



Internal Communications, Motivation, and Agency in the Police Force

A study of police constables on COVID-19 duty in Madhya Pradesh

A joint police research study by IDFC Institute and Madhya Pradesh Police, DG Research Cell



Sources: Office of Additional SP Headquarters, Indore, Distributing food (April 2020), Office of Additional SP, Dewas, Assisting migrants (May 2020), and Office of Additional SP, Dewas, Distributing food (May 2020)

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Abstract

This study is a survey of the police constables on COVID-19 duty, serving in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. The survey delves into three key factors impacting frontline police service delivery in the context of the pandemic. First, flows of vertical and horizontal internal communication with the constables and their effectiveness. Second, the factors motivating them to go above and beyond their traditional role in the face of tremendous personal risks and the formal or informal structures in place for recognising the same. Third, the degree of autonomy and agency available with and deployed by the constables in the discharge of their duties in such unforeseen situations. We find that intrinsic motivation, clear communication, and positive appraisal are enablers for delivering public services during the pandemic.



Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a wide range of challenges for public institutions to deliver services. Their capacity to serve has been put to test and manifested in varying responses by different state level institutions. One such institution is the Police which has been at the forefront of pandemic management (Mangla and Kapoor, 2020). The police teeth to tail ratio¹ for the sanctioned strength of total civilian police forces in India is 1:17:99 (BPR&D, 2020). The largest proportion is the constables on the field. In response to the lockdown decision by the Government of India and the respective state governments, constables have been at the front lines enforcing precautionary measures, coordinating public health response, ensuring smooth supply of essentials, protecting healthcare workers and preventing overcrowding, to name just a few of their responsibilities.

Their duties ranged from enforcing state sanctioned lockdown measures as part of their law enforcement responsibilities to responding to vulnerable populations amidst personal risks under their security, public order, peacekeeping, and protection responsibilities. This highlights the inherent tension between what Balko (2013) describes as the ‘Warrior’ and ‘Guardian’ mindsets that exist simultaneously in a police’s role. The former exhibits order and control through its traditional role as a ‘controlling agent’, which can be seen when imposing lockdowns and restricting public movement. The latter encompasses a protective and supportive approach to the needs of the vulnerable by collaborating with other institutions as well.

In addition to the dual nature of their role and their multiple duties, the constables also dealt with ever changing circumstances and orders as well as distressing on-ground situations. Amidst this uncertainty, the importance of an inclusive and empowering organisational culture for sustaining an ethos of public service cannot be overstated. Such a culture is manifested through effective and open internal communication flows including the existence of feedback loops, established systems and processes for motivating and appreciating frontline workers, and proffering frontline workers some degree of autonomy in the discharge of their duties. Along with these aspects, intrinsic motivation is another key driver for street level functionaries to perform their pandemic management duties.

¹ Represented by comparing senior supervisory officers (Director General to Deputy Superintendent of Police) and immediate supervisory officers (Inspector to Assistant Sub-Inspector) with field personnel (Head Constable and Constable).



Objective

The survey was designed to look deeper into whether information flows horizontally or vertically and from the bottom up or top down in the police, whether learnings from the field are incorporated in pandemic management, and the processes around internal communications. Additionally, we tried to understand what motivates police personnel to serve the public beyond their traditional roles at tremendous personal risk. We attempted to assess the level of autonomy and discretion they enjoy in performing their duties.

The survey also attempts to assess the welfare role played by police personnel during this crisis. This includes serving and protecting the citizens and supporting other government institutions by facilitating their operations. The goal is to understand different facets of service orientation amongst the constables as they are at the frontline, facing the citizens. Finally, this survey aims to understand the underlying organisational behavior in police to gauge nuances around the state's capacity to serve the public in crisis.



Methodology

Data Collection

Responses were collected through an online link-based survey instrument, with multiple-choice objective questions, designed and administered in Hindi and English. The link was live between 22 July 2020 and 11 August 2020. The Deputy Superintendents of Police (DSPs) recruits who were on probation in the districts as part of their field training were asked to share the survey link with at least ten of their constables. They shared the survey link via WhatsApp, individually or in groups, with the constables. To ensure that the required response rate was met, the DSPs also called the constables and asked them to fill in the survey link. Only IDFC Institute researchers had access to the responses from the survey. It is also important to note that the DSPs who distributed the survey links to the respondents were probationary officers. This means that they were only the senior officers of the respondent constables for the duration of the district field training period. It should be further noted that the probation district and final district of posting for DSPs after their training are different.

Sampling Strategy

Due to limitations posed by COVID-19, a non-random sampling approach was adopted. Constables on COVID-19 duty across Madhya Pradesh were identified with the help of the DSP probationers who were on their field training in the districts. We received responses from 773 constables; however, 11 surveys had to be dropped as they were incomplete. The effective number of responses analysed was 762. The actual number of constables in Madhya Pradesh police is 46,736 (BPR&D, 2020), thus covering 1.6% of constables in the civil police force.

Efforts were made to ensure that there was a representation of constables from all 52 districts of Madhya Pradesh but due to remote working conditions, the response rate was not consistent across districts.

Limitations

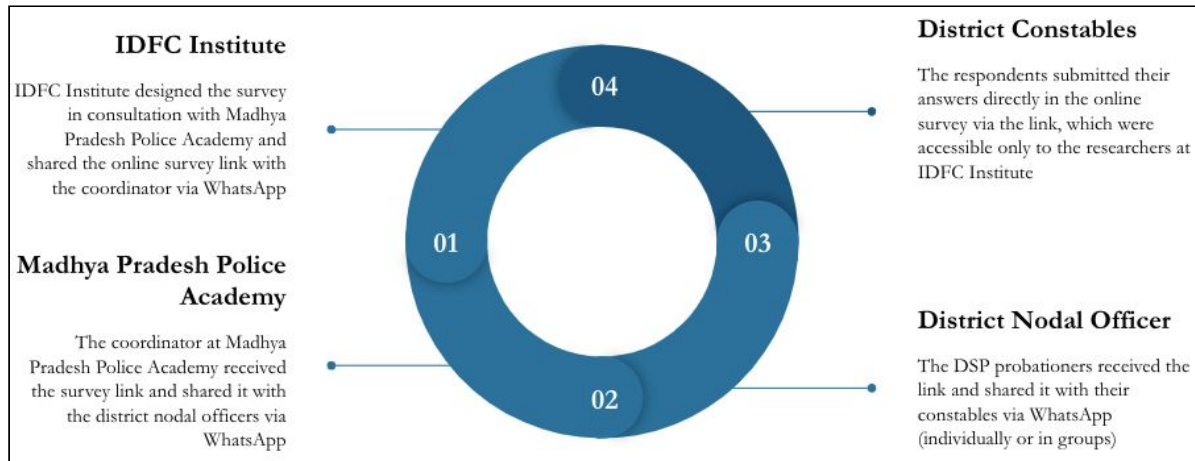
One of the main limitations of the study is selection bias as only those constables who have experience using digital platforms were identified to fill out the survey.

Further, the survey was distributed by DSPs who were senior in rank to the respondents. This may have inhibited free and candid responses from the respondents. This limitation was mitigated to an extent as the DSPs who distributed the survey links were probationary officers who would be reassigned to different districts once their probationary period ended. However, this method of survey administration was employed due to the lack of direct access to frontline field constables and inoperability of survey agencies during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Another limitation pertains to the sample selection methodology. Since the sampling was non-random, these results cannot be extrapolated to inform studies at the population level and must be read at the sample level in the context of COVID-19 only.

Lastly, in order to enable clear response, open-ended questions were not utilised as our preferred option. However, analysis has indicated that some questions, in the form of free-text responses, would have led to a richer and more nuanced understanding of the situation on the ground.

Figure 1: Survey Administration and Interagency Coordination



Source: Authors' analysis



Key Learnings

COVID-19

1. The COVID-19 crisis situates this survey in a non-routine context. In light of this, the study's results present a positive image of the way police hierarchy operates and the heightened sense of camaraderie as compared to the general understanding of senior and junior personnel relationships. Therefore, one of the hypotheses to be tested in future studies is the consistency of such results across time and in different contexts. This will help understand the true nature of such relationships, especially in a routine work setting as compared to a situation involving a crisis such as the COVID-19 outbreak.

Demographics and duties

1. The respondent constables are predominantly male with nearly 90% of them between the ages of 20-40 years, indicating that the younger constables are playing an important role in the COVID-19 response.
2. The main duties of the constables have been regulating movement (40%) and assisting people who need help (39%), which are critical for enforcing the lockdown.

Communication operations

1. Nearly all (97%) of the respondents felt that duties were clearly explained to them.
2. However, nearly 10% of the respondents said they do not have regular debriefs which points to an area for improvement.
3. WhatsApp is a reliable and accessible medium for communicating with those on the field. It is also found to be effective by more than 90% of the respondents.

Communication flows

1. Almost two-thirds of the respondents indicated that they communicate their challenges and suggestions to seniors, but only one-third communicate their anxieties and worries to them. A little over half (55%) of respondents communicate challenges and suggestions to peers, and approximately 71% communicate their anxieties and worries to peers.
2. Nearly 90% of constables who communicated their challenges and suggestions to their seniors felt heard, and indicated that steps were taken to address their challenges. 73% reported that their suggestions were even incorporated for future responses. Almost all (98%) of the respondents who shared their anxieties and worries with their seniors felt that they received adequate support and empathy from their seniors.
3. This is indicative of the fact that seniors do acknowledge and empathise with their juniors. However, there is an approachability gap perceived by constables when it comes to sharing their anxieties and worries with seniors. Efforts to understand this gap, and bridge it, are needed to ensure strong internal communications and high morale within the force.
4. Overall, horizontal communication flows seem to be balanced (50% or more) across all domains—challenges, suggestions, anxieties and worries. However, there is scope for improvement in upward communication flows relating to sharing of anxieties and worries (37%).



Communication challenges

1. For two-thirds of constables, the challenges they faced mainly pertained to accessibility issues viz. having to resort to digital mediums since meeting in person was not practical (36%) or because seniors were never alone (16%) or due to a lack of a dedicated platform for communication (15%).
2. A large proportion (42%) indicated the lack of time to be a challenge, either since they perceived their seniors to be very busy (27%) or because they themselves were busy (15%).
3. One-fifth of the respondents indicated more behavioural and cultural barriers in communication, such as seniors being displeased/annoyed when being communicated with or the cultural legacy of not initiating conversations with seniors.

