

PERCEPTION OF NORTH - EASTERN STUDENTS
RESIDING IN CHANDIGARH TOWARDS
CHANDIGARH POLICE

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Abstract

In every society law enforcement agencies are very important and Police is the main agency which responds to any form of crime in the society. The court has given the final verdict in any form of crime but, it is the police who perform the real execution. When any abnormal situation arises, the first agency which comes to peoples mind is the police. So, it is very important for the police force to keep a good image among the public. In Chandigarh, many students from different states and other countries come for their study and it's the duty of the police to keep them safe from any unwanted situations. So, it's become very important to know what these students think about Chandigarh police and what they expect from them. In this background the present paper tried to understand and analysed the perception of North-Eastern students residing in Chandigarh towards Chandigarh Police.

Key Words: Chandigarh, North-Eastern states of India, Perception, Police,

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Introduction

All societies and civilization, since the very starting point of organized community life, have always used some kind of means to defend the organization and society from the anti social elements and to ensure justice in one form or the other. Gradually, as the society advances the police came into existence and have evolved to become the tool to ensure peace and public safety in the society. The line which once divided territory, caste, race, sex is now blurred as a result of globalization. This has led the police to face many challenges as some cases are very sensitive and can demoralize a certain section of the modern society. The challenges faced by Chandigarh Police are no different in this case.

A large number of students belonging to different caste, class, race etc. arrived in Chandigarh every year from many parts of India as well as from other countries to study. Ensuring the safety of these students is also a mammoth task. The recent incidents of 2012 in which the north-eastern settlers were driven back to their native states from many cities of southern and central India raised the question of internal security.

However, the case in northern India especially Chandigarh is different as there was no report of abuse or threat to the north-eastern students. The Chandigarh Police were quick enough to conduct meeting and establish helplines for the north-easterners in case any threats were issued.

Chandigarh Police

Like any other states and Union Territories of India, Chandigarh Police is also spearheaded by Inspector General of Police (IGP) who is assisted by Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG). The Senior Superintendent of Police looks after crime and law & Order aspects of policing whereas Traffic & Security is looked after by the Senior Superintendent of Police (Traffic & Security). The training, operations and crime against women and children are looked after by Senior Superintendent of Police (Operations & Training). Then there is Deputy Superintendant of Police (DSP), Inspector, Sub-Inspector, Head Constable and Constable respectively.

Chandigarh Police has been playing a key role in keeping the city beautiful as a model City. Though the city planner Le-Corbusier planned the City only for half a million people but today its population has crossed one million mark. In order to keep pace with the growing need of the

city, Chandigarh Police has taken many steps towards strengthening its infrastructure and management of traffic. The present strength of Chandigarh Police is over 6000 men and women.ⁱ

Students from North- Eastern States in Chandigarh

The North East India comprises of the seven sister states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. They form part of the East Himalayan region which extends from Sikkim eastwards and embraces the Darjeeling Hills of West Bengal. The location of the region is strategically important as it has international borders with Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Tibet.ⁱⁱ

Every year a large number student came to Chandigarh from the North-Eastern States of India for further study. There are about 1000 students studying in different colleges in Chandigarh and in Panjab University, Chandigarh from different States of north-east. There are about 600 students from Manipur, 150 students from Mizoram, 100 students from Nagaland and about 50 students from Assam. There were least numbers of students coming from the rest of the North-Eastern States in Chandigarh.

Perception

Perception is the process of selecting, organizing and interpreting or attaching meaning to the events happening in the environment. It may be defined as the intellectual process through which a person selects the data from the environment, organizes it, and obtains meaning from it. The physical process of obtaining data from environment, known as sensation, is distinct from it (Prasad, 2007).ⁱⁱⁱ Perception is a process consisting of several sub-processes. The approach emphasizes that there is input which processed and gives output. The stimuli in the environment – objects, events, or people – can be considered as the perceptual inputs. The actual transformation of these inputs through the perceptual mechanism of selection, organization, and interpretation can be treated as the throughputs, and the resulted opinions, feelings, and attitudes, etc. which ultimately influence the behavior can be viewed as the perceptual outputs. It can be explained by the following figure 1.1.

