POLITICIZED POLICING IN PAKISTAN: A CONSTRUCTIVIST STUDY OF PROBLEMS OF POLICING IN LAHORE

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Abstract: *Unable to exorcise its nightmarish traits inherited as colonial legacy, police in Punjab is still seen as a public-frightening rather than a public-friendly organization, which continues to promote a sense of fear rather than security and wellbeing among the population. This image has perpetuated a widespread mistrust between police and the general masses. Reforms introduced in past were either not implemented properly or failed to improve policing. This constructivist study focuses on the lived experiences of different stakeholders in society and highlights different aspects of the phenomenon as understood and described by those stakeholders, highlighting public image of police, problems faced by police and their perceived reasons, views on previous reforms and hurdles in the way of their implementation, and suggestions for improvement.*

Keywords: Policing, Pakistan, constructivism, politicized policing, community policing, democratic policing.

Introduction

Pakistan, facing a number of problems, has always lacked good governance, which has now snowballed into a systematic crisis and presents challenge that seems capable of virtually paralyzing the

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entire system. The ever-increasing population, corruption, legal system skewed in favor of the rich, limited educational and healthcare opportunities, social decay, military threats, political instability, and economic turmoil present an inescapable bondage for the masses. Transition to democracy is still at a delicate stage; and politics of agitation is on as a tradition.

Add to this the menace of terrorism and extremism and the picture is complete. Taliban and like groups have posed themselves as real threat, and terrorist attacks have remained a routine. Recent military operation in North Waziristan (Zarb-e-Azab) is reportedly a success in eliminating terrorists' bases; but terrorist attack on Army Public School Peshawar reminds us of Tet Offensive.[1] While military forces of Pakistan cannot be completely exonerated, the fact remains the incidents like APS Peshawar are primarily the failure of Pakistan's civil institutions like police. Military is not responsible for protecting the cities, it is the task of civil law enforcing institutions – primarily police.

Apart from failing to provide security to the citizens of the country from terrorists, which however they are not trained for, police in Pakistan is not very effective in maintaining law and order in general. Rather than promoting a sense of security and wellbeing among the population, the police in general has managed to promote a sense of fear among the population, and there exists a widespread mistrust between police and the general masses. Reasons for this

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[1] It was a series of attacks launched on January 31, 1968, by People's Army of Vietnam consisting of regular and irregular forces, on the forces of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam), the United States and their allies. Tet Offensive shattered American public faith on US forces' ability to win the war as People's Army of Vietnam was supposedly on the verge of collapse according to what was being reported back in the US. Although Tet Offensive did not accomplish any military objectives, the surprising capacity of an enemy that was supposedly about to surrender convinced many in the US that the war was not winnable. Muhammad Usman Amin Siddiqi, The US Foreign Policy towards Pakistan: A Blame Game or A Great Game," (M.Phil thesis, GCU Lahore, 2011), 71. Also see Aamer Shehzad, *Understanding International Relations* (Lahore: Aamer Publications, 2007), 262.

mistrust, inter alia, include corruption, high-handedness, torture and extra judicial killings, illegal detentions, and deaths in custody. The results are not limited to deteriorated law and order situation or high rate of crime, but many believe that victims of unjust behavior of Police make a chunk of prospect recruits for terrorism.

Many reforms have been introduced in past to improve policing for the promotion of human security and that of economic and social development in the country. But these reforms were either not implemented or failed to bring about desired results. This paper tries to present a situational analysis of the problem of policing in the Punjab, highlighting the need for reforms, reasons for the failure of earlier reforms, and suggestions from different stakeholders to improve policing.

Background

The establishment of organized policing system is usually considered a corollary of Industrial Revolution in Europe, when big cities witnessed a massive migration − people coming from rural areas to work in factories. This compelled authorities to establish a more viable and responsive policing system for the effective prevention of crimes and maintaining peace. In 1829, London Metropolitan Police was established and is considered the first organized urban policing system. Hitherto, there was no organized institution of law enforcement. Following the post-Industrial Revolution expansion of London, parliamentary committees were appointed in 1812, 1818, and 1822 to suggest on the subjects of policing and crime. Finally it was Sir Robert Peel's committee (1828) that paved the way for police Bill, establishing London Metropolitan Police.[2] Sir Robert Peel "used his military experience in Ireland to create a social control organization midway between a military and a civil force."[3] The idea of setting up the institution of

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[2] "MPS Timeline 1829-1849," *Metropolitan Police*, accessed February 13, 2013, http://content.met.police.uk/Site/history.