Motivation

1. Overall, the department and seniors created a positive and appreciative environment for constables. However, close to one-fourth of the constables did not experience an appreciative working environment, with seniors either ignoring or dismissing their efforts, or scolding/expressing annoyance at their efforts. This points to a need to improve sensitisation which is crucial for keeping up the motivation and morale of constables.
2. Intrinsic motivators such as a strong sense of duty as police personnel (75%) and a strong sense of duty as a human being (33%) were reported. Socialisation factors such as police training (45%) and peers engaged in similar work (16%) were other major sources of motivation. However, close to one-fourth indicated fear of punishment or the consequences of ignoring orders for their jobs and careers, as guiding motivators. This points to another area for improvement. Efforts must be made to allay such fears.

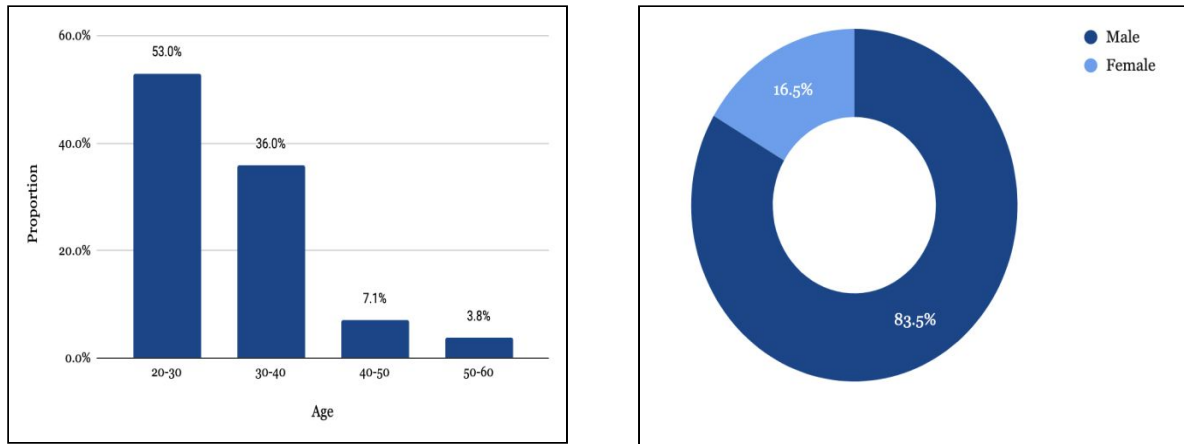
Agency

1. Results indicate a balance between constables who enjoyed some degree of autonomy (47%) and those who worked strictly according to orders (52%).
2. Almost three-fourths of constables managed situations involving lockdown violations by citizens, by instructing them to go back home after explaining the dangers of the virus, while 9% resorted to the use of force and 6% imposed a fine as per orders given.

Demographics

In this section, we present the respondent age and gender distribution to better situate the learnings of the study.

Figure 3: Age and Gender Distribution



Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

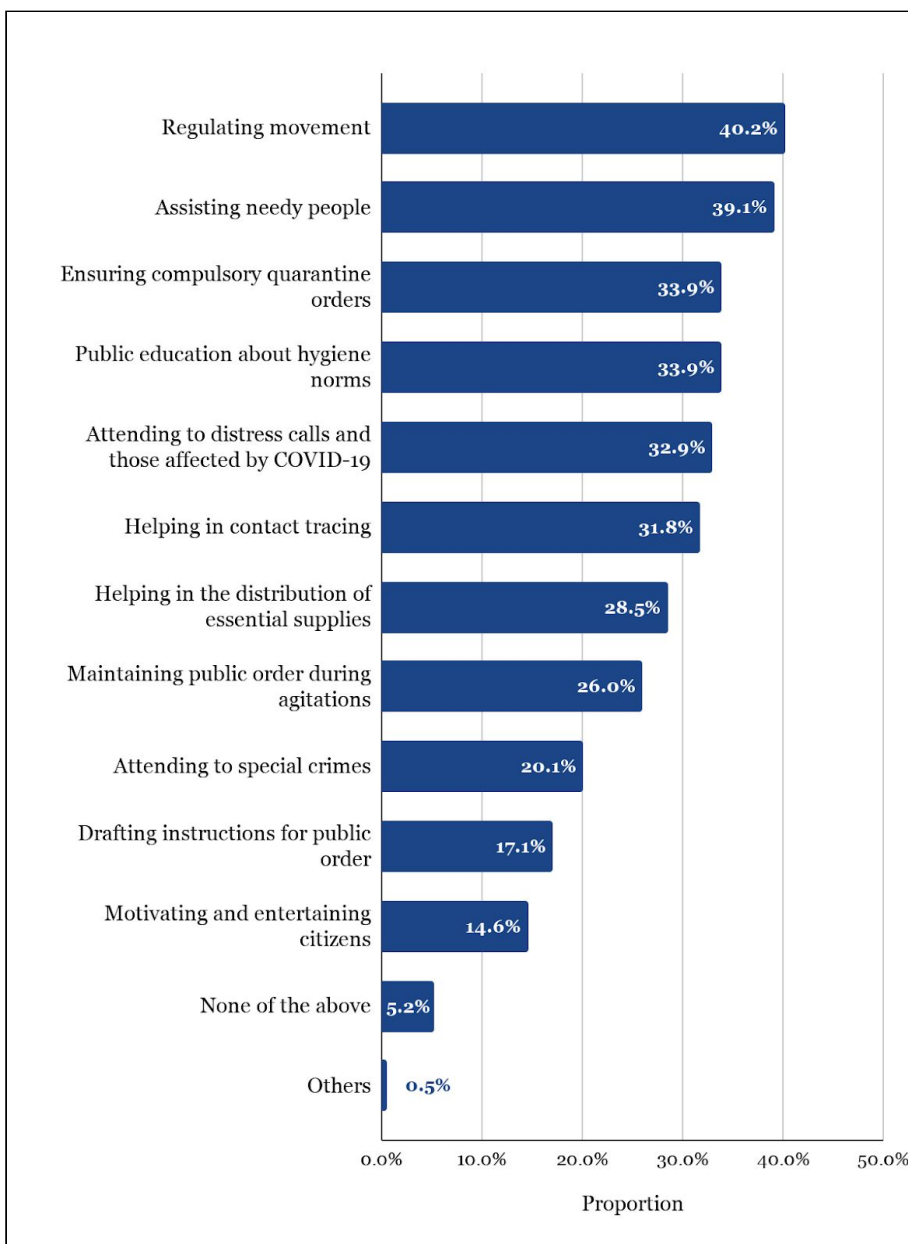
The respondent constables are predominantly male (83.5%) with nearly 90% of them between the ages of 20-40 years. The average age of the respondents is 30.7 years and the median age is 29 years. The reported ages range from a minimum of 20 years to a maximum of 60 years. Given that COVID-19 is often more severe in older people or those with comorbidities such as lung or heart disease, and diabetes, Madhya Pradesh Police ensured that older/more vulnerable personnel were not deployed on the field from April. The study did not cover information on comorbidities.

COVID-19 Communications

The Government of India, under the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, and the National Disaster Management Act, 2005, entrusted civil administrators and police with the responsibility of managing the COVID-19 public health crisis. The police, in particular, were tasked with enforcing the nation-wide ‘lockdown’ approach. At a time when we still lacked information on the severity and nature of the disease, police organisations were tasked as one of the first responders. In this context, the types of duties entrusted to constables in Madhya Pradesh are presented below.

I. What are your COVID-19 related duties/activities?

Figure 4: COVID-19 duties

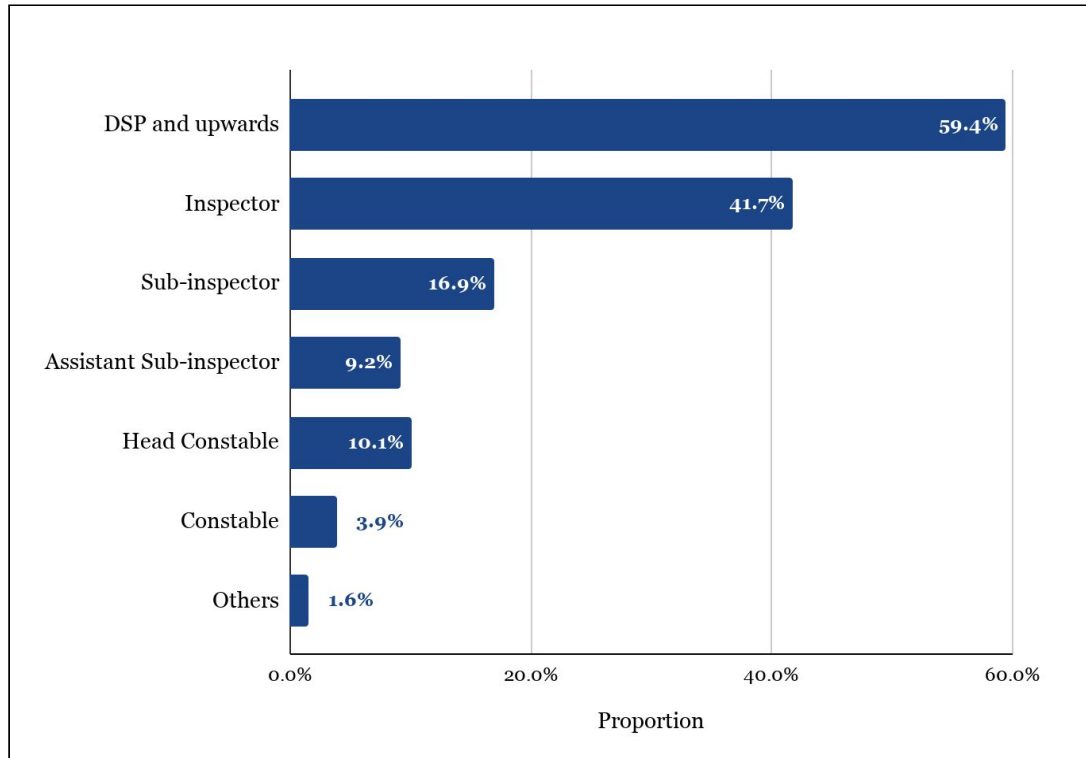


Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

The constables main duties were regulating movement (40%) and assisting people who needed help (39%), which were critical to enforcing the lockdown. Less than a third of them (20%) were staffed on special crimes.