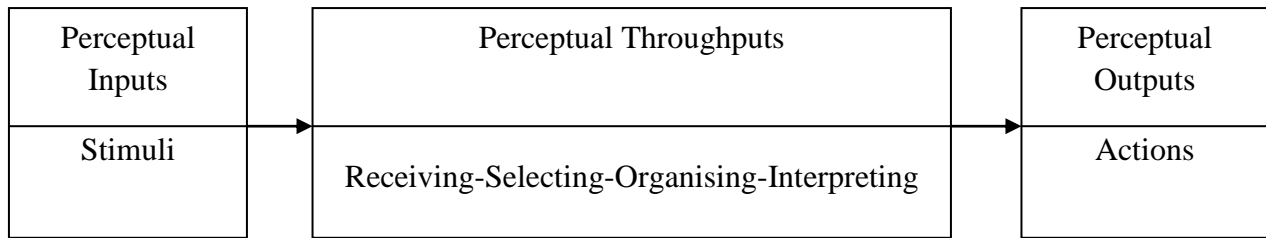


Figure 1.1: Process of Perception^{iv}

The present study focuses to understand the perception of North Eastern Indian students residing in Chandigarh towards Chandigarh Police.

Perception of the North-Eastern Students

To assess the perception of North-Eastern students towards Chandigarh Police, a general study should undergo about the social and cultural background and the specific ethnic sensibilities and mindset that makes an important influence and impact upon the general idea and understanding of their perception. Most of the North-Eastern States are categorized under the ‘Disturbed Areas’ by the Central Government which estimates that the region comes under a situation as infested by separatists, insurgents, underground military organisations.

The passing of Arms Forces Special Power Act (AFSPA), 1958, which was originally implemented to counter such unwanted elements have resulted in an unexpected and an alarming rate of human rights violation committed by the State Machineries which got unlimited power by the so called draconian Act. The local people live a life of perpetual phobia and hatred against the Indian Army and other military forces. The resulting psyche of the people is a deep loathing and fear against the military forces.

As contrary to such condition, the people from those states which doesn’t come under the tag ‘disturbed areas’ and haven’t come across any such human rights violations and traumatic experiences doesn’t have any grudges against the military forces.

Both the people from these two different regions have different perceptions against military forces. Therefore, the students which come across from such places came along carrying such perceptions and their understanding of the police and military forces are rather negative.

However, as there is no such active insurgent and underground problem in Chandigarh and no implementation of AFSPA, and the community policing initiatives undertaken by the Chandigarh Police, the students residing here may have a soft outlook or a neutral view towards the police.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to analyse the perception of the North-Eastern students residing in Chandigarh towards Chandigarh Police.

Research Methodology

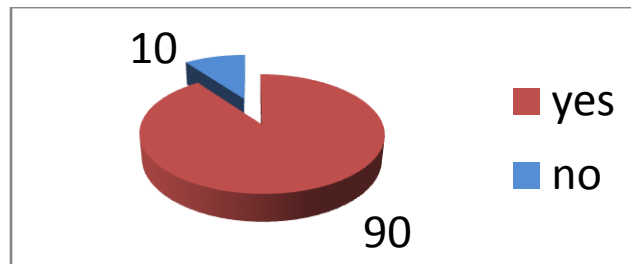
In order to assess the perception of the students of North-Eastern States residing in Chandigarh, questionnaires were distributed to 100 students and were analysed by using suitable tools.

The primary data collected were from the students hailing from North-Eastern States of Manipur(40), Mizoram (30), Nagaland (20) and Assam (10). Students from these four States mainly came to Chandigarh for educational purpose. It is found that on an average of 600, 150, 100, 50 students came for studies to Chandigarh from Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Assam respectively. The sample of 40, 30, 20, 10 respondents from the respective States were chosen for keeping the number of students into consideration. The sources of secondary data include books, journals, newspapers and internet.

RESULTS

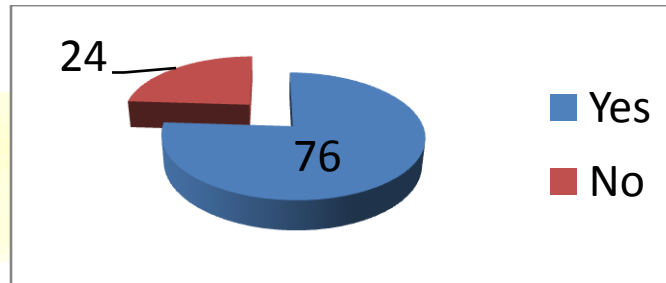
1. Response on the feeling of safe and secure in Chandigarh

After analysing the responses to the question whether the students feel safe and secured, it was found that 90% of the respondents feel safe and secured while 10% of the respondents did not feel safe in Chandigarh.