[3] Stanley H. Palmer, *Police and Protest in England and Ireland, 1780−1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), quoted in Eric H. Monkkonen, "History of Urban Police," *Crime and Justice* 15 (1992): 549.

police solved both tactical and political problems: "they were cheaper than a military force; they created less resentment; and they were more responsive to civil authorities."[4]

The idea to formulate an urban policing in America came into being in 19th century following the precedent of Peel's model of metropolitan police. Hitherto, loosely organized night watchers and constables, mostly consisting of either volunteers or their paid substitutes, were used to perform duties in the US. But they were not in any way a serious crime-fighting organization, as all they used to do was to raise hue and cry to warn off potential offenders. There are two schools of thoughts as to why police was created in the US: for the prevention of crimes or to control public outbursts as a result of intolerance for riots which had long been the part of American life – empirical evidence supports the latter.[5]

Pakistan inherited police system from British India. British created this police system under 1861 Act. The ultimate objective of this system was to protect and enlarge colonial rule in India while keeping public under strict scrutiny. In the words of Dr. Muhammad Shoaib Suddle, "Police was designed to be a public-frightening organization, not a public-friendly agency"[6] – something that police in Pakistan still exhibits. The purpose was admirably served by adopting Irish Constabulary model, which placed police under

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[4] Wilbur R. Miller, *Cops and Bobbies: Police Authority in New York and London*, 1830-1870 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), quoted in Monkkonen, "Urban Police," 549.

[5] For a detailed discussion as to why the institution of police was established, see Monkkonen, "Urban Police," 549−53. Also see Bobby L. Blackburn, "Oklahoma Law Enforcement since 1803" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Oklahoma State University, 1979); Felix Rippy, "Crime and the Beginnings of the Muncie Police Force," *Indiana Social Studies Quarterly* 38 (1985): 5−18; and James M. Gallman, "Preserving the Peace: Order and Disorder in Civil War Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania History* 55 (1988): 201−15.

[6] Muhammad Shoaib Suddle, "Reforming Pakistan Police: An Overview," *120th International Senior Seminar Visiting Experts' Papers*, Resource Material Series No. 60, 94, http://www.unafei.or.jp/english/pdf/PDF_rms/no60/ch05.pdf.

executive authority through the office of the District Officer – an agent of the colonial government.[7] It is important to mention that Police Act of 1861 was promulgated in the aftermath of 1857 mutiny, and therefore, the primary purpose of the Act was to 'control' the natives and prevent the members of the police force from joining mutineers ever in future.

> The police administration at the district level was thus subjected to a dual control – all administrative, technical, financial, professional, and organizational control of Inspector General through his deputies; and the lateral general control and direction of the District Magistrate. Also, postings and transfers of Superintendents of Police and officers senior to them were the concern of the provincial government, not of the Inspector General.[8]

This dual control left police devoid of its independence, which paved way for the most damaging problem of politicized police force in post-independence Pakistan. Same organizational, operational, and administrative procedures envisaged in Police Act of 1861 were adopted by the State of Pakistan after it got independence and continued till the promulgation of new Police Order 2002 in Pakistan.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

The word 'Police' implies "the arrangements made in all civilized countries to ensure that the inhabitants keep the peace and obey the law."[9] The word also denotes "the force of peace officers (or police) employed for this purpose."[10] Initially, as mentioned earlier, the system of organized force of police was established to keep the law and order and to control the public. This notion has

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[7] Ibid., 95.

[8] Ibid., 98.

[9] "History," *Metropolitan Police*, assessed February 13, 2014, http://content.met.police.uk/Site/history.

[10] Ibid.

now changed to democratic policing, meant to police a democracy −
serving the people of the country and not its regime. The UN
International Police Task Force concisely describes the
characteristics of democratic policing:

> In a democratic society, the police serves to protect,
> rather than impede, freedoms. The very purpose of
> the police is to provide a safe, orderly environment in
> which these freedoms can be exercised. A democratic
> police force is not concerned with people's beliefs or
> associates, their movements or conformity to state
> ideology. It is not even primarily concerned with the
> enforcement of regulations or bureaucratic regimens.
> Instead, the police force of a democracy is concerned
> strictly with the preservation of safe communities and
> the application of criminal law equally to all people,
> without fear or favor.[11]