II. Who provides you with these instructions?

Figure 5: Communication of COVID-19 duties

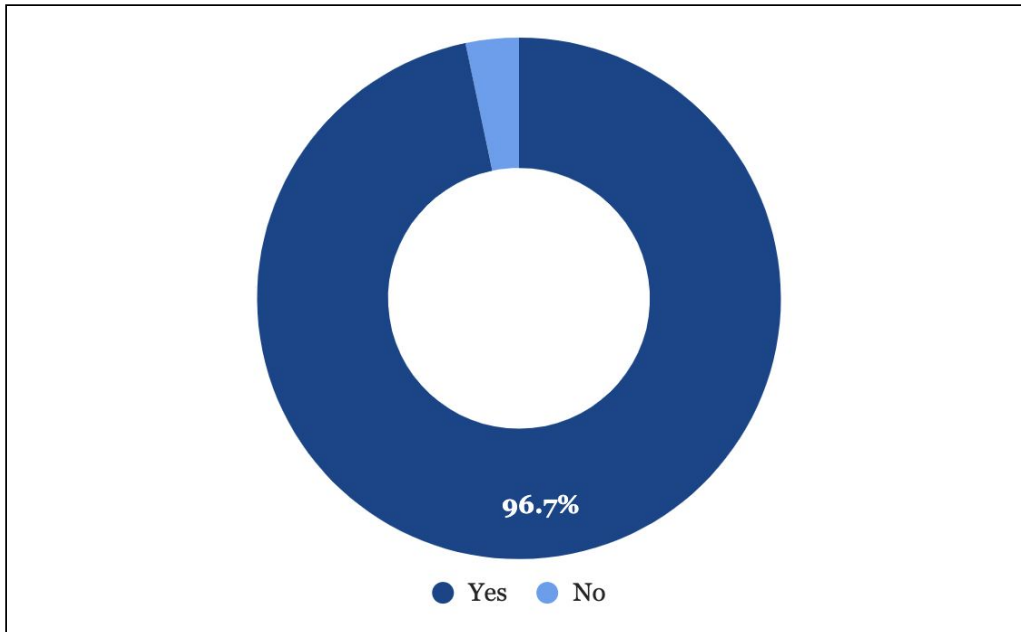


Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

Nearly two-thirds (59%) of the instructions for the constables comes from officers in the positions of DSP and upwards while nearly two-fifths get instructions from Inspectors. This implies that there has been communication flow with higher-level officers, apart from their immediate superiors.

III. Are your COVID-19 related duties clearly explained to you?

Figure 6: Explanation of COVID-19 duties



Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

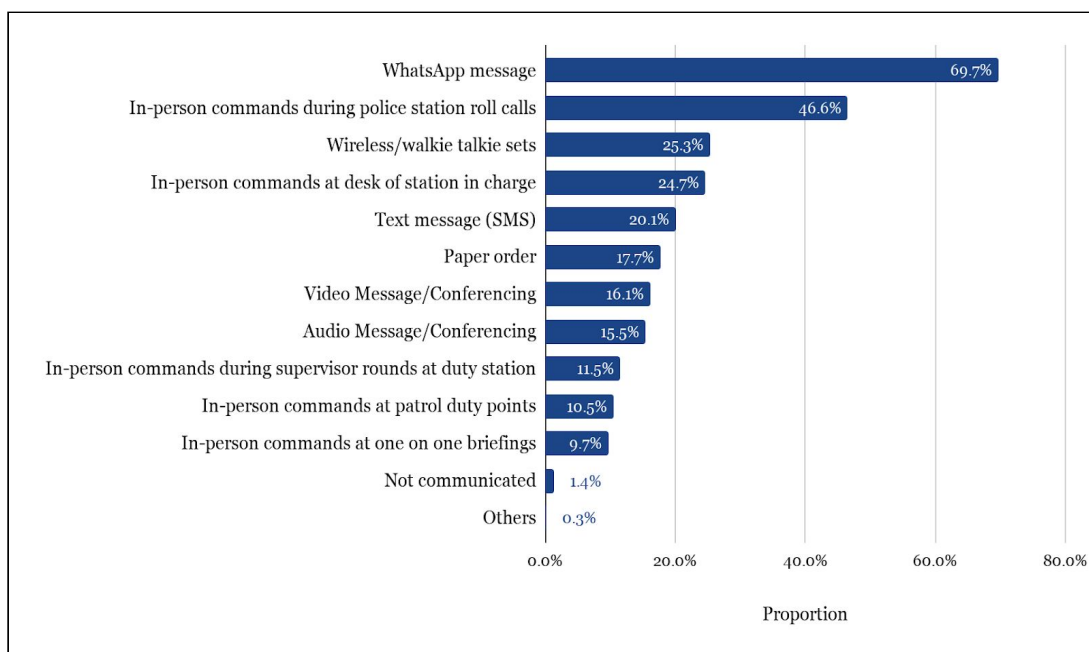
The biggest challenge during the lockdown was communicating duties and precautionary measures, especially to those who were on the field. Nearly 97% of the respondents felt that duties were clearly explained to them, which is encouraging, especially with the constant new developments regarding COVID-19.

Flow of Communication

As a part of this study, we wanted to understand the most effective and frequently used channels of communication in the police organisation and the frequency of debriefs. COVID-19 has been a challenging experience for a lot of police personnel. High stress levels have been reported among the frontline staff, particularly the police (Chauhan, 2020). This indicates the need for frequent check-ins and debriefs to make sure constables are coping with the challenges and anxieties of the job. Mental health is a serious concern that needs to be systematically addressed in policing in India (Pandey, 2017).

I. How are the latest orders communicated to you?

Figure 7: Communication channel for the latest orders

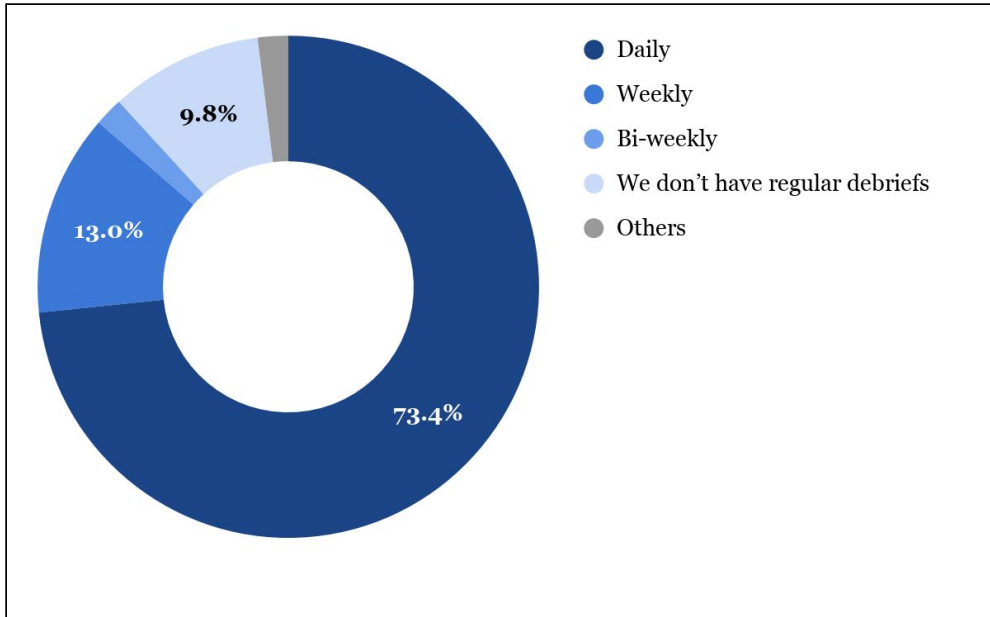


Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

The most used channel of communication is WhatsApp, which is used by nearly 70% of the respondents. Next is in-person commands during police station roll calls as indicated by a little less than half of the respondents.

II. How often do debriefs take place?

Figure 8: Frequency of debriefs

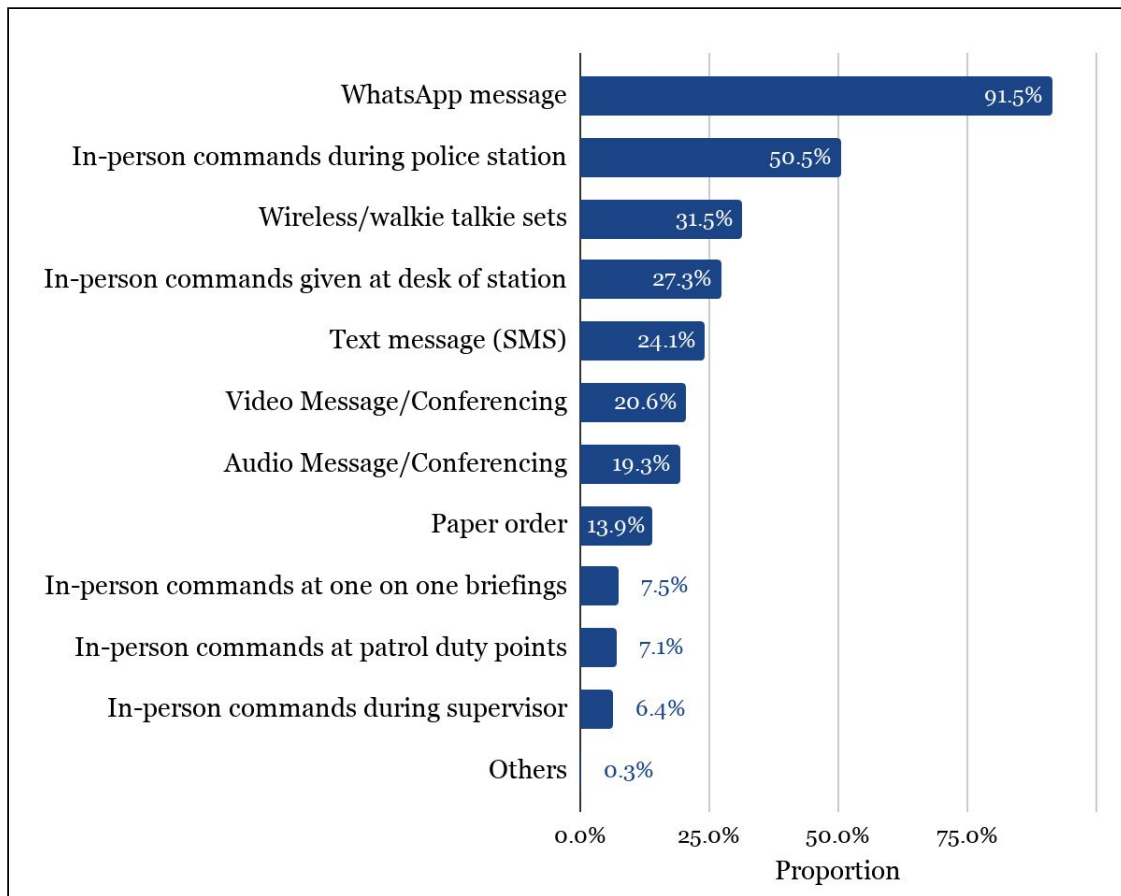


Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

Nearly 90% of the respondents had daily or weekly debriefs. 10% of the respondents said they do not have regular debriefs; this is an area for the senior officers to focus on in order to ensure that duties are performed well and any concerns of those on the field are addressed. Even if not in person, this could be done over WhatsApp, which more than 90% of the respondents have reported as being effective for communicating orders (results presented in the next section).

