

Personality Profile of an Efficient Police Officer-A Case Study of Shankar Mahadevan Bidari, I.P.S.

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ABSTRACT

In this case study an attempt is made to profile the personality characteristics of Sri. Shankar Mahadevan Bidari. A police job is truly a challenging and difficult job as it expects multiple roles with perfection from the individual. Identifying a common profile of an effective and successful police officer might be aided by assessing officers' personalities. Leadership is one of the most important personality traits that is clearly noticeable in Sri. Shankar Mahadevan Bidari. This paper explains Sri. Shankar Mahadevan Bidari's leadership qualities by looking at the events associated with manhunt of Veerappan and gang. Empathy is beneficial to interpersonal connections as it's very crucial for law enforcement officers. Empathy in law enforcement officials has only lately been researched, particularly in terms of its application to certain aspects of the profession. By behaving in a supportive manner, police officers who are able to regulate their emotions will improve their interactions with the public and develop stronger connections. Another key personality feature linked to the emotion management part of affective sharing in empathy is neuroticism. Neuroticism is a personality trait that assesses one's emotional stability, particularly in relation to unpleasant emotions like anger and depression. Sri. Shankar Mahadevan Bidari is found to have low neuroticism which makes him to have more stability in his emotions and mood swings which enables him to focus more on the task and to be more efficient. The other personalities also include openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion and agreeableness with relevant examples of his achievements.

Keywords: Police officers, Leadership, Empathy, Neuroticism, Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion and Agreeableness

A police officer's job is one of the most difficult, requiring certain abilities, psychological attributes, and skills. As a result, a professional – such as a police officer – must possess the following qualities: - advanced attention (stability, ability for rapid switching, concentration, distribution) as police officials must shadow, wait, and accompany an object for a long time; the ability to notice barely visible characteristics.

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Identifying a common profile of an effective and successful police officer might be aided by assessing officers' personalities. The use of common qualities to illustrate how and why officers act the way they do gives insight into how and why they act that way, as well as highlighting what they do well. The purpose of this article is to identify certain personality traits of the famous and accomplished police officer Sri Shankar Mahadev Bidari and to conduct a critical study of those traits.

Leadership

The public expects the Criminal Police to exercise not only control over the enforcement of law and order, but also honesty, fairness, dependability, and a responsible attitude toward the performance of professional tasks. It's worth noting that a police officer should be a role model for legal culture and has a responsible attitude toward serving society by protecting human rights and freedoms, combating crime, and maintaining public safety and order. The most important of the primary tasks for increasing the effectiveness of law enforcement activity is to establish a system that will provide Police agencies and units with employees who have the necessary qualities for successful acquisition of the law enforcement profession, as well as to maintain their efficiency, increase their reliability, and develop their professional potential.

The characteristic personality profiling of Sri Shankar Mahadev Bidari is very well demonstrated in handling and killing the notorious smuggler and elephant poacher and Killer Veerappan as the leader. In February 1993, he was posted as Commander, Task Force, Malimahadeshwara Hills to trace and arrest the Veerappan and his gang members when the force was totally demoralized after repeated terrorist acts committed by the gang. In this challenging assignment, he worked hard in a systematic manner with zeal, determination, courage and gallantry in extremely difficult circumstances in hostile and difficult terrain for a period of three and half years. He led his force from the front against the gang in a number of encounters. In 1993, the gang had around 150 members, 135 rifles, and 3 tonnes of explosives, but by April 1996, it had been reduced to 5 members. 60 gang members were murdered in various engagements under his supervision, 126 gang members and harbourers were apprehended, and 58 cases were lodged, investigated, and charge sheeted. The Supreme Court found four of the arrested gang members guilty and sentenced them to death.

He was able to recover nearly 3 tonnes of explosives as well as 126 firearms. In this operation, he demonstrated fortitude, heroism, gallantry, investigation, intelligence, and leadership qualities that are remarkable and unmatched in the history of the Indian Police. The Government of Karnataka rewarded him and his team with a financial prize of Rs.8 crores and a personal reward of Rs.160 lakhs for their exceptional work. On Republic Day, 2011, the President gave him the First Bar to the police Medal for Gallantry in appreciation of his remarkable courage and gallantry throughout the operations.

Empathy

Empathy is beneficial to interpersonal connections. It's very crucial for law enforcement officers. Empathy is frequently defined as the act of putting oneself in another's shoes. Empathy is ingrained in our daily lives and interactions with others. Because one is actively concerned with how the other is feeling, having higher degrees of empathy allows more engaging discussion. Asking insightful inquiries, for no other reason than to learn more about another's feelings, demonstrates empathy. It's important in professional interactions, whether you're trying to create trust or work through a conflict. Empathy is a "dynamic process

including cognitive and emotional discoveries about others' experiences," according to the definition. (Main, Walle, Kho & Hapern, 2017, p. 358).

