majority of the participants agreed that force could also be used to protect themselves when attacked by the accused. Interview excerpts of the same are quoted below.

P1 (24/03/2016)

“We can use the weapons given to us for self defence and fire at them to protect ourselves”

P2 (25/03/2016)

“Yes, definitely we can. It’s permitted under section 197 of IPC”

P3 (25/03/2016)

“Today if I fire for self defence also, tomorrow I have to face an enquiry. You never know what happens in that enquiry. If there is pressure for the enquiry, then action will be taken against me, though I had used it for self defence”

P5 (31/03/2016)

“Definitely. They would have given us pistols, rifles and lathis. If there is a situation where we have to protect ourselves, then we can use them. Of course, self defence is important.”

But one of them quoted that they hesitate to use force under several circumstances fearing later enquiry. Any disciplinary action can be against the police officer if the firing for self defense is proved to be inappropriate/ illegal. The participants feared the enquiry by the police department and the human rights commission. Interview excerpts of the same are quoted below.

Thus, self defense, though there exists fear about later enquiry, can still be considered as one of the reasons for the use of force by policemen.

Outlier 1. To Book The Culprit/ To Extract Truth.

Apart from these causes, an outlier was also identified by the researcher. This could not be mentioned as one of the themes as it was not identified as a major theme by majority of the expert analysts. It was identified that policemen did use force to book the culprit , in other words, to extract the truth from the accused. Most of the participants refused to talk about this aspect and tried to brush off the matter. While some of them did agree to this and openly

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

accepted that they used force to book the culprit and also justified their actions saying that some matters should be dealt that way. Interview excerpts of the same are quoted below.

P1 (24/03/2016)

“ While talking to a murderer, his level of thinking, standard and background will be different. Being nice to him will not help. We should be rude. People might perceive this as violent”

P4 (31/03/2016)

“If they don't tell the truth, then we have to use force”

P2 (25/03/2016)

“Actually, third degree treatment should not be done. But, work will not get done, if we don't it. Nobody will listen to us if we are nice to them.”

Overall, three themes - stress, maintaining law and order and self defense – were identified by the expert analysts as the causes and reasons for the use of force by policemen. These are the broad patterns which emerged from this research study and these themes could be considered as causes and reasons for the use of force by policemen.

CONCLUSION

This chapter highlights the findings of the study in relation to the existing theories and other research findings.

The present research study aimed at exploring the causes and reasons for the use of force by policemen. The research method employed was qualitative. Data collection was done through the interview method. Five participants constituted the sample. The thematic analysis of the data led to the emergence of three themes which could be considered as causes and reasons for the use of force by policemen. The three broad patterns identified were: a) stress, b) maintaining law and order, c) self defence.

The first theme represented high stress levels in terms of long working hours, no weekly off and holidays, difficulty in fulfilling basic needs. Some of these factors have existing research evidence. Considering the ill effects of lack of sleep among police officials, Correl et al (2013) found that both undergraduates and police recruits who did not get enough sleep- even by just an hour- had less cognitive control. As a result, they were more likely to act on bias and erroneously shoot at unarmed black targets in a video game. Thus, this validates that lack of adequate sleep could lead to the use of force by policemen.

Another factor that was found to cause stress and eventually lead to the use of force was the pressure from higher authorities. This has immense support from theory as well as research. Two concepts explain this, i) Displaced aggression , ii) The excitation transfer theory. i) Displaced aggression is the aggression against someone other than the source of strong

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

provocation. Displaced aggression occurs when the person is unwilling or is unable to aggress against the initial source of provocation (Baron, 2010, pg. 443). Here, in this context, it could be understood that the inability to revert against a superior official could make the lower level police staff aggress on a substitute target which could be an accused or general public. ii) Excitation transfer theory. The pressure often creates heightened arousal which could eventually make a person confused, lose his temper and lash out at others. This emotional arousal from one situation can be transferred to another situation too. The excitation transfer theory offers an explanation for the same. This theory states that arousal produced in one situation can persist and intensify emotional reactions occurring in later situations (Baron, 2010, pg. 447). Thus, here the emotional arousal caused by the pressure from higher authorities could be transferred to another situation where the policeman could get violent while receiving a complaint or while going on beats or rounds. This, quite well, explains the reason for the use of force by policemen.

