



Perception of Local Communities Towards the Role of Police in Controlling Drug Activities: A Case Study from Chakwal, Pakistan

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Abstract

This study investigates community perceptions of police performance in controlling drug-related activities within District Chakwal, Pakistan. The research focused on the jurisdiction of Police Station Dhudial and its adjoining villages. Employing a simple random sampling technique, 120 respondents were selected without regard to social class, education, age, or gender. Data were collected through a structured, close-ended interview schedule, and a t-test was applied to assess gender-based differences in satisfaction with police efforts to combat drug-related issues. The results revealed a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents in their level of satisfaction with police performance. Approximately one-third of the respondents reported personally witnessing drug users and sellers in public spaces, including roads, streets, and hotels. The majority of participants perceived that the police had been largely ineffective in reducing drug supply and addiction within the community. A minor proportion of the respondents expressed satisfaction with overall police performance, and roughly one-third indicated satisfaction with the adequacy of police staffing at the local station. These findings underscore the need for enhanced police capacity, community engagement, and policy interventions aimed at mitigating drug-related problems at the local level.

Keywords: Satisfaction, Drug Activities, Performance, Police Station.



Introduction

Drug abuse and drug trading is not only the problem of Pakistan, but in neighbors Bangladesh, Maldives, India, Afghanistan and Nepal all are facing problems related to drug addiction and drug trafficking (Mohi-ud-Din, 2015). Illegal drug trafficking is increasing day by day and it is the responsibility of public government to take action against this kind of activities (Kabir, 2011). Criminal behavior and the habit of drug addiction cannot be measured individually. Both the drug addiction and crime have strong and close relation (UNDCP, 1995). Addicts are involved in many criminal acts such as theft, murders, kidnapping, rapes, child abuse and drunk driving. Property crime and related crimes in societies mostly do by the drug abusers (Harrison and Gfroeror, 1995). The issue of drug inject is directly associated with poverty, government policies, social structure of the society and deprivation (Hussain, 2008). Pattern of crimes heavily affected by the changes accrued in political environment of a country. Studies show that after the opening of the borders in European Union many crimes increased such as terrorism, drug smuggling and computer crimes. New ways attract the drug traffickers, smugglers and other merchandise (Clutterbuck, 1990).

Police Department is an important, even essential, public agency. The main purpose of police department is to creating the environment where all people feel them safe and secure and participate in social solidarity (Paulol, 2010). Safety and the security of a person and property are the basic rights of people, and these rights also ensure the quality of good life overall the community (Plant and Scott, 2009). Police department can play an important role in the context of identification of specific crime, criminals and reduction of crime in a society (Goldstein, 1990). Police performance heavily depends upon its relations with the public. Police need public support to achieve success in their duties. Public perception strongly affects the criminal justice system, policies and the nature of work because police is working as a social institution (Halsey and White, 2008). There is the connection between the community opinion, police department and the resources which allocated for police. If the police and public relation are good than police gain a good image in society and also get promotions (Tremoglie, 1990).

Research Methodology

This chapter highlight the study locale, the selection of sample of respondents for research, technique of data collection and data analysis. The present study focused on the role of police in order to controlling drug addiction and trafficking. Research was conducted in district Chakwal, Pakistan. The universe of the study focused in Union Council Padshahan and its adjacent villages. Respondents were chosen randomly regardless social class, education, age and gender. Researcher used simple random sampling technique in the study. A sample of 120 respondents was selected and the data was collected by using open and close ended interview schedule. In order to collecting perfect information from the respondent's researcher used well-designed in-depth interviews were taken by the respondents according to the study objectives. Questioner was developed in a way that could be simply understood by the respondents. 20 to 30 minutes were taken from each respondent and the local language used during the interview. After data collection the quantitative data was analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and statistical techniques such as and percentage analysis and t-test for comparative analysis.



Results of Study

Drug addiction is an important problem in Pakistani society and especially in the area which are more rural than urban like Chakwal city. Therefore, it's the responsibility of government, police department, community and also the social scientists to take immediate attention. In the present study discussion focused on the community perception about role of police department in order to controlling drug addiction and selling in the study area. An attempt has been made to interpret, analyze and discuss the collected data in order to draw conclusion and to make suggestions in view of the analyzed results. The suggested measures will be helpful to manage the deadly effects of drug addiction in our society and improving the police performance.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution Of Identification Of Drug Addicts

Identification of Addicts by Respondents	Frequency	Percent
Personally see the abusers on roads, streets and in hotels	39	32.5
Family member use drug	29	24.2
Himself part of a peer group who use drug	19	15.8
Drug used on different occasions	29	24.2
Because of police records	4	3.3
Total	120	100.0