Another important concept in this regard is of Community
policing. Community policing has two core components: partnership
and problem solving. International Crisis Group report summarizes
the concept in the following words:

> To develop community partnership, the police must
> build positive relations with the community, involve
> the community in the quest for better crime control
> and prevention and pool their resources with those of
> the community to address the community's most
> urgent concerns. Problem solving is the process
> through which the specific concerns of communities
> are identified and the most appropriate remedies
> devised. Community policing does not undermine
> police authority or subordinate its primary duty to

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[11] United Nations International Police Task Force*, Commissioner's
Guidelines for Democratic Policing in the Federation of Bosnia-
Herzegovina* (1996), quoted in Sanjay Patil, *Feudal Forces: Reform
Delayed: Moving from Force to Service in South Asian Policing*
(New Delhi: Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, 2008), 11.

preserve law and order. Rather, it allows the police to tap into the expertise and resources of communities, thereby reducing some of their own load. Local government officials, social agencies, student unions, labor unions, business, and trading interests, in short, all who live in the community and have a direct stake in its development and progress, can share responsibility with police to find solutions to the problems that threaten safety and security.[12]

At the operational level, the concept of community policing envisages the principles of good customer service attitude, new techniques to solve problems, removing trust deficit among the population, improving the mandate of police, partnership of people, proactive kind of policing, helping the vulnerable, and bond with governmental agencies. The requirements for developing a community policing include training of police and community, decentralization in police system, establishment of community management teams, formation of medical reserve unit, and devising preventive environmental strategy.

However, Pakistan has inherited the institution of Police from British India as a colonial legacy, still exhibiting most of its colonial traits. Colonial police force considered itself answerable to and sought to secure the interests of the colonizers and their bureaucracy and not that of the people. They were meant to control the population, rather than protecting the community, and were trained to remain outside and distinct from the very community. The police was designed as an extremely hierarchical structure ensuring loyalty to the leadership and the regime rather than to the rule of law.[13]

Policing in Pakistan does not reflect the transformation that ought to have taken place following the independence. The policeman is not understood as a citizen in uniform providing lawful services to the population. Police service in Pakistan has continued

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[12] International Crisis Group, *Reforming Pakistan's Police*, Asia Report No. 157 (July 2008), 19−20.

[13] For details of colonial legacy of policing, see Patil, *Feudal Forces*, 10.

to reflect a colonial model exhibiting a number of problems. The existing literature enumerates a wide spectrum of problems with policing in Pakistan.

Sanjay Patil's work, though dealing with South Asian countries as a whole, make five types of problems attached with Policing in South Asia: a) Abuse of power and wrongful acts perpetrated by the police, including reluctance and refusal to register FIR (First Information Report); use of torture for investigation, extrajudicial killings, unjustified arrests, and giving false evidence. b) Lack of effective oversight of police i.e., internal or external accountability mechanisms. c) Extensive political interference in not only recruitments, transfers, and promotions of police officers but also in day to day activities of the police. d) Lack of resources including logistics and financial incentives. e) Bad working conditions of the lower ranks of police.[14] Though the categories developed by Patil are not specifically for Pakistan, they portray exact picture of policing in Pakistan.

International Crisis Group report enlists similar problems with policing in Pakistan: failure to uphold law, failure to combat crime, inability to protect citizens, brutality and corruption, high-handedness, extra judicial killings, torture, help in rigging elections, suppression of opposition, gender-related violence, illegal detentions, and inadequate salaries.[15] Dr. Suddle, former Inspector General of Police Sindh and Director General of Intelligence Bureau, has identified the following problems: incompetence, inefficiency, no response to citizens, highly politicized force, distorted public image, and institutionalized abuse of power.[16]

Research Methodology

This paper is an iterative study of the problems of policing in Pakistan following qualitative research methodology. Though the problems of policing have been dealt by a number of scholars, and existing literature gives a pretty good idea of the problems of

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[14] Ibid., 12−13.

[15] International Crisis Group, *Reforming Pakistan's Police*, 1−7.

[16] Suddle, "Reforming Pakistan Police," 8.

policing in Pakistan, most of those studies have been conducted by research groups consulting secondary sources or by the retired senior police officers sharing their experiences. They are very helpful in understanding the roots of the problem and can prove extremely useful in reforming the police service in Pakistan. But this research primarily focuses on the lived experiences of different stakeholders in society and highlights different aspects of the phenomenon as understood and described by those stakeholders.