The cognitive portion of empathy is the act of accurately identifying another's affect, which is a broad term for mood and emotion, and the emotional element is the process of generating the appropriate internal sensation to mirror the other person's (Main et al., 2017). This definition of empathy is based on a social cognitive model of empathy and a conceptual extension (Inzunza, 2015). Empathy is present in, if not essential to, any connection, yet it is viewed as an innate trait of an individual at its heart. However, by dissecting empathy into its constituent parts, one might learn to enhance or improve empathy. As a result, rather than being an innate and unchangeable feature, empathy is a personality trait. To better understand empathy, it's necessary to distinguish it from sympathy.

The combination of low neuroticism and great empathy, to be precise, these two personality qualities have the ability to influence law enforcement officers' behaviour even more than they do persons in other professions, based on the experiences they have on the job. There has been some research exploring the relationship between these two personality qualities and how they may affect those who work in high-stress environments. These two personality variables were thought to be vital to grasp in this specific community throughout many meetings with law enforcement professionals. It may be feasible to gain a better understanding of how police officers may best serve their communities by looking into individual variances in empathy and neuroticism. This study will review past research on empathy and neuroticism and explore why these personality traits should be deemed significant for police personnel.

Empathy requires a number of steps on both the cognitive and affective levels. Self-other awareness, perspective taking, and emotion modulation are all included in Inzunza's (2015) definition of empathy. The ability to distinguish between what another person is feeling and one's own self is known as self-other awareness, and the line between self and other must be clearly defined. Recognizing the need to distinguish one's response to another's experience gives one a job to work on. During an interview, interrogation, or engagement with a community member, a police officer must be able to distinguish between his or her own emotions and those drawn from the other person. Taking another's perspective does not imply that you are automatically aware of their real feelings. Perspective-taking, on the other hand, is defined as the ability to perceive a situation through the eyes of another person, as that person sees it.

The ability to shift perspectives in the hopes of better understanding the other person is a clear task that can be improved. In the interview room, officers may do this when talking with victims and even perpetrators. Emotion regulation refers to a person's ability to experience a wide range of emotions while also being able to respond correctly and defer a reaction if the situation calls for it. By behaving in a supportive manner, police officers who are able to regulate their emotions will improve their interactions with the public and develop stronger connections. Empathy can be broken down into subsets of acts to show how many activities are involved in feeling empathy. Empathy is a broad concept, and the various subcategories all necessitate processing different types of information at varying speeds in order to be successful. Because one must respond and adapt in real time, most empathy is interactive rather than reactionary. (Mains et al, 2017)

Empathy in police officers

Empathy in law enforcement officials has only lately been researched, particularly in terms of its application to certain aspects of the profession. Inzunza (2015) emphasises the need of empathy in suspect interviews, community policing, and victim support. Multiple roles in law enforcement necessitate a high level of sensitivity. Building solid relationships with community organisations, inside the department, and when working in teams requires empathy. When selecting officers, empathy should be taken into account, and it should be monitored throughout their careers. As the body of knowledge on empathy expands, it's critical to consider how this personality trait affects law enforcement agents. Emotion management is important for police officers, according to Inzunza (2015), who investigated the affective aspect of empathy, which includes emotion regulation. Emotion regulation helps police officers avoid stress and burnout. These two occurrences are easily visible in officers' job and can cause a lot of anger and poor judgement. Officers are unable to operate at full potential as a result of such feelings. Positive community relationships, according to Parks, Mastroski, Dejong, and Gray (1999), help offset the less pleasant interactions, such as undercover assignments inside a gang. Furthermore, increased empathy leads to more meaningful and beneficial interactions with the communities that officers are accountable for and serve. Empathy benefits not only the community and the police department, but it also allows officers to develop in every element of their work. Officer job performance has been found to be improved by empathy in a number of ways. Officers who show stronger empathy toward victims, for example, recover from the trauma of such confrontations faster, according to Foley and Terrill (2008). Interviewing styles were studied by Oxburgh, Ost, Morris, and Cherryman (2015) and Inzunza (2015), who distinguished between dominant and compassionate interviewing styles. Officers are more likely to empathise and comprehend when using the compassionate approach. They discovered that once a suspect confessed, officers felt more empathy for them, and suspects were more likely to confess if the interviewers employed a humane approach. Officers would be wise to use a gentler interview method at the onset, since this may help them get to the truth faster and get confessions without exhausting their mental and physical resources. Remaining detached and unsympathetic is only detrimental to the cop. Because confessions are near-perfect evidence for convictions, officers who are able to use empathy in their interviews may achieve better conviction rates. Prosecutors' performance will only improve if they are given better cases to work on. Officers with reduced neuroticism will be able to control their intuitive reactions to crimes suspects may have committed, and will be able to think with active inquiry and comprehension rather than judgement.