III. Which is the most effective means to communicate?

Figure 9: Channels of communication



Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

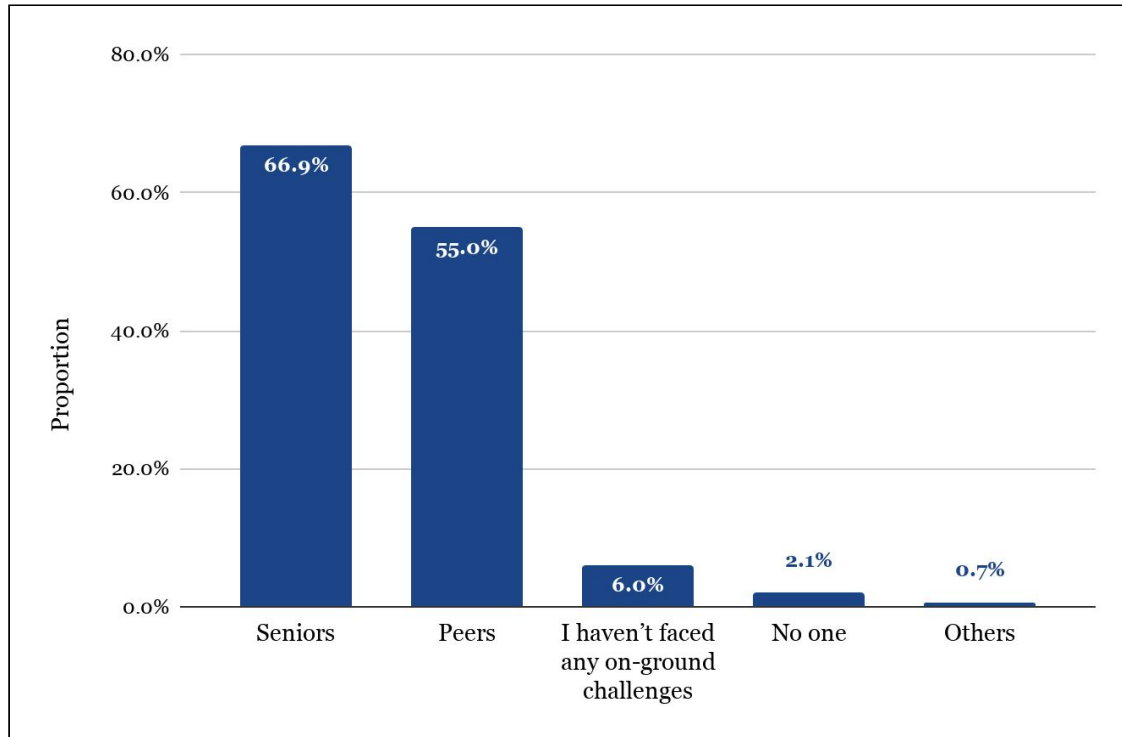
When asked about the most effective channel for communication, over 90% felt it was WhatsApp. This is followed by nearly half of the respondents feeling that in-person commands during police station roll calls are the next most effective way of communicating. However, since the outbreak of COVID-19, in-person communication may not always be possible. In its absence, WhatsApp has proven to be an effective channel of communication. Additionally, the selected sample of constables are those who have access to WhatsApp and are familiar with using it. Hence, this response may be a consequence of the selection bias in the sample.

Challenges Faced

As first responders on the field, police have faced many challenges in carrying out their duties. In this section, we examine whom the constables communicate their on-ground challenges to and whether their seniors are receptive to their challenges.

I. With whom do you communicate any on-ground challenges faced by you?

Figure 10: Communication of on-ground challenges



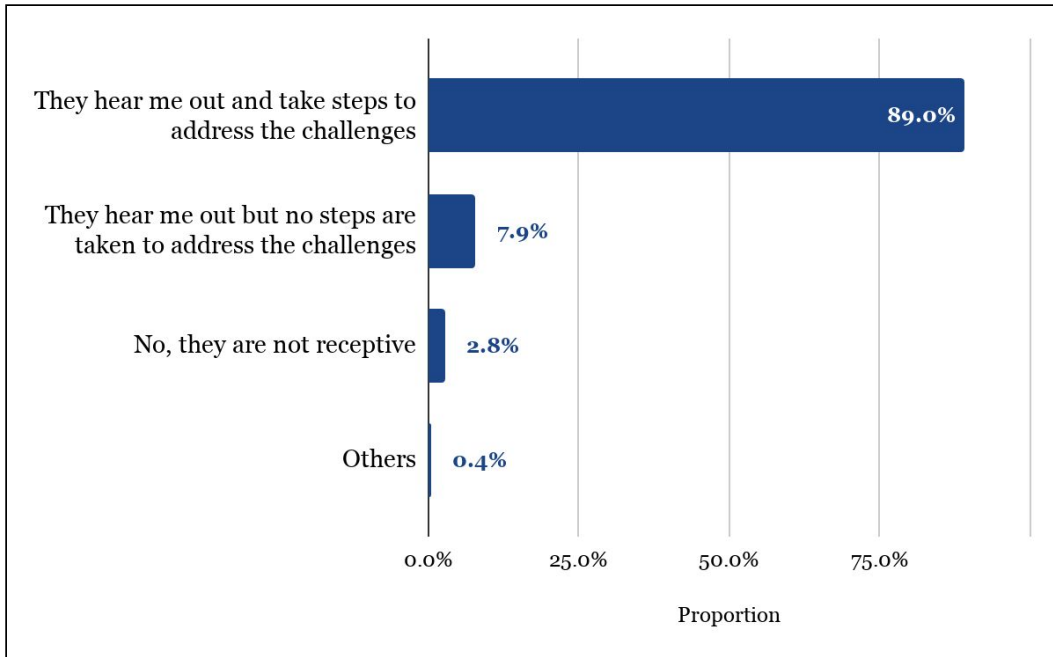
Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

Two-thirds of the respondents indicated that they communicate their challenges to seniors, followed by over half of them communicating with their peers. We followed up on this response by asking if those communicating their challenges to seniors felt that they were receptive to their challenges. The results are presented in the next section.



II. Are your seniors receptive to the challenges faced by you?

Figure 11: Receptivity of seniors to challenges faced



Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 509.

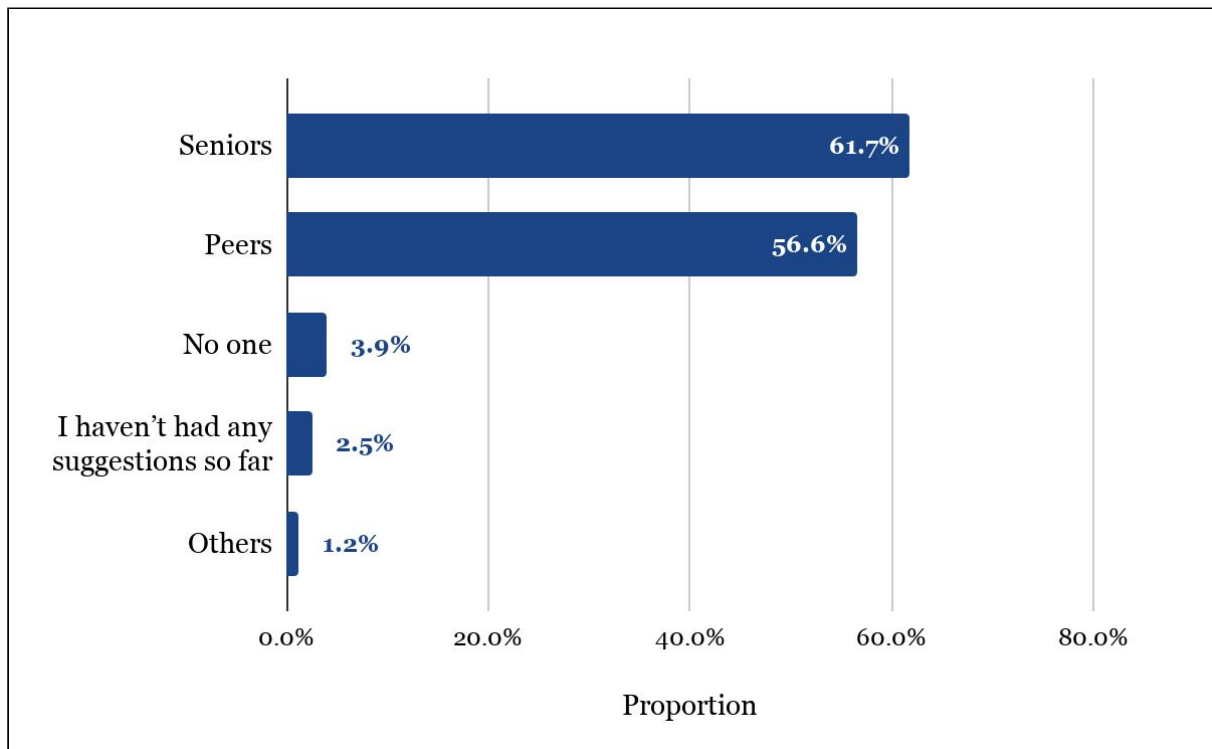
Out of those who responded that they communicated with seniors, nearly 90% felt that the seniors listened to the challenges faced and took steps to address them. A little less than 10% of them felt that the seniors, while hearing them out, did not take steps to address the issues. Overall, the results indicate that nearly 98% of those who communicate their challenges to the seniors feel that they are heard, even if there isn't always action taken to address the said challenge.