The data has been collected from a sample of 11 respondents of varied backgrounds using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is the most frequently used sampling technique in qualitative studies because of the nature of data required. The sample consisted of two respondents from general public, who have come to two different police stations for different reasons – one to register an FIR of mugging and one to meet his brother in lockup (Rehan and Saqib respectively).[17] Five (5) respondents were from police department working on different ranks – a Superintendent of Police, a Sub Inspector working as SHO in a police station in northwestern Lahore near Walled City, a constable of the same police station, an Assistant Sub Inspector posted in south Lahore, and a *moharer* (reader) of a police station in central Lahore. Two (2) advocates – one in Zila Katchery Lahore and other in Lahore High Court – were also interviewed. One Member of Provincial Assembly Punjab belonging to government benches and a senior officer of Home Department, Government of Pakistan was also interviewed. His exact designation has not been revealed to keep anonymity.

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews. The themes of the interview guide included public image of police and its reasons, departmental problems of police or problems faced by the police and their reasons, police reforms and hurdles in the implementation of reforms, and suggestions to reform police in Pakistan. The interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of the respondents. Where permission to record the interview was not granted, interviewer noted the main points of the respondents' responses. However, all the respondents were interviewed in

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[17] Fake names – their real names and identities have been withheld by mutual agreement.

confidentiality, and their names and identities are withheld by mutual agreement. Data has been analyzed used technique of iterative analysis in order to explore all the possible dimensions of the problem.

Results and Analysis

Superordinate Themes	Themes
Public Image of Police	Tarnished Image
	Corruption: Bribery and Political Power
	Rude/Unfriendly Attitude
	Red Tapism: Lack of access to Authorities
	Ineffectiveness: Lack of Public Protection
	Lacks Public Confidence as Community Force
	Politicized Policing: Tool of Victimization
	Justification: Nature of Job − Public Dealings
	Justification: Structural Bias against Police
Problems faced by Police	Working and Living Conditions
	Workload: Prolonged Duty and Multitasking
	Lack of Training / Adequate Skill Level
	Insufficient Compensation and Benefits
	Lack of Resources: Manpower and Facilities
	Service Structure: Promotion and Accountability
	Lack of Grievance Handling Procedures
	Outdated Legal System
	Societal Issues
	Illegitimate Political Interference
Perceived Reasons for the Problems	Structural Problems
	Lack of Resources
	Politicization
	Societal Issues
Views on Previous Reforms	No Outcome
	Illegitimate Political Interference
	No Input from Police Department
	Lack of Implementation
	Negative Points − Working Conditions and Accountability
	Positive Points
	Future Plans

Hurdles in the way of Implementation of Reforms	Politicians: Politicization
	Bureaucrats
	Police Department
Suggestions	De-politicization
	Improving Accountability Mechanism
	Departmental Input in Reforms
	Improving Service Structure
	Modernization of Police Force
	Improve Skill Level
	Continuous Process of Reforms
	Image Building

Discussion

Public Image of Police: Public image of police in Pakistan is severely tarnished. All the respondents were of the view that police has negative or bad public image. None of them argued in favor of good public image of police. Though some tried to justify tarnished public image of police, but none of them said that police does not have a tarnished public image. The interesting fact in this regard is that respondents from police department were more candid and outspoken, categorically asserting that people have extremely negative views about police.

The foremost reason, according to the respondents, for this tarnished public image of police is widespread corruption. Most of the respondents were of the view that it is bribery that has severely tarnished the image of police among general masses. It is assumed that police would not do anything unless they are bribed. A senior lawyer said, "Police and dacoits both are considered same for people, two sides of the same coin, because whenever you confront any of them you must have to pay them."[18] It does not matter one is a defendant or an accused, he has to bribe police not only to get a favor but to avoid maltreatment. "I have paid to almost all the concerned to meet my brother in the lockup, which is supposedly my right and that of my brother,"[19] said one of the respondents.

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[18] Interview with Advocate in Zila Ketchery, April 03, 2013.

[19] Interview with Saqib, March 28, 2013.

Most of the respondents were of the view that lower ranks of police are more corrupt than the senior officers. Others are of the view they all are same, it is just that people have most of their interaction with the lower ranks. We'll get back to this point later in our discussion. Another issue attached with the issue of bribery is unlawful favors to rich and powerful. Police in Pakistan has not considered its role as that of upholding rule of law; rather they bend rules for rich and powerful. Poor and weak are the prime victims of bad policing in Pakistan.