Neuroticism

Neuroticism (agitation , animation) (Emotional Stability) : Neuroticism is a trait characterized by sadness, moodiness, and emotional instability.¹ Individuals who are high in this trait tend to experience mood swings, anxiety, irritability, and sadness. Those low in this trait tend to be more stable and emotionally resilient. (Shankar bidari has low neuroticism).

Another key personality feature linked to the emotion management part of affective sharing in empathy is neuroticism. The Big 5 personality variables include neuroticism as one of them. The primary traits that allow us to generally understand and quantify personality are neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and openness to experience (Goldberg, 1981, 1990; Costa & McCrae, 1992; John & Srivastava, 1999). Neuroticism is a personality trait that assesses one's emotional stability, particularly in relation to unpleasant emotions like anger and depression. The term "neurotic" as it is often used does not imply neuroticism or emotional stability as defined by psychologists. Emotional stability or

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steadiness is reactionary; emotions are a response to a circumstance or occurrence, not something that happens by itself. Based on one's natural inclinations, one depicts one's regular responses to a circumstance. It is clear whether people are fast to express their anger. Someone with a low neuroticism score, on the other hand, is less reactive in general. In the identical circumstance mentioned above, a parent with a lower level of neuroticism might approach the youngster with an open mind, asking questions rather than imposing punishment. The parent could inquire as to why the grade was lower than anticipated, taking a step back from his or her natural disappointment or anger. Though it intuitively correlates, low neuroticism does not always imply excellent emotional control. Neuroticism is concerned with the rapidity of a regulated, considered response rather than the depth of feeling when the emotion is experienced. When opposed to someone with high neuroticism, a person with low neuroticism may still have powerful emotional reactions, but they have better control over their subsequent actions. According to previous studies, neuroticism and anxiety have a favourable relationship. In law enforcement, neuroticism and conscientiousness are the two factors most often studied. Low neuroticism is related to more efficient task completion in general office jobs (Barrick et al., 2001). Because a majority of police work is case oriented, low neuroticism may be highly beneficial. Neuroticism has been studied in terms of predictive job satisfaction (Miller, Mire & Kim, 2009)

In February 1993, he was posted as Commander, Task Force, Malaimahadeshwara Hills to trace and arrest the notorious sandalwood smuggler, elephant poacher and killer Veerappan and his gang members when the force was totally demoralized after repeated terrorist acts committed by the gang. In this challenging assignment, he worked hard in a systematic manner with zeal, determination, courage and gallantry in extremely difficult circumstances in hostile and difficult terrain for a period of three and half years. He led his force from the front against the gang in a number of encounters. The gang which was having more than 150 members, 135 firearms and 3 tonnes of explosives in 1993 was decimated to 5 members by April 1996. Fortitude, courage, gallantry, investigation, intelligence and leadership skills, displayed by him in this operation are exemplary and unprecedented in the annals of the Indian Police. He formulated the proposals for the formation of seven districts and ably assisted the then Chief Minister late Shri J.H. Patel with intelligence inputs in the field of maintenance of law and order, prevention of communal incidents, matters related to Cauvery river water dispute and sharing of Krishna river water, with drought situation and administration of the State. He streamlined the efforts to deal with and detect the foreigners over-staying in India.

Many scholars have conducted generalization of characteristics of modern police activities (Alexandrov et al, 2019, Okhrimenko et al, 2019, Shkola et al. 2019, Bondarenko et al, 2019, summarizing it's the main psychological features, which distinguish it among other types of professional activity. They include:

- focus on ensuring the rule of law and observance of human rights;
- the need to make prompt decisions and have a high responsibility for them
- official powers;
- emotional intensesness and tension, psychophysical stress;
- the availability of organizational and extreme factors;
- specific nature of objects of professional activity;
- tolerance to uncertain situations;
- importance of leadership and team work of units;
- taking into account the gender characteristics of the police;

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- humanistic orientation of activity.

It can be inferred that criminal police officers carry out their duties in difficult and, at times, unusual and extreme circumstances (Bandurka, Bocharova, & Zemlianskaia, 2006). The functional tasks of a member of the criminal police's operational units are to carry out operative-investigation activities, both publicly and privately, by undertaking operative-investigation measures aimed at protecting life, health, human rights, and freedoms.