Suggestions for Improving Police Response

To probe further on the receptivity of seniors, we collected feedback on whether the suggestions given by the respondents to improve on-ground police response were heard and acted upon by the seniors.

- I. To whom do you communicate any suggestions you may have for improving police responses?

Figure 12: Communication of suggestions

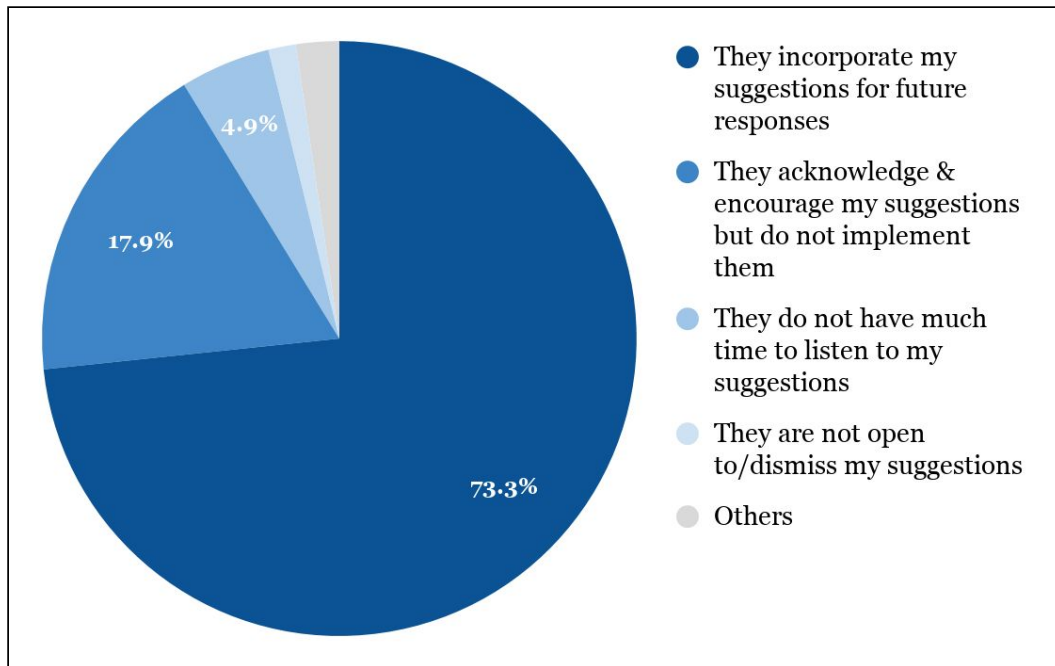


Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

Almost two-thirds of the respondents (62%) feel comfortable communicating suggestions on how police response can be improved to seniors while over half of them (57%) responded that they communicate suggestions to peers.

II. Are your seniors receptive to your suggestions?

Figure 13: Receptivity of seniors to suggestions



Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 469.

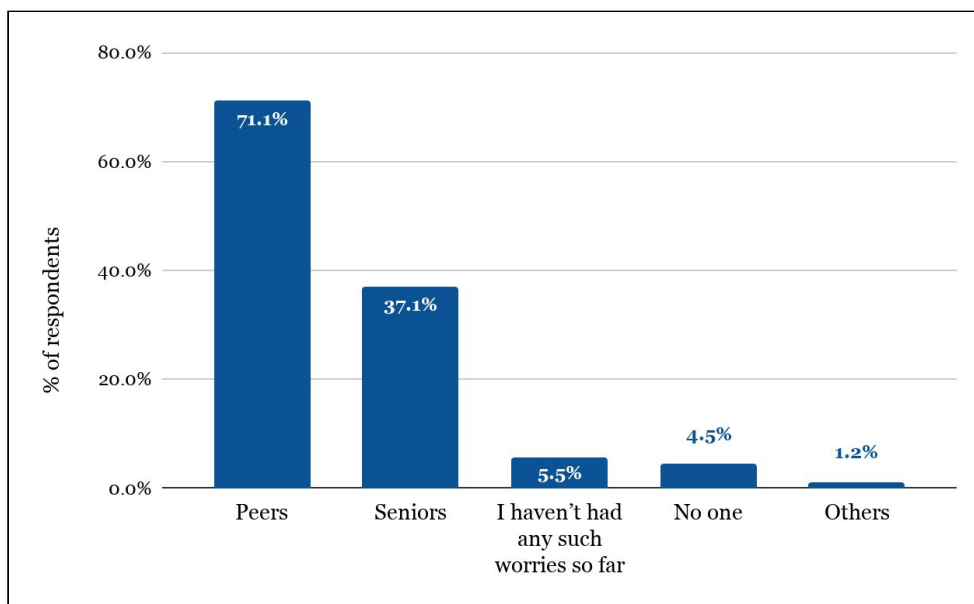
Of the subsection of constables who reported that they communicated their suggestions to their seniors, close to 91% indicated that their suggestions were at least acknowledged and not outrightly dismissed. In fact, 73% indicated that their suggestions were incorporated for future responses. 6.4% of the respondents indicated that their seniors were either dismissive of their suggestions or were not able to dedicate time for listening. A fraction of the respondents (2.3%), captured as the “others” category, indicated that their seniors listened to them/incorporated their suggestions only sometimes.

Job-Related Anxieties

A key occupational hazard of policing is that it involves high stress and anxiety. The constant exposure to people suffering from distress and pain and the need for making life and death decisions regularly can have a negative impact on the mental health of police personnel. COVID-19 has exacerbated these risks, leaving frontline constables at their epicentre. The section aims to capture communication flows with respect to anxieties and understand how supportive constables perceive their seniors to be. Free and strong internal communications are key for allaying anxieties, worries and keeping the morale of the personnel high.

I. With whom do you communicate your job-related anxieties and worries?

Figure 14: Communication of job-related anxieties

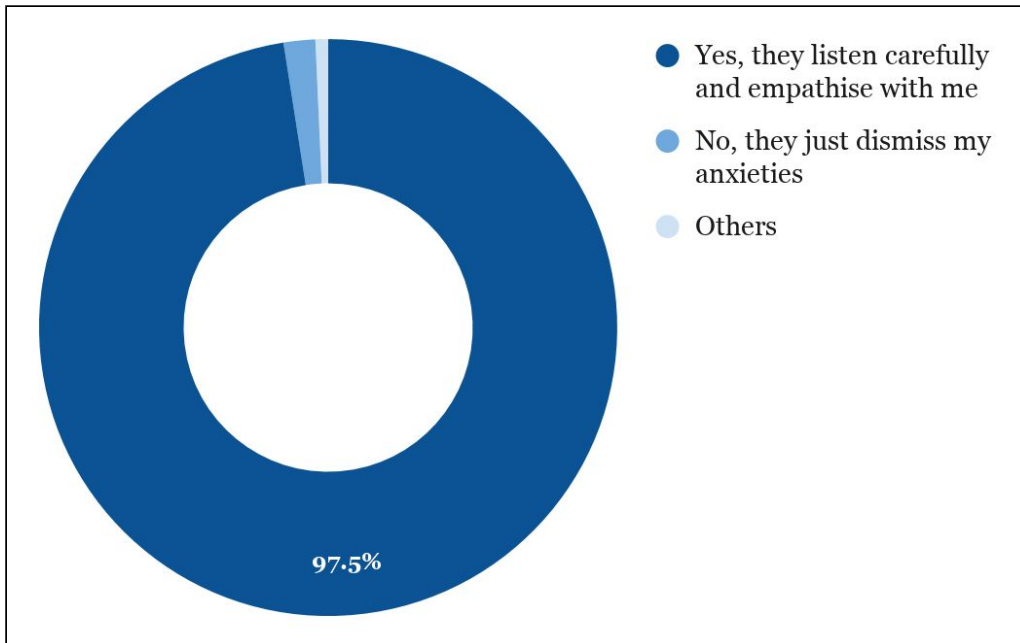


Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

Results indicate that constables prefer to communicate their anxieties and worries to their peers compared to seniors by a large margin. This is in stark contrast to the communications of challenges and suggestions, which they prefer to relay to seniors (Figure 10 and 12). While close to two-thirds of respondents communicated challenges faced and suggestions to their seniors, a little over one-third communicated their anxieties to seniors. While peer to peer communication of anxieties seems expected, the fact that one-third of the respondents communicate their anxieties to seniors is a positive indication despite the hierarchical structure of the police.

II. Are your seniors supportive upon hearing your anxieties?

Figure 15: Supportive nature of seniors



Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 283.

Almost 98% of the constables who communicate their anxieties and worries to their seniors indicated that their seniors listen to them carefully and empathise with them. However, a fraction (2.5%) of them conveyed that their seniors were dismissive or had different reactions at different times or the reaction was dependent on the senior in question and couldn't be generalised. A social desirability bias² can not be ruled out in this response as the constables surveyed may have been cautious against giving a more undesirable answer.

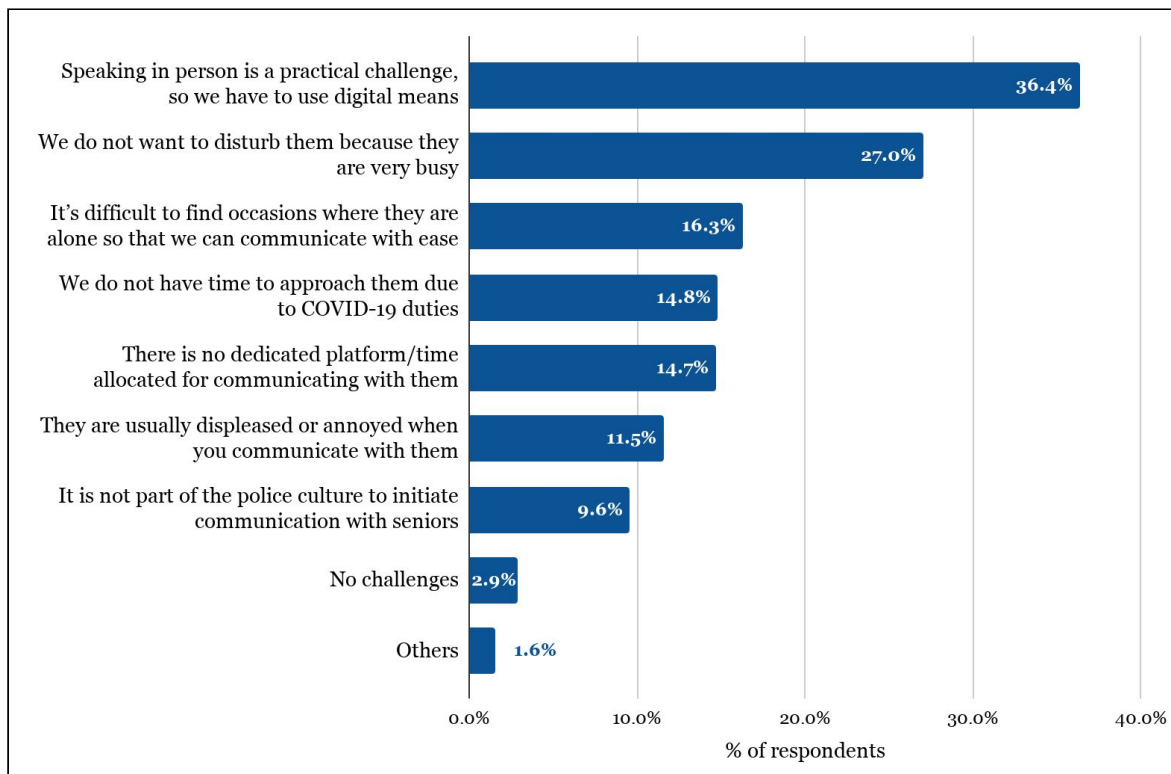
² Social desirability bias is the tendency to underreport socially undesirable attitudes and behaviors and to overreport more desirable attributes.