Another reason, according to the respondents, for negative views about police is their rude attitude – insulting behavior and abusive language – towards people. The way they gracelessly deal with common man and the delaying tactics they employ in their dealings with the people who come to police station for getting their grievances redressed have also been told as reasons of tarnished public image of police. "The moment you are addressed by a policeman, you start feeling yourself a third-class citizen; they make you feel inferior,"[20] said one of the respondents. The policemen's dealings with the citizens is extremely disgraceful, they deal with everyone as if he is a criminal – though criminals don't even deserve rude behavior. Third reason for tarnished image of police among people is related to second one – red tapism. People do not have access to higher officials of police. It is linked with the second reason because the rude behavior of lower rank officials necessitates access to higher rank official of police and they are not available to the general masses. "If you want to complain against them, you have to go to CCPO with application, wait for hours, may be days; and that too would not work, I'm sure,"[21] said one of the respondents.

Police has failed to provide protection to the citizens from theft, mugging, robberies, and murders – the prime reason of the existence of this department. This ineffectiveness has been identified by the respondents as a reason of this tarnished image. That is the reason public does not trust them and have no confidence in them that they can protect them or can bring their culprits to justice. As

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[20] Interview with Rehan, March 25, 2013.

[21] Interview with Saqib.

Rehan expressed his disappointment regarding the prospects of finding his valueables back, "They have asked me to submit an application, which I have; now they would do absolutely nothing about it."[22]

Police is used as a tool of victimization. Politicians use police to victimize their opponents. This is culture in Pakistan that people register FIRs against their opponents. Cross FIRs are the normal practice. Both the parties lodge FIRs against each other and use police to victimize their opponents either by bribery or by influence of politicians or senior officers.

While every respondent was of the view that police has a tarnished public image, as mentioned earlier, some of them tried to justify this tarnished image. Though these justifications came from the respondents belonging to police department, but are in fact very plausible. They are of the view that it is the nature of their job that has built this public image. In this regard, firs argument is that police has to deal with general masses, and that is why their corruption and behavior come into limelight; otherwise all the departments are as much corrupt as is the police, but their image is not as bad as that of police. Secondly, whenever people have to interact with police, it is when they are in trouble; and therefore, the behavior of police has more impact than would have in normal circumstances. Thirdly, police has to perform duties that are unpleasant for the public – blocking of roads, checking, asking questions and so on. Fourthly, they are of the view that the society is overall not law-abiding, and that is why they do not like an agency that asks them to act lawfully. Lastly, they are of the view that police has to deal with two parties in a situation and one is always aggrieved, that aggrieved party grumbles about the behavior of the police and thereby builds that negative image of police.

Another related line of arguments by the members of police department relates to a structural bias against police. They are of the view that society is biased against police, and therefore, does not see positive aspects of police and always highlight negative aspects. People do not appreciate sacrifices of police; even their martyrs are

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[22] Interview with Rehan.

not respected as that of military. They sacrifice their lives on duty but people normally do not give them due weightage, whereas that of military are hailed as sacred sacrifices. Respondents from police department blamed media for portraying negative image of police. Whenever media points out some issue politicians dismiss or terminate concerned police officers as a political stunt without investigating the facts of the case. Overall they were of the view that masses are socialized in a way that policemen are perceived as 'bad guys'. "In homes, mothers threaten their kids with the name of police when they make mistakes and hence a negative image develops in the minds since childhood,"[23] said a respondent.

Problems faced by Police: The first group of problems, pointed out by the respondents, is related to working conditions and workload of the policemen. Police has to work round the clock and has no proper timeframe of its duty. Most of the respondents consider this prolong duty one of the reasons of their rude attitude. It is humanly not possible to work round the clock without proper timeframe. The primary concern of lower rank officers is that they do not find time for rest. They have to rest during their duty in mobile cars or in police stations. Then police has an issue of multitasking. Police performs a wide spectrum of duties ranging from security, crime prevention, and investigation, to taking culprits to courts, protocol, and patrolling. "I am a single person and everyone demands my presence; for example, in session court, in Supreme Court registry branch, in my police station, and so on; how can I possibly do that,"[24] said a respondent. Another issue attached with the issue of workload is the working and living conditions. Policemen – especially the lower rank officers – have to work in very miserable conditions. As mentioned earlier, most of the time they rest in their mobile cars, and most of them live in police stations. Normally they share a room and sleep 7 to 8 people in that room. Most of them are normally posted outstation and have to live in police stations, as they cannot afford rented houses.