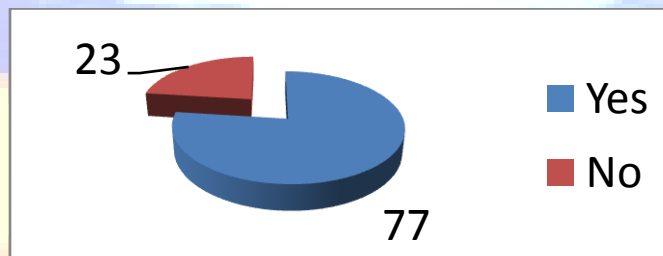
2. Responses on whether giving credit to Chandigarh Police for making them feel secured.

After analyzing the responses to the question whether the students give credit to Chandigarh Police, it was found that 76% of the students give credit to the Chandigarh Police and 24% of the students did not agree to give credit to the police for them to feel safe and secure.



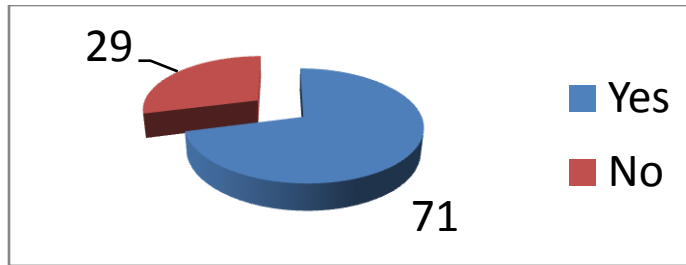
3. Response on whether North-Eastern (N-E) students feel free to approach Chandigarh Police when problem rises.

After analyzing the response whether N-E Students feel free to approach the Police it was found that 73% of the students feel free while 23% of the students from North-East States felt reluctant to approach the police.



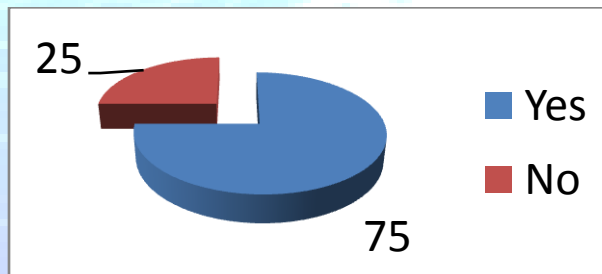
4. Response on whether Chandigarh Police use polite language when interacting with the students.

While analysing the question whether Chandigarh Police use polite language while interacting, it was found that 71% of the respondents felt that the Police were polite enough while 29% of the respondents did not have a pleasant meeting with the Police.



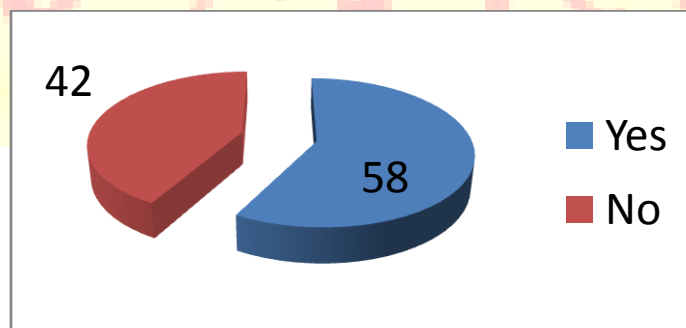
5. Response on the performance of duty by Chandigarh Police towards the N-E Students.

While analyzing the response on the question whether Chandigarh Police is performing their duty equally towards the N-E Students it was found that 75% of the students agree that the police has no bias in performing their duty while 25% of the students felt that there is biasness in the nature of performance when it comes to North-East Students.



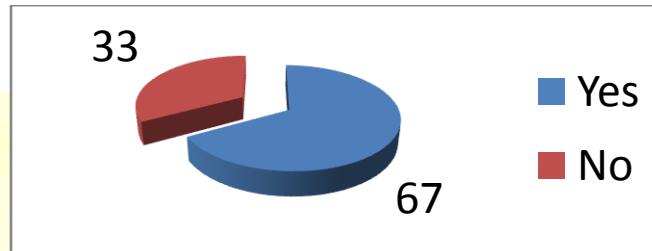
6. Response on whether Chandigarh Policemen are physically fit to handle criminals.