Communication Challenges

This section focuses on understanding the key challenges faced when communicating with seniors. This is pertinent in order to improve feedback loops and empower the constables to play a part in decision support as well, rather than merely executing orders.

I. What are some of the challenges you face when communicating with seniors?

Figure 16: Challenges faced in communication with seniors



Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

The results indicate that the challenges for two-thirds of constables, mainly pertain to the medium, time and platform for communication. A common response (36%) was that communicating with seniors is a practical challenge and so digital means such as WhatsApp, or text messages are used. This is also in line with the finding that 90% of constables perceive WhatsApp to be their most preferred and effective channel of communication (Figure 9). 15% indicated that the lack of dedicated time and platform for communicating with seniors contributes to their challenges, while 16% indicated that it is difficult to communicate with seniors since they are never alone or are surrounded by people. There were also a large number (42%) of constables for whom the lack of time, either on the seniors' part (27%) or on their own part (15%) was a barrier to communication. Separately, one-fifth of the respondents indicated behavioural and cultural barriers in communication, such as seniors being displeased/annoyed when being communicated with (12%), or the perceived organisational culture of not initiating conversations with seniors (10%).

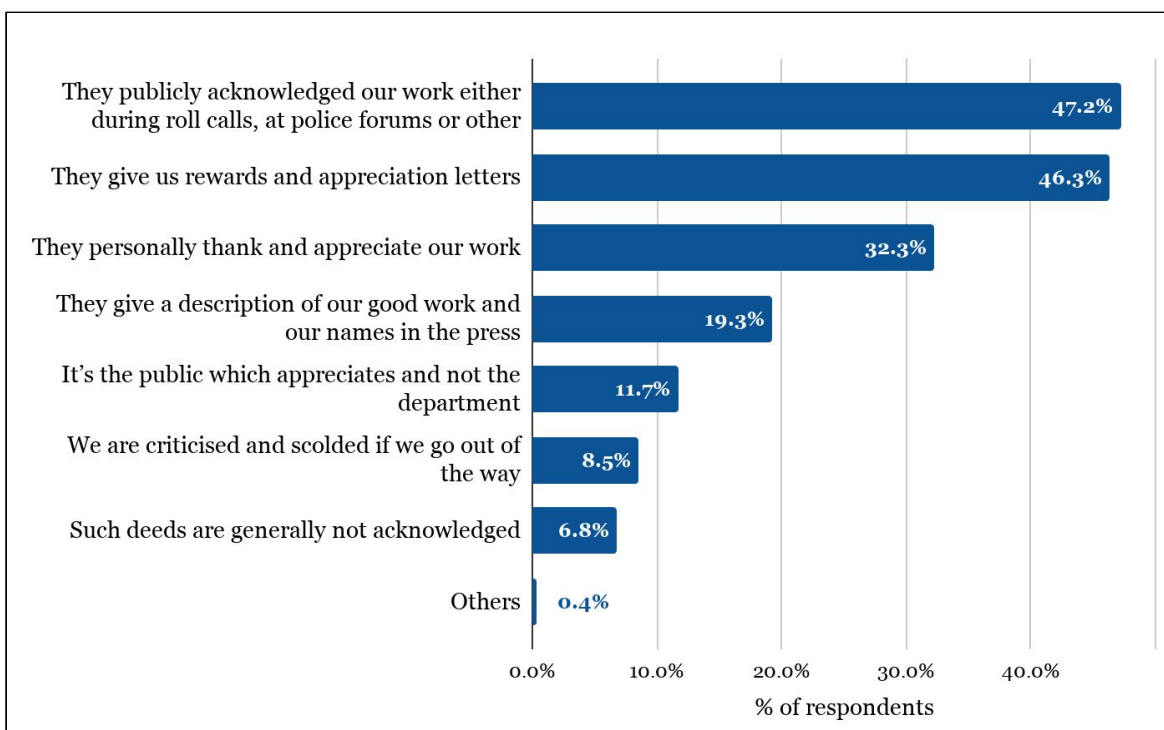


Motivation

The police constables have been at the forefront of managing the pandemic. In addition to their numerous duties, they were also confronted with high-pressure situations involving varying degrees of distress. Appreciating their efforts is a crucial input for keeping up the force’s morale and motivation. This section seeks to understand how department and police leaders expressed their appreciation and motivated the constables. It also seeks to understand intrinsic motivation factors that propelled constables to conduct their duties at the risk of their own safety and lives.

- I. How is the work done during COVID-19 duties responded to by the department and the seniors?

Figure 17: Rewards and recognition

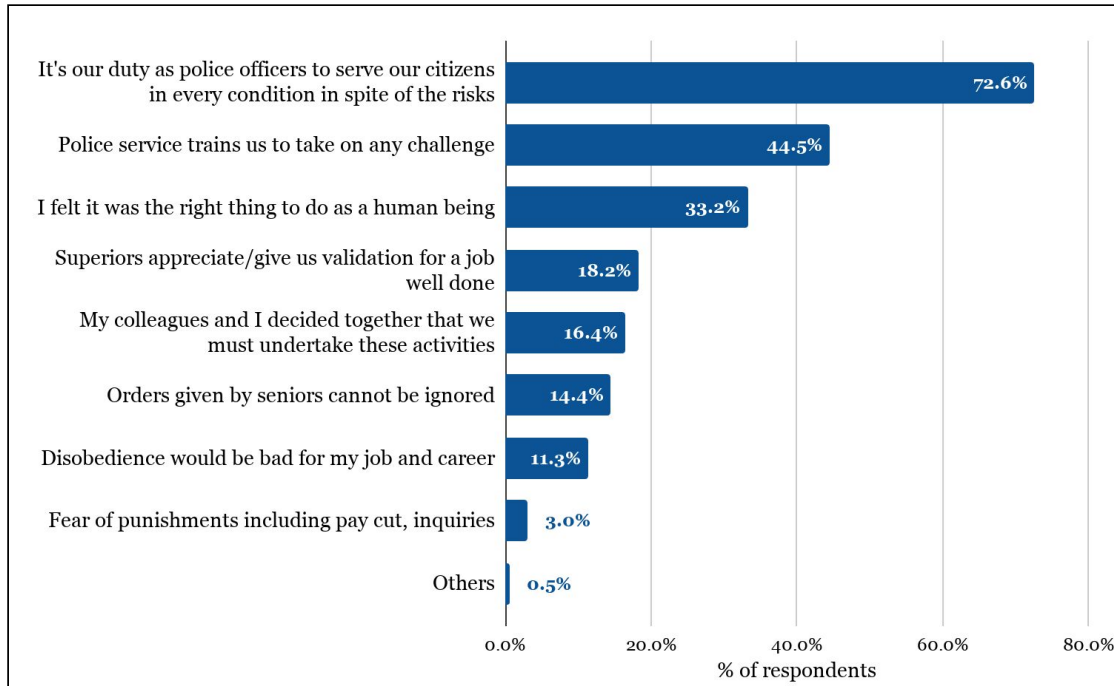


Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

The results indicate that overall the department and seniors created a positive and appreciative environment for constables. Almost half of them indicated that appreciation was in a visible format, either through announcements at public forums (47%) or through rewards and appreciation letters (46%). However, close to 27% of the constables did not experience a very appreciative working environment. Their responses indicate a need for cultivating a culture of reward and appreciation across the department and to take steps to boost their morale.

II. What motivates you to work hard despite the personal risk involved in performing COVID-19 related activities?

Figure 18: Motivating factors



Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

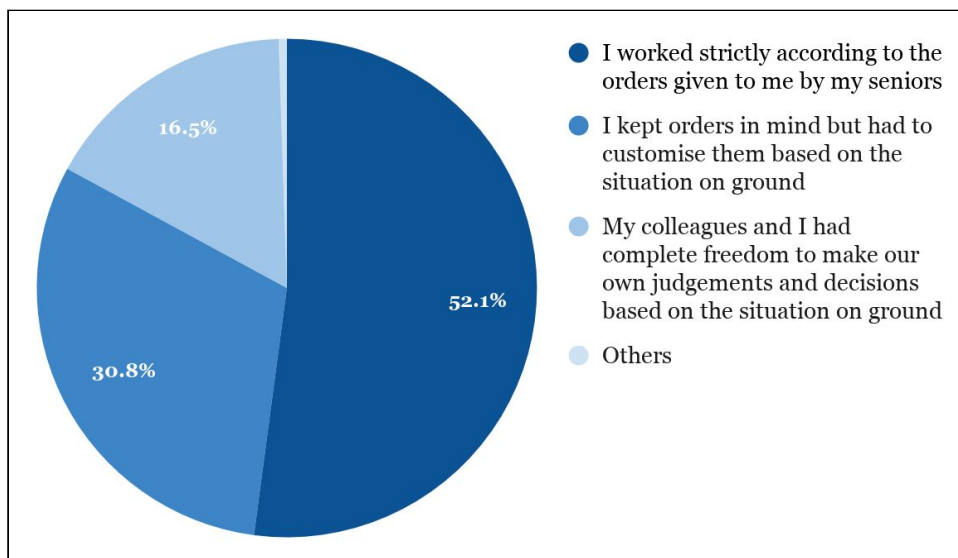
Overall, the results indicate that a strong sense of duty motivates constables to undertake their tasks. Close to three-fourth identify their sense of duty as rooted in being a part of the police service, while one-third identify their sense of duty rooted in being a good human being. 61% constables cited socialisation factors as key motivators, such as police training (45%) and peers (16%). The responses can be viewed as an identification with the Madhya Pradesh Police motto of 'Desh Bhakti-Jan Sewa' meaning patriotism and public service, which may have influenced their orientations. The response of a little over one-fourth of the constables indicated fear as a key driving factor—fear of punishments or the consequences of ignoring orders on their jobs and careers.