The next problem identified by the respondents is lack of training or requisite skills. Police officers are not trained in most of

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[23] Interview with Superintendent of Police, April 24, 2013.

[24] Interview with SHO, March 28, 2013.

the things they are supposed to do. For example, they are not properly trained in crime scene examination, interrogation, investigation, or prosecution. Though they are given classes during their training programmes but they are either not sufficient or are not relevant according to our respondents. Then they are definitely neither trained nor equipped to fight terrorism, which they are now supposed to deal with – thus enhancing life threats to them.

Another significant problem with the department of police is related to their compensation and benefits system. Police officers have low salaries; as one of our respondents said, "they cannot meet their day to day expenditures because of price hike and inflation."[25] "This new government has even discontinued the capital allowance they used to give us to work in Lahore," said a police constable. He added, "with our salaries, we can afford meat once in a month." [26] They are not given residence facility in the area where they are posted, and most of them are posted out of their own cities.

Another problem identified by the respondents was related to lack of resources at the disposal of police department. They do not have sufficient manpower, logistics, weaponry, and even uniforms. "Ordinary citizens possess better weapons than us,"[27] was the response of a respondent. They do not have sufficient vehicles for performing their day to day tasks. The same respondent said that the funds and residences of police department are used by other departments.

Another group of problems is related to service structure of police department. Police department faces a whole lot of administrative problems. They are mostly related to recruitment and promotions. The process of promotions is very slow and is heavily influenced by favoritism and corruption. There's serious lack of coordination between different branches of the department. Another very common response was rude attitude and maltreatment of lower rank officers by their seniors. The department lacks grievance

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[25] Interview with Advocate in High Court, April 05, 2013

[26] Interview with Constable, March 28, 2013.

[27] Interview with SHO.

handling procedure; "there's no provision of appeal against termination,"[28] said one of the respondents from police department.

Outdated legal system is another problem being faced by the department of police. They have to work within the framework of legal system that is in place since colonial period and most of it is still intact, which leads to red tapism and needless delays. One of our respondents pointed out a unique issue when asked about the problems faced by the department; he narrated an incident in which he had to face a lot of problems when his police station was surrounded by a large number of *mullahs* (bearded men belonging to clergy) asking him to register an FIR against a non-Muslim citizen for preaching his religion. "Who can stand against these *mullahs*,"[29] he said. He said that they sometimes have to do things under social duress, which they know are not lawful.

The most common response from almost all of our respondents was politicization of police force. Almost all of them, including the Member Provincial Assembly interviewed, were of the view that police is highly politicized and politicians heavily influence working of the department. Starting from recruitment, posting, transfers, and promotions to day to day activities are marked by political interference. Members of provincial and even national legislatures are keenly interested in postings of SHOs in their respective constituencies. A senior officer of Home Department said, "Police officers who show resistance to political interference have to pay cost in the form of bad postings, etc."[30]

Perceived Reasons for the Problems: In response to the reasons for the problems police department faces, the most common answer was again related to political interference. Most of recruitments, especially of lower rank officers, are politically motivated, bringing in incompetent officers. Favoritism (*sifarish*) is a norm in Pakistani society. People are used to use their influence even where it is not needed. One of the respondents from Police

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[28] Interview with Constable.

[29] Interview with SHO.

[30] Interview with Senior Officer of Home Department, April 23, 2013.

department said, "I receive calls from MNAs and brigadiers for release of bikes."[31] One of the respondents said:

> Police is basically a disciplinary body but now it has become a political force. DPOs and SHOs are appointed according to the wishes of MNAs and MPAs. Political interference has badly affected the chain of command and accountability of police department. Ruling elites have been using police department for their own purposes. It is used as a lever by ruling elite. Police department is used for political victimization. It is used to grill the people who oppose or defy the ruling elite.[32]

Over population and lack of resources have also been identified as the reasons for the problems of police department. Most of the issues related to lack of resources have already discussed earlier. An important issue pointed out by the respondents in this regard was related to training of CSPs – senior officers of police recruited though Federal Public Service Commission. The training they receive is 'superficial' according to our respondents, and they are of the view that their training is not relevant with their job requirements – creating serious lack of leadership for the department.