Openness to experience (ingenuousness participation in) :

As ASP he suppressed gambling and illegal activities with a heavy hand, displayed rare courage, confidence and ability. He handled serious law and order problems in the face of risk to his life and excelled in prevention, detection and investigation of crimes. He served with distinction as SP in Mandya, Chitradurga, Tumkur, Bellary, Railway Police and Dharwad Districts and brought about impressive improvement in the Police administration of these districts. He improved the administration of the districts in Central Range and supervised the bandobust arrangements for elections to the Grama Panchayats, Taluk Panchayats and Zilla Panchayats. He supervised the investigation in Nelamangala liquor tragedy cases and ensured the arrest of all the persons who were responsible for the liquor tragedy. He took initiative and detected large-scale cultivation of poppy in Kolar District.

Conscientiousness (honest, honorable, just, scrupulous):

In 1982 he was hand-picked to serve as SP Mandya District when the district was seriously afflicted by communal disturbances, farmers agitations, labour agitations and caste conflicts. By his hard work, bravery, administrative and investigation skills and ability to lead his men, he restored order in Mandya District and ensured that General Elections to the Assembly in 1982 were held peacefully. In 1988, when Tumkur District was in flames on account of a dispute in a religious institution, he was posted as SP Tumkur District. He dealt with the situation boldly and impartially with a firm hand and restored order in the district. After a brief stint as ADGP, Intelligence for a period of one month, he took up the responsibility of serving as Commissioner of Police, Bangalore City on 11th July, 2008. As Commissioner of Police, Bangalore City, has maintained peace, law and order and communal harmony in Bangalore City for the period of 2½ years and maintained the city free from any law and order or communal incidents. He brought about unprecedented improvement in the prevention and detection of property offences and recovery of stolen property.

Extraversion (boldness, brashness, forwardness, immodesty):

He organised, supervised and personally led the investigation in the sensational and serious cases like the Mahalakshmi Train Dacoity cases, nation-wide racket of diversion of railway wagons, arrest of a number of dacoity gangs and detection of more than 200 dacoities which had taken place through out South India, cases of highway dacoities in Bellary District and arrest of several other gangs of robbers, chain snatchers, smugglers and the racket of smuggling of ammunition to PWG in Andhra Pradesh from Goa, large scale theft of components in HMT factory and numerous burglaries and chain snatching cases.

As DCP Headquarters, Bangalore City, he played a key role in the arrest of LTTE militants Shivarasan and Shuba who were wanted in Rajiv Gandhi murder case. With a small team, he traced and arrested 10 ULFA militants who were hiding in Bangalore City and wanted by Assam Police. In September 1990, he made a bold attempt to nab a wanted terrorist of Andhra Pradesh by name Bimala Naik who was hiding in a farm house near Bellary and in the

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encounter, Bimala Naik was killed. He served as an Escort Officer to late Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India during the SAARC Summit in 1986.

Agreeableness (affability, agreeability, amenity, amiability, amiableness, congeniality, congenialness, cordiality, friendliness and geniality)

In 1990 as SP Bellary, he ensured that his district remained as the only incident-free district when all the districts in the state were affected by serious and widespread communal disturbances in the wake of Ram Shila Yatra. His role in suppression of anti Tamil riots in 1991 in the wake of notification of interim award of the Cauvery Tribunal and implementation of the Supreme Court Orders in the Kabini Dam area in 2002 earned widespread appreciation. He attended to the work of providing infrastructure to all KSRP battalions and improving the discipline, morale and expertise of the Karnataka State Reserve Police. In 2002, he was specially deputed to deal with a serious agitation of farmers in the context of the orders of the Cauvery River Water Dispute Tribunals, at Kabbini Dam in H.D.Kote Taluk of Mysore District. As ADGP Administration, he brought about impressive improvement in the administration of the State Police Department. He paid special attention to restoration of communal harmony and suppression of communal elements in the coastal district of Dakshina Kannada (Mangalore). He organized and supervised bandobust arrangements in connection with the General Elections to the Karnataka Legislative Assembly in May, 2008 and ensure that the elections were conducted in an exemplary manner and peacefully. It is to his credit that during his tenure as ADGP, Law and Order, not a single incident of Police firing took place in the State of Karnataka.

CONCLUSION:

This detailed case study of Sri Shankar Mahadevan Bidari brought out that he is an Individual with exceptional Leadership traits along with empathy which enables him to understand situation of others. Sri. Shankar Mahadevan Bidari is found to have low neuroticism which makes him to have more stability in his emotions and mood swings which enables him to focus more on the task and to be more efficient. The other personalities also include openness to experience which is exhibited through the different cases and situations he has solved. Through high Conscientiousness, he has been chosen several times by higher authorities to lead and handle different situations that were a problem to the state or country. Extraversion, has been justified by the Mahalakshmi Train Dacoity cases where he exhibited his courage in supervising and solving the case. Agreeableness is exhibited in various cases of communal violence where Sri Shankar Mahadevan Bidari has effortlessly handled the situations and has stopped the chaos that was to occur.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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