Autonomy in Decision-Taking

Amid the pandemic, the frontline police forces' community policing and humanitarian efforts have been widely appreciated. At the same time, reports of excessive use of force by the police have been criticised. As part of being on the frontline, the constables' experiences on-ground situations that cannot always be preempted. In such situations, they must adapt and use their judgement and discretion in deciding how to manage the situation. The recognition of such functional autonomy is important for empowering the constables and giving them greater agency to take responsible decisions instead of merely taking orders. This section aimed to understand how autonomous the constables were while performing their COVID-19 duties and to understand how they managed situations where citizens violated lockdowns.

I. How would you describe your experience of managing the lockdown?

Figure 19: COVID-19 experience

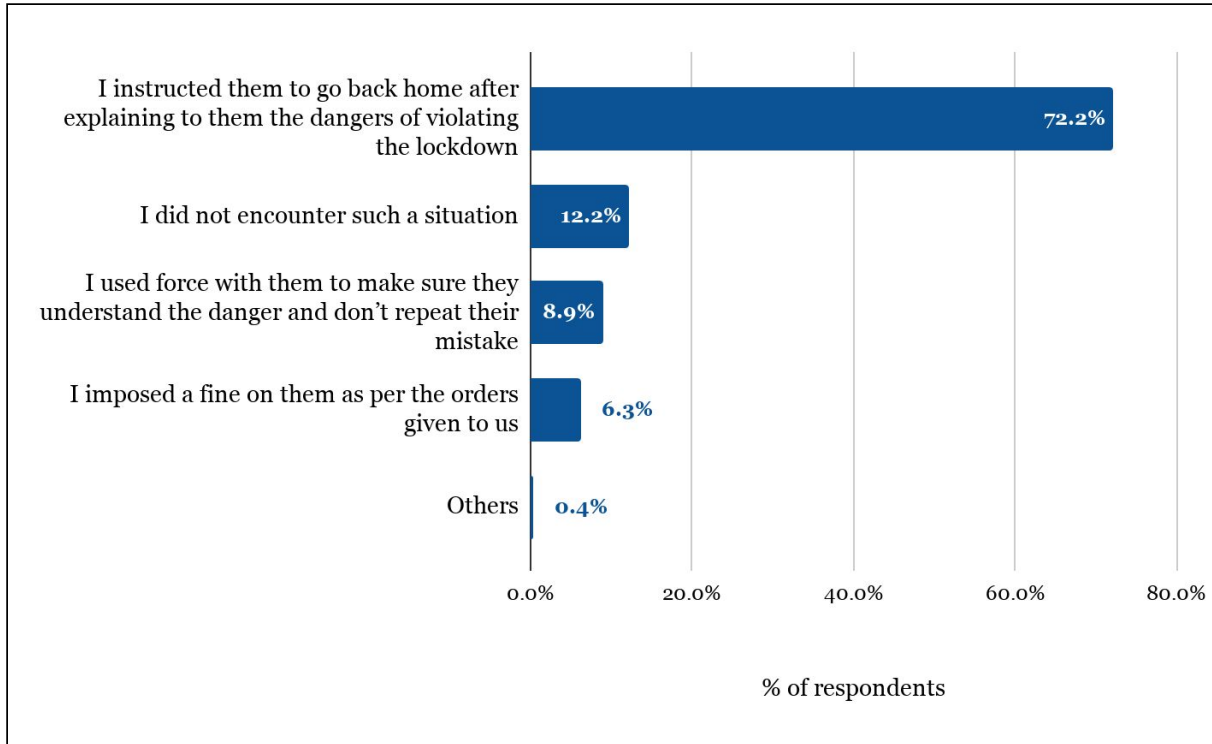


Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

The results indicate a balance between constables who enjoyed some degree of autonomy (47%) and those who worked strictly according to orders (52%). The degree of autonomy varied from complete freedom (~17%) to some degree of freedom (~31%) where constables kept orders in mind but made customisations wherever necessary.

II. How did you manage situations where citizens violated the lockdown curfews?

Figure 20: Managing of duties



Source: Primary survey. Sample size is 762.

Almost three-fourth of constables managed the situation by instructing citizens to go back home after explaining the dangers of violating the lockdown. The remaining quarter indicated that they did not encounter such situations (12%), resorted to the use of force (9%), and imposed a fine as per orders (6%). The use of force by police across the world to enforce lockdowns has received substantive criticism. The findings of this study with regard to the use of force must be read with three caveats. First, the survey was administered three to four months after the initial lockdowns in March and April 2020. Therefore, the use of force prior to the survey period cannot be ascertained or generalised. Second, the results may be indicative of the service reorientation after the initial strict lockdown period ended. There is a likelihood of a shift in the organisational norms towards helping the vulnerable, feeding the poor and desolate, supporting medical personnel, and providing essential supplies. Lastly, the possibility of social desirability bias in the constables' response may not be ruled out in the case of use of force.



Conclusion and Policy Implications

The COVID-19 crisis has widened the police's role to include duties beyond their core policing functions. About three-quarters of the surveyed constables felt a sense of public service while in the field. The survey also suggested good two-way flow of communication between seniors and constables and between peers, as opposed to the usual criticism of broken communications channels. This could have contributed to the increase in camaraderie and intrinsic motivation during the pandemic. A study by Collins (2007) shows that positive emotions amidst negative events are important elements for the psychological resilience and coping of social workers. This notion can be extended to the current situation involving the police constables as well. According to Collins, there are three kinds of positive emotions: a positive reappraisal, goal-directed/problem-focused work and the infusion of ordinary events with meaning. Positive reappraisal involves appraising a difficult situation positively. A goal-oriented approach focuses on people's attention and encourages feelings of effectiveness and control. Meaning focuses on finding redeeming elements in a stressful situation. These characteristics are observed in the results of this survey as well. However, given the limitations, follow-up studies are needed to test the hypothesis.

Internal communications, motivation, and a sense of agency are critical ingredients in the functioning of any public institution in ordinary as well as extraordinary times. This survey aimed to assess these and identify gaps which could be addressed in an informed fashion. The survey results are encouraging on most fronts and identify areas of improvement. However, given that the sample was non-random and non-representative, the results cannot be generalized for the state police and must be read only at the sample level.

The policy implications based on this survey outline that:

- The respondents' inbuilt sense of duty and service towards the distressed and under challenging circumstances demonstrated that the intrinsic motivation to serve exists. The police organisation must know how and when to utilise this institutional capital. This must be seen as an asset which should be appropriately utilised as a resource for building state capacity to serve the public in times of crisis.
- The vertical and horizontal channels of communication were operational during high stress situations. The use of internet and technology seems to have enabled and catalysed the effectiveness and clarity in communication. This is an asset for optimising police capacity to serve and deliver under trying circumstances.
- The job-role identification to serve the needy and distressed existed amongst the surveyed street level police service providers. This sense of duty at the individual level should be institutionalised as a job requirement to foster a service oriented organisational culture. There is merit in giving credence to the welfare administration role of the police and normalising it in a wider planning and policy context.
- There is also a wider role in welfare administration which the police plays at an inter agency level. This must be accounted for while planning and providing for public welfare at scale and must be recognised in policy mandates.



Appendix

I. District-wise Distribution of Respondents

The district-wise breakdown of respondents is presented in the table below.

	District	Number of responses
1	Agar Malwa	12
2	Alirajpur	13
3	Anuppur	13
4	Ashoknagar	14
5	Balaghat	10
6	Barwani	12
7	Betul	16
8	Bhind	10
9	Bhopal	46
10	Burhanpur	5
11	Chhatarpur	34
12	Chhindwara	13
13	Damoh	13
14	Dewas	6
15	Dhar	24
16	Dindori	9
17	Guna	4
18	Gwalior	7
19	Hoshangabad	10
20	Indore	40
21	Jabalpur	29
22	Jhabua	5
23	Katni	1
24	Khandwa	8
25	Khargone	26
26	Mandla	5
27	Mandsaur	10
28	Morena	9
29	NA	1
30	Narsinghpur	35



31	Niwari	2
32	Panna	34
33	Raisen	2
34	Rajgarh	2
35	Ratlam	26
36	Rewa	61
37	Sagar	17
38	Satna	19
39	Sehore	18
40	Seoni	11
41	Shahdol	34
42	Shajapur	35
43	Sheopur	5
44	Shivpuri	3
45	Sidhi	12
46	Singrauli	12
47	Tikamgarh	4
48	Ujjain	6
49	Vidisha	19
		762



II. English Questionnaire

IDFC Institute (Mumbai-based think-tank) wants to understand communication flows within the police hierarchy, the factors motivating frontline police officers to go above and beyond their traditional role—all in the context of COVID-19. Since the outbreak, the only government department with the human resources to enforce policy decisions is the police.

We know that it is you who faces the daily challenges and realities of the operations of the service, and for that reason, your knowledge is very valuable. We recognise the importance of your work and believe that your knowledge and experience can be helpful in generating new ideas to improve communications within the police hierarchy.

For this reason, we invite you to answer this survey. It should not take you longer than 15 minutes. If you are interested, you may provide your contact information. The information that you provide here will not affect your evaluation in any way and your identity will not be revealed. It is our research ethic to not share your name with anybody without your consent.