Johnson R R (2013) found that the officers primed for a negative affect by personal circumstances were more likely to take out their frustration by exercising their discretion to arrest for a minor offense. Another study found that uniformed men had higher scores of physical aggression than women, and women scored significantly higher on anger than men when not carrying any aggressive cues. The findings also revealed that in general, men security personnel reported much higher physical aggression than women, while women showed slightly higher means of verbal aggression than men (Bensimon M, 2015). These findings support the fact that use of force could be displaced aggression and also the gender specific roles in expression of aggression.

The second theme identifies the duty of policemen to maintain law and order as the reason for the use of force. This theme also describes specific situations such as protests in which the use of force would be considered appropriate and legal. A study by Mendias and Kehoe (2006) supports that use of force could be to maintain law and order. This study focused on the relationship between four policing ideals namely, law enforcement, peace maintenance, procedural compliance & assessing whether the protagonist accepted the responsibility and the exercise of discretionary powers of policemen.. In justifying an arrest, law enforcement was ranked first on only 31% of occasions. Across arrests and nonarrests, the officers justified 66% of their actions using two combinations of ideals: law procedure and peace-procedure. Hence, the officers appeared to exercise their discretionary powers using one of two cognitive schemas to appraise each incident.

The third theme identifies self defence as one of the causes for the use of force by policemen. This was found to be a provision under law but the participants stated that they hesitate to use it. A report by Portland State University strongly indicates the reasons for the use of force and the after effects of the use of force for self defence by policemen. The report is a detailed review of 40 scholarly related to police use of force. The report states that in most circumstances, the use of force is a last resort. In every one of those circumstances, the police are highly scrutinized on whether the force used was justified. The reasons for the police use

The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons

of force include, but are not limited to, officer training and education, the suspect's actions before and after police contact, mental stability of the person who is in contact with the officer, and in general, the totality of the circumstances presented to the officer. This report shows that in most circumstances, officers used force when it was necessary. Unfortunately, it is not possible to show that every situation required force.

Considering the above mention factors as leading to the use of force by policemen, some of the recommendations could be made. Firstly, increasing the number of shifts from two (A & B) to three (A, B & C) could bring about a big change. Psycho- education to the police department about the ill effects of stress is necessary to bring about this change. This is the recommendation offered by three of the participants. This could help them get adequate rest and sleep, spend quality time with family and friends – which many participants felt they lacked. Secondly, the police department could focus on recruiting more staff which would result in division of labour and thereby reduce the work overload of policemen. Thirdly, providing psycho education to policemen during or even after the training about the stress levels in their job, the ways to cope with it, ways to manage stress and thereby educate them on the importance of mental health could be considered. Equipping the police personnel with 'people skills' can make them more people friendly. Lastly, proper education till collegiate level could help in avoiding the use of unnecessary force by policemen. This was quoted by one of the participants as a probable reason for decrease in the use of unnecessary force by present day policemen. The results of the analysis which examined the effect of officer education on three key decision making points (i.e., arrest, search, and use of force) indicated that higher education carries no influence over the probability of an arrest or search occurring in a police— suspect encounter. However it suggested that college education does significantly reduce the likelihood of force occurring (Rydberg J & Terrill W, 2010) .

Though the participants were initially hesitant to talk about the use of force, they did give a lot of information eventually. The gathered information was carefully scrutinized and then considered for thematic analysis as some of the information which seemed relevant to the study was given off the record. The interviews were held in the participant's cabin with minimal distractions. Since the method of study is qualitative, the findings cannot be generalized. Despite this limitation, the study does throw light upon the high stress levels under which the police personnel function and the reasons that make police vulnerable to the use of force.

Acknowledgments

The author is thankful to all those who participated in the study and helped facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interests: The author declared no conflict of interests.

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How to cite this article: Kanzal V R (2017). The Use of Force by Policemen: Causes and Reasons. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, Vol. 4, (4), DIP:18.01.062/20170404, DOI:10.25215/0404.062