Other group of responses related to reasons of problems revolves around structural problems of police department – workload, compensation and benefits, institutional decay, weak institution, and governmental indifference. Workload and compensation and benefit have already been discussed earlier. Respondents were of the opinion that there's an overall institutional decay in Pakistan and police department is not an exception. Most of our respondents identified governmental indifference as a reason for all the problems police department has to face. Then some of our respondents were of the view that police is a weak department and criminals are more powerful in our society than police.

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[31] Interview with Moharer (Police Station Reader), March 25, 2013.

[32] Interview with Advocate in High Court.

Views on Previous Reforms: When asked about the police reforms, most our respondents focused on lack of implementation and absolutely no outcome. Two respondents from public were not even aware of any reforms in police − proposed or implemented. Other respondents − few of them were aware of the police reforms 2002 and the amendments in them − were of the view that reforms have not been properly implemented, and therefore, have yielded absolutely no result. One of the respondents – MPA from the ruling party – had no idea what those reforms were, but pointed out that our government has increased the salaries and has made it sure that recruitment in police is on merit.

The negative points about the reforms pointed out by the respondents included further suppression of the lower rank officers, lack of proper accountability mechanism, and that reforms have not addressed the basic issues of working conditions of the members of the department. Those who pointed out lack of implementation were of the view that there's absolutely no political will to implement police reforms. Another important point raised by the respondents was that police is not included in the process of reforms, and without them it is impossible to identify actual problems or find appropriate solutions.

MPA and senior officer from Home Department gave a long list of reforms that government plans to introduce but said little about previous reforms and their implementation. The future plans included: changing the criteria of promotions, speedy promotions for qualified officers, changes in investigation system, introduction of anti-terrorism wing,[33] following Turkish and British model of policing, streamlining the system of FIR and ensuring rapid response, introduction of new designations, increase in budget, and introducing new training programmes focusing ethical issues of policing.[34]

Hurdles in the way of Implementation of Reforms: Almost all the respondents were of the view that political elites of Pakistan are responsible for the abovementioned condition of

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[33] Interview with Member Provincial Assembly, April 18, 2013.

[34] Interview with Senior Officer of Home Department.

policing in Pakistan. First of all it is their responsibility to introduce reforms through legislation, which they have failed to do. They have not only failed to perform their duty, they have also made it sure there are no reforms in police department so that they can keep using police for their political goals. Apart from politicians, respondents have also blamed bureaucracy for misleading the politicians and the high command of police department for not letting the benefits of reforms come down to lower rank officers.

Suggestions: The foremost suggestion from our respondents was regarding independenct working and de-politicization of the department. Respondents were of the view that police should be made independent as armed forces of Pakistan. "No one should demand accountability as long as police work according to the instructions of legislators or ministers. There should be no political interference in our work,"[35] said one of the respondents.

Strong system of internal and external accountability has also been suggested by the respondents. Respondents belonging to lower ranks of police were of the view that for them there's already very strong system of accountability in place, but equally strong system is also needed to be implemented for senior police officers. One of the respondents after narrating an incident said, "When a senior officer dismisses any person he should be accountable for what grounds he suspended his junior."[36]

Service structure should be improved. A fair system of promotions and transfers should be implemented. Any future service structure should also define functional divisions, promotion criteria, working hours, and working conditions. Modernization of the department is also a common suggestion from the respondents. They were of the view police should be given modern weaponry, vehicles, and other facilities to fight modern crimes like that of cyberspace. A related suggestion was improving the training programmes of police officers – lower rank and seniors. They should be trained according to their job description and functional division they are working in.

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[35] Interview with Superintendent of Police.

[36] Interview with SHO.

Most important of all is that whatever reforms are to be introduced are to be implemented in true letter and spirit. Police department should be included in the process of framing reforms. Reforms are a continuous process, change cannot be brought overnight.

Conclusion

One theme has recurrently emerged as the most important problem, reason for problem, and hurdle in the way of reforms – politicization of police force – and the most important suggestion has been to put an end to illegitimate political interference in police department, letting it work independently. Illegitimate political interference in police is the most insidious problem that undermines professionalism of police in Pakistan. Recruitment, promotions, transfers, issues of tenure, and even day to day affairs of police are political in nature and are dictated by considerations other than merit. Therefore, crime investigation and the handling of law and order situations are often colored by political interference.