When the question whether Chandigarh Police personnel are physically fit to handle criminals, it was found that 58% of the respondents think the Police personnel are fit enough while 42% of the respondents think they are not fit enough to handle criminals.



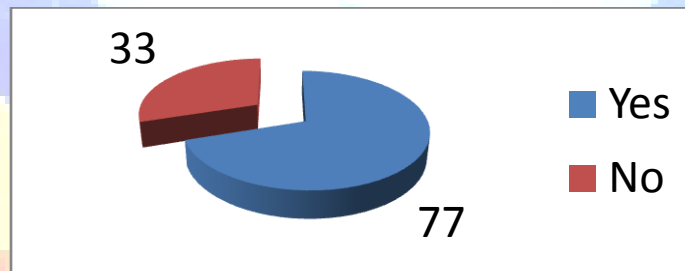
7. Response on whether Chandigarh Police reaches the crime spot on time.

After examining the question whether Chandigarh Police reaches the crime spot on time it was found that 67% of the respondents agree that the police in Chandigarh reaches the crime spot on time while 33% think that they never reach the crime spot on time.



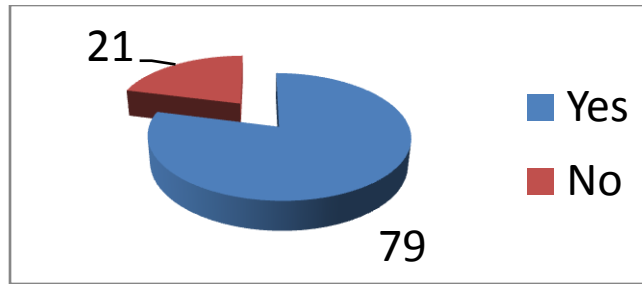
8. Response on whether the North-East students are aware of the Community Policing Initiatives taken up by the Chandigarh Police.

When the question whether the students were aware of the community policing initiatives taken up by Chandigarh Police it was found that 77% of the respondents were aware of the initiatives while 33% were not aware of such initiatives.



9. Response on whether the perception towards the Chandigarh Police based on personal experience.

While analyzing the question whether the perception of the students toward the Police are based on personal experience, it was found that 79% of the students have personal experience while 21% of the students perception are based on word to mouth.



Findings

- As per the research carried out, it can be concluded that the N-E Students have a very high appreciation and regards towards the Chandigarh Police concerning their conduct, actions and manners.
- The students have reposed a reasonable trust and respect to the uniform and authority of the Chandigarh Police, thanks to their efficiency and effectiveness in dealing with their call of duty and professional obligations towards the citizen and especially towards the students from outside Chandigarh.
- The Chandigarh Police has received a considerable appraisal from the North-Eastern Students and the most striking point regarding this case is the feedback that comes from their own personal experience.
- The research has also found that there is a reliable trust by the students towards the police service.
- Another worth mentionable development of the Police Service is that the students feel free to approach the police at any time of their need.
- The findings show the achievement of the Chandigarh Police service concerning the matters of social issues and share a good rapport with the citizens.
- A sizeable number of students from North-East are aware of the community policing initiatives taken up by Chandigarh Police like the Chandigarh Police Gully Cricket League (CPGCL), the helpline opened for N-E students when threats were issued in the southern cities in 2012.

- However, the police personnel sometimes are subjected to personal biases and prejudices towards the unfamiliar North-East faces and their attitude towards the student fall below their professional conduct.
- Racial issues sometimes influenced their professional judgments and their conduct goes to an unreasonable discrimination to the outsiders knowingly or unknowingly.

Suggestions

The perception of the North-Eastern students residing in Chandigarh towards Chandigarh is very positive. But, there are some areas where the students want the police to improve. Some of them are follows:

1. Like the Chandigarh Police Gully Cricket League (CPGCL), a football tournament should be organised to attract more students from the North-East as football is one of the favorite sports there. In fact an initiative was started for a football tournament but the project was called off much to the disappointment of the students.
2. The police personnel should be more professional while dealing the cases relating to students thereby negating biasness in any form.
3. There should be more interaction taking places between the police and the students so that the confidence between the two grows.

References

ⁱ Chandigarh Police Retrieved from <http://chandigarhpolice.nic.in/history-chandigarh-police.html> on 25th November 2013.

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ⁱⁱⁱ Prasad L.M. (2007), “*Organisational Behaviour*” Sultan Chand & Sons Educational Publishers, New Delhi, P 91

^{iv} Ibid. pp92-93