1. Please provide the following information:
 - a. Age
 - b. Gender
 - c. Duration of service
 - d. District

COVID-19 Duties

2. What are your COVID-19 related duties/activities? [*Select all that apply*]
 - a. Regulating movement and zonal restrictions
 - b. Helping health officials in contact tracing
 - c. Ensuring compliance with compulsory quarantine orders
 - d. Assisting needy people, including poor families, older citizens, disabled persons
 - e. Motivating and entertaining citizens by singing songs/making videos
 - f. Helping in the distribution of essential supplies of food, medicine and other resources
 - g. Attending to distress calls and those affected by COVID-19
 - h. Attending to special crimes such as domestic violence
 - i. Maintaining public order during agitations
 - j. Public education about social distancing, public health and hygiene norms
 - k. Drafting instructions for public order
 - l. No, I didn't undertake any of these activities
 - m. Other (Please specify)

Downward Communication Flows

3. Who provides you with these instructions?
 - a. DSP and upwards
 - b. Inspector
 - c. Sub-inspector



- d. Assistant Sub-inspector
 - e. Head Constable
4. Are your COVID-19 related duties clearly explained to you?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
5. How are the latest orders communicated to you?
- a. WhatsApp message
 - b. Text message (SMS)
 - c. Video Message/Conferencing
 - d. Audio Message/Conferencing
 - e. In-person commands during police station roll calls
 - f. In-person commands at desk of station in charge
 - g. In-person commands at patrol duty points
 - h. In-person commands during supervisor rounds at duty station
 - i. In-person commands at one on one briefings
 - j. Paper order
 - k. Wireless/walkie talkie sets
 - l. Latest orders are not communicated to us
 - m. Other (please specify)
6. How often do debriefs take place?
- a. Daily
 - b. Weekly
 - c. Bi-weekly
 - d. We don't have regular debriefs
 - e. Other (please specify)
7. Which is the most effective means to communicate? [*Select top three options*]
- a. WhatsApp message
 - b. Text message (SMS)
 - c. Video Message/Conferencing
 - d. Audio Message/Conferencing
 - e. In-person commands during police station roll calls
 - f. In-person commands given at desk of station in charge
 - g. In-person commands at patrol duty points
 - h. In-person commands during supervisor rounds at duty station
 - i. In-person commands at one on one briefings
 - j. Paper order
 - k. Wireless/walkie talkie sets
 - l. Other (please specify)

Upward Communication Flows

8. With whom do you communicate any on-ground challenges faced by you?
- a. Peers
 - b. Seniors



- c. No one
- d. I haven't faced any on-ground challenges
- e. Other (please specify)

[If Seniors, proceed to question 8, else to 9]

9. Are your seniors receptive to the challenges faced by you?
- a. They hear me out and take steps to address the challenges
 - b. They hear me out but no steps are taken to address the challenges
 - c. No, they are not receptive
 - d. Other (please specify)
10. With whom do you communicate any suggestions you may have for improving police responses?
- a. Peers
 - b. Seniors
 - c. No one
 - d. I haven't had any suggestions so far for improving police response
 - e. Other (please specify)

[If Seniors, proceed to question 10, else 11]

11. Are your seniors receptive to your suggestions?
- a. They incorporate my suggestions for future responses
 - b. They acknowledge & encourage my suggestions but do not implement them
 - c. They do not have much time to listen to my suggestions
 - d. They are not open to/dismiss my suggestions
 - e. Other (please specify)
12. With whom do you communicate your job related anxieties and worries?
- a. Peers
 - b. Seniors
 - c. No one
 - d. I haven't had any such worries so far
 - e. Other (please specify)

[If Seniors, proceed to question 12, else 13]

13. Are your seniors supportive upon hearing your anxieties?
- a. Yes, they listen carefully and empathise with me
 - b. No, they just dismiss my anxieties
 - c. Other (please specify)
14. What are some of the challenges you face when communicating with seniors? *[Select all that apply]*
- a. We do not want to disturb them because they are very busy
 - b. They are usually displeased or annoyed when you communicate with them
 - c. We do not have time to approach them due to COVID-19 duties



- d. It is not part of the police culture to initiate communication with seniors
- e. There is no dedicated platform/time allocated for communicating with them (like a feedback session)
- f. It's difficult to find occasions where they are alone or not surrounded by others so that we can communicate with ease
- g. Speaking in person is a practical challenge so we have to reach out to them on the phone, WhatsApp or text messages
- h. Other (please specify)

Motivation, Agency and Discretion

15. How is the work done during COVID-19 duties responded to by the department and the seniors? *[Select all that apply]*
- a. They publicly acknowledged our work either during roll calls, at police forums or other platforms
 - b. They give us rewards and appreciation letters
 - c. They give a description of our good work and our names in the press
 - d. They personally thank and appreciate our work
 - e. Such deeds are generally not acknowledged
 - f. We are criticised and scolded if we go out of the way
 - g. It's the public which appreciates and not the department
 - h. Other (Please specify)
16. What motivates you to work hard despite the personal risk involved in performing COVID-19 related activities? *[Select all that apply]*
- a. It's our duty as police officers to serve our citizens in every condition in spite of the risks
 - b. My colleagues and I decided together that we must undertake these activities
 - c. I felt it was the right thing to do as a human being
 - d. Police service trains us to take on any challenge
 - e. Superiors appreciate/give us validation for a job well done
 - f. Orders given by seniors cannot be ignored
 - g. Disobedience would be bad for my job and career
 - h. Fear of punishments including pay cut, inquiries
 - i. Other (Please specify)
17. How would you describe your experience of managing the lockdown?
- a. I worked strictly according to the orders given to me by my seniors
 - b. I kept orders in mind but had to customise them based on the situation on ground
 - c. My colleagues and I had complete freedom to make our own judgements and decisions based on the situation on ground
 - d. Other (Please specify)
18. How did you manage situations where citizens violated the lockdown curfews?
- a. I did not encounter such a situation
 - b. I instructed them to go back home after explaining to them the dangers of violating the lockdown



- c. I used force with them to make sure they understand the danger and don't repeat their mistake
- d. I imposed a fine on them as per the orders given to us
- e. Other (Please specify)



III. Hindi Questionnaire

COVID-19 महामारी प्रकोप के दौरान पुलिस विभाग मानव संसाधन का एकमात्र विभाग है जो की नीतिगत फैसले ले रहा है। अतः आई. डी.एफ.सी इंस्टीट्यूट (मुंबई स्थित थिंक-टैंक) आपसे पुलिस पदाधिकारियों के बीच होने वाले उस संचार प्रवाह को समझाना चाहता है, जो COVID-19 महामारी के दौरान आपको अपनी नियमित जिम्मेदारियों के अलावा भी लोगों की सहायता करने के लिए प्रोत्साहित करती है। हम जानते हैं कि यह आप ही हैं जो संचालन की दैनिक चुनौतियों और वास्तविकताओं का सामना करते हैं और इस कारण से, आपका ज्ञान बहुत मूल्यवान है। हम आपके कार्य के महत्त्व का सम्मान करते हैं। हमें विश्वास है कि पुलिस पदानुक्रम के भीतर संचार को बेहतर बनाने के लिए आपका ज्ञान और अनुभव नए विचारों का सृजन करने में सहायक हो सकते हैं। इस कारण से, हम आपको इस सर्वेक्षण का उत्तर देने के लिए आमंत्रित करते हैं। उत्तर देने के लिए १५ मिनट से अधिक समय नहीं लगेगा। यदि आप रुचि रखते हैं, तो आप अपने संपर्क की जानकारी प्रदान कर सकते हैं। यह आपके मूल्यांकन को प्रभावित नहीं करेगा और आपके पहचान को गोपनीय रखा जाएगा। आपकी सहमती के बिना आपका नाम किसी के साथ साझा न करने की हमारी प्राथमिक और नैतिक जिम्मेदारी है।

1. कृपया निम्नलिखित प्रदान करें :-
 - a. आयु
 - b. लिंग
 - c. सेवा की अवधि
 - d. जिला

COVID-19 के कर्तव्य

2. COVID-19 से संबंधित आपके कर्तव्य / गतिविधियाँ क्या हैं? [उचित उत्तरों का चयनित करें]
 - a. अभियानों और क्षेत्रीय प्रतिबंधों की विनियमन
 - b. कॉन्टेक्ट ट्रेसिंग करने में स्वास्थ्य अधिकारियों की मदद करना
 - c. अनिवार्य संगरोध आदेशों का पालन निश्चित करना
 - d. गरीब परिवारों, वृद्ध नागरिकों, विकलांगों सहित ज़रूरतमंद लोगों की सहायता करना
 - e. गीत गाकर / वीडियो बनाकर नागरिकों को प्रेरित करना और शिक्षा देना
 - f. भोजन, दवा और अन्य संसाधनों की आवश्यक आपूर्ति के वितरण में मदद करना
 - g. संकट कॉल और COVID-19 से प्रभावित लोगों के लिए उपलब्ध / सहायक होना
 - h. घरेलू हिंसा जैसे विशेष अपराधों को संभालना
 - i. आंदोलन के दौरान सार्वजनिक व्यवस्था बनाए रखना
 - j. सामाजिक दूरी, सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य व स्वच्छता मानदंडों पर सार्वजनिक शिक्षा देना
 - k. सार्वजनिक व्यवस्था बनाए रखने के लिए निर्देश तैयार करना
 - l. नहीं, मैंने इनमें से कोई भी गतिविधि नहीं की है
 - m. अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)

निचले स्तर तक संपर्क बनाए रखने में

3. आपको ये निर्देश कौन प्रदान करता है? [उचित उत्तरों का चयनित करें]
 - a. क. डी.एस.पी. और उच्च स्तर से
 - b. ख. निरीक्षक
 - c. ग. सहायक निरीक्षक
 - d. घ. सह उप निरीक्षक
 - e. च. हेड - कांस्टेबल
 - f. अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)
4. क्या आपके COVID-19 संबंधित कर्तव्यों को स्पष्ट रूप से आपको समझाया गया है?
 - a. हाँ
 - b. नहीं



5. आपको नवीनतम आदेश के बारे में कैसे सूचित किया जाता है? [उचित उत्तरों का चयनित करें]
- वाट्सऐप संदेश
 - लिखित संदेश (एस.एम.एस.)
 - वीडियो संदेश / कॉन्फ्रेंसिंग
 - ऑडियो संदेश / कॉन्फ्रेंसिंग
 - पुलिस स्टेशन से रोल कॉल के दौरान पुलिस अधिकारी द्वारा
 - स्वयं थाना प्रभावी द्वारा
 - स्वयं गश्ती / पेट्रोलिंग कर्तव्यों द्वारा
 - स्वयं ड्यूटी स्टेशन पर पर्यवेक्षक के दौर के दौरान
 - स्वयं ब्रीफिंग