Table 1; showed the results of the subject that how the respondents identify the drug addiction in the research area. Data revealed that 32.5% respondents said they personally observed the drug abusers on roads, streets and in hotels, 24.2% respondents said that any of their family member in involved in drug activities the same frequency ratio told that drugs are used on different occasion like on Eids or on wedding ceremonies when the peer groups meet after a long time, they used drug for entertain themselves. The horrible fact is that the 15.8% respondents who were interviewed themselves addicts and also the part of peer group which used drugs. Only 3.3% respondents said that they aware about the existence of drug activities because of police records. Similar results were reported by Din (2015) who found that the complex situations of drug addiction prevail in Canada, USA, Maxico, Nicaragua, Belize and Guatemala.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution According Satisfaction With Police Performance

Response	Highly satisfied		Satisfied		Neutral		Unsatisfied		Highly unsatisfied	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Satisfaction with police performance	0	0	18	15.0	11	9.2	55	45.8	36	30.0
Satisfaction with available Police staff	0	0	35	29.2	6	5.0	50	41.7	29	24.2

Table: 2 results showed that 45.8% and 30.0% respondents were unsatisfied and highly unsatisfied respectively with the performance of local police and they have negative views about the police department. Only 15.0% respondents were satisfied with the police performance and said that police department is functioning effectively and 9.2% respondents were neutral viewed about the subject. There was not a single respondent in a local community who was the highly satisfied with police performance. Kusow, (1997) founded that residential location and age of respondents seem to affect the perception towards police performance. It's reported that younger people were less satisfied with the



police performance as compared to the respondents who older than aged 60. Data revealed that 41.7% and 24.2% respondents the highest frequencies were not satisfied and highly unsatisfied with the number of police staff working in the studied area. 29.2% respondents were satisfied with the number of staff available in the local police station, 5.0% respondents were neutral about the subject. Over all community suggest that staff in local police station should be increased and demand to government and higher police authorities to take action against the problem.

Table 3: Frequency Distribution According To Crime Reduction By Police Department

Crime Control By Police	Frequency	Percent
Yes	23	19.0
No	97	81.0
Total	120	100.0

Table 3; to controlling crime is the subject of police department, for this purpose the police department have strength, power technology and staff to working in the community and reduction of crime is the subject of police department. Community needs to work smoothly but in criminal environment a community cannot perform their functions smoothly. The perception of local community about police department is not positive. When it was asked that the crimes are reduced by the police department or not, 81.0% answered that police are fail to reducing criminal activities in the community and they have the negative perception about the police department. Only 19.0% respondents were agreed that police are reducing crime in the society. But a clear picture which drawn by the community survey is that the local inhabitants are not happy with police performance.

Table 4: Frequency Distribution According To Police Visit The Area On Daily Basis Or Not

Police daily visit the area	Frequency	Percent
Yes	51	42.5
No	69	57.5
Total	120	100.0

Table 4; results showed that police didn't visit/patrol the area on daily basis which is at long distance from the police station, only a small near part of the area visit by the police. 57.5% respondents were reported that local police didn't visit the area on daily basis, these respondents mostly belong to small villages or *dhokes* which are at long distance from the police station. Some respondents were living in the controversial area between the two police stations. 42.5% respondents were answered that police visit their area on daily basis.

Table 5: Frequency Distribution According To Reason Of Police Poor Performance

Reason of Police Poor Performance	Frequency	Percent	Percent of Cases
Police Favor for drug addicts and suppliers	32	20.8	32.7
Police don't Charge the Criminals	20	13.0	20.4
Police staff is Dishonest	13	8.4	13.3
Political involvement in Police Duties	22	14.3	22.4
Police staff Take Bribery	67	43.5	68.4
Total	154	100.0	157.1



Table 5; the above tables result show that police is not performing their duties properly; therefore, it is necessary to understand reasons behind the police poor performance. Table results showed the multiple responses of respondents, 43.5% respondents said that police staff takes bribery from drug users and from dealers therefore the problem of addiction may not be eradicated from the society. 20.8% respondents said that police favor for drug addicts and suppliers because police take bribery and have direct relations to the drug suppliers. 14.3% respondents said that there is political involvement in police duties and therefore police didn't function properly. 13.0% respondents said that police didn't charge the criminals, take bribery from them and leave them.