Argument against illegitimate political interference being the most important problem is widespread corruption – where there's no illegitimate political interference bribery takes its place. Even if there's no illegitimate political interference or favoritism, common man has to bribe police to get his grievance redressed. So how illegitimate political interference is the most important problem of policing in Pakistan? Because when there is no political interference, neither political elites have any personal interests to be served through police, and MNAs and MPAs do not call police stations for asking favors, they can then hold police officers accountable for not performing their duties. When political elite themselves ask for favoring one party against other and ask for unlawful favors, how can they hold the same police officer accountable for doing similar things on his own? This illegitimate interference makes it extremely difficult for hardworking and conscientious officers to advance their careers while maintaining their integrity.

Independence of police department is not in favor of Pakistani political elite. They do not want to lose control over

police, because their politics depends heavily on control over police. They have a tendency to view and use police as a standing force for their own agenda. Moreover, people vote for them because they help them in matters related to police (*thana ketchery*), and politicians also need police to punish their opponents. An independent police department on the model of military, as suggested by most of our respondents, would minimize the likelihood of this happening. Rather military has to pay a constant price of its independence in the form of paranoid politicians' loud apprehensions of military derailing democracy. How can they allow another institution to work outside their control?

Police Order, 2002 was no doubt a very useful legislation introducing arrangements to limit illegitimate political interference in the matters related to police. But in less than two years of its introduction, those aspects were amended in order to maintain traditional use of police for vested interests. For example, the Police Order, as it was originally promulgated in 2002, stated that federal government would provide a list of officers from amongst whom Provincial Police Officer (PPO) is to be appointed; that list is to be vetted by National Public Safety Commission (NPSC),[37] which would recommend three officers to provincial government; and provincial government would appoint any one of those as PPO. After amendment in the order, PPO is now selected by the provincial government out of a panel of three police officers recommended by the federal government. Removal of an independent body (NPSC) vetting the list provided by the federal government would increase the likelihood that composition of the list would be politically colored.

Whereas there is long list of other problems of policing in Pakistan, but they all can be solved if there's political will to solve them. Problems related to lack of resources, service structure, compensation and benefits system of police, working conditions, and workload of police can be solved if reforming police is a priority of political elite in Pakistan. But the abovementioned

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[37] A 12-member committee, consisting of three members from the government benches, three from the opposition, and six independent members.

example of amendment in 2002 order suggests that political elites have always tried to perpetuate their control over police at the cost of efficiency, effectiveness, and merit.

Introducing effective mechanisms of accountability can greatly enhance the likelihood that police will behave lawfully. Parliamentary oversight is virtually non-existent in Pakistan. Parliament should oversee the effectiveness of policing, rather than making ad hoc commissions for reforms or inquiries. This lack of accountability again points to lack of political will to reform police to be an effective force. Given political will, following steps can be useful in reforming policing in Pakistan:

Although police cannot be reformed overnight and reform is a continuous process, we have to start from somewhere. The first step is complete implementation of Police Order 2002 as originally promulgated in 2002, not the amended one. Include police department and the civil society in formulating further reforms about police in the country. Increase in budget allocated to police department, and make sure those funds are independently used by the department. Improve training programmes of police in the country focusing on investigation, prosecution, terrorism, and most importantly, public dealing and human rights orientation. Modernization of police is something without which all other reforms would not yield desired results. Provision of modern equipment to police and training to use it is the need of the time.

Poor policing must also be attributed to overall dysfunctional system of governance in the country. A constant vacillation between military and democratic regimes and constitution being frequently rewritten or amended has also undermined a steady approach towards reforming policing in the country. The menace of corruption is not limited to police only but political elite, bureaucracy, and judiciary are also suffering from the same problem. Thus, eliminating internal corruption of police in isolation would do no good, as it is embedded in a larger system, which, if remained unreformed, would not let police function properly. Therefore, reforms in the criminal justice system are as necessary as that of Police. Having said that, police has more frequent public interaction than judiciary or bureaucracy, and therefore, merits an early treatment.

There is a dire need to educate people about the role of police as well. People of Pakistan are not actually clear about what type of police do they really need. In the face of high rate of crimes and lack of public protection, people often demand an efficient and aggressive police; whereas, when they are themselves victimized by an aggressive police, they demand a fair and polite policing. In order to overcome this problem, public education is needed, which can be attained through curricula. On the other hand police should also be reformed on the principles of community policing – engaging community for policing of their areas.