Table 6: Frequency Distribution According Suggestion For Police Department

Suggestion for police department	Frequency	Percent
Corruption reduced by the accountability in department	36	30.0
Efficient and honest staff should be encouraged	48	40.0
Police should charge the criminals	27	22.5
Police visit the area on daily basis	9	7.5
Total	120	100.0

Table 6; many questions are arising on the performance of the police staff from previous some decades. In order to maintain law and order in society first we have to control drug consumption, drug addiction and trafficking. In order to controlling these crime and drug activities the effective police department should be needed, which may control the drug addiction, smuggling or trafficking. In table 6; public opinion was taken about the measurement which can improve the police performance, table results revealed that (30.0%) respondents were opinioned that corruption should reduced by the accountability in police department, (40.0%) respondents suggested that efficient and honest staff should be encouraged, (22.5%) respondents said police should charge the criminal and (7.5%) respondents suggested that police visit/patrol the area on daily basis.

Table 7: Distribution Of Mean, Standard Deviation And t-Test Of Variance Variables On The Basis Of Male And Female Respondent's Views

Response	Male		Female		F	Sig	t-test
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D			
Drug Trafficking	1.50	.504	1.10	.303	104.889	.000 **	-5.269
Recognition of Drug Trafficking	3.07	1.363	2.04	1.317	.167	.684 Ns	-3.391
Violence Cases	1.57	.500	1.22	.415	23.055	.000 **	-4.172
Nature of violence	4.65	1.896	3.27	1.888	1.718	.194 Ns	-3.004
Satisfaction with Police Performance	3.68	1.127	4.13	.791	11.011	.001 *	2.531



Satisfaction with Available Police Staff	3.30	1.197	3.92	1.013	13.005	.000 **	3.045
Crime Reduction by Police Department	1.77	.500	1.90	.303	22.734	.000 **	1.768

Table; 7 reveals gender perception regarding the assessment of opinion about drug trafficking, way of recognition drug trafficking, violence cases faced by respondents from drug abusers, nature of violence; verbal, nonverbal, physical, psychological, mental or sexual, satisfaction with police performance in the selected area, satisfaction with the number of staff available in the area and either crime are reduced by the police department or not. The table results show that these variables highly significant from both genders. Though according to male and female respondents' opinion about drug trafficking has mean value 1.50 and 1.10 and S.D 0.504 and 0.303. In compare to overall mean values indicated that great difference between male and female respondents regarding the subject.

Discussion

Drug addiction and trafficking both are serious problems for the developed and developing countries, due to both of these problems society is not working smoothly. Many other problems are associated with the drug addiction and trafficking like thefts, frightening, kidnapping, illegal pregnancy, murders, rapes, group rapes, child abuse and use of illegal weapons, all these problems are associated with the subject. To eradicating all of these problems and to ensuring the safety of the citizen can be possible with effective police force and with maintain law and order in society. It is only possible when police department work effectively. Many questions are arising on the performance of Police departments, most of the respondents have negative perception about police performance. Respondents were asked about the police performance that how much they are satisfied with the performance; satisfaction scale was used to check the respondent's satisfaction. The problem of functioning effectively is directly associated with the problem of number of police staff available in the research area. The area which studied was vast and constituted with the 17 scattered small and big villages including *dhokes*, and for a very vast area only a single police station working with 15 policemen and even not a single lady in police station is available. Therefore, most of the local community people were not satisfied with the staff strength provided by the Punjab police department and suggest that need to be more and effective police staff in area and also demand for new check posts. To control drug addiction is the subject of police department, police department have strength, power technology and staff to working in the community and reduction of crime is the subject of police department. Community needs to work smoothly but in criminal environment a community cannot perform their functions smoothly. The perception of local community about police department is not positive. Respondents said that police didn't charge the criminals, take bribery from them and leave them. Similar results were reported by the Banerjee *et. al.*, (2008) who found that in developing countries police are plagued in many problems such as inefficiency, corruption, and insular police culture, which create negative public perception about police. Respondents were not satisfied regarding the visit and patrolling of police in the area where drugs are commonly supplied and used. Similar results presented by the Paulol (2010) who measured that the performance of police



department depend on the regular public and police interaction and public perception about police. In this sense police department improve their performance; ensure the citizen rights, and preventing crimes in society.

Conclusion

Drugs addiction and drug trafficking both are very serious problem in Pakistani society. Police department is responsible for crime reduction in society. And it is only possible when police department work effectively. Many questions are arising on the performance of Police departments, most of the respondents have negative perception about police performance. The problem of functioning effectively is directly associated with the problem of number of police staff available in the research area. It's concluded that there are many problems in which police are plagued such as inefficiency, corruption, political involvement in police duties and insular police culture, which create negative public perception about police. Through power and force police can stop crime in society.

There is great difference between male and female respondent's view regarding the drug trafficking found in the area or not, violence cases which both gender face or not, satisfaction regarding the number of police staff available in the police station and opinion about the crime are reduced by the police department or not. The variable satisfaction with police performance is also significant. The table shows that these both variables the way of recognition of drug trafficking and the nature of violence which faced respondents are not significant and there is no difference found between the male and female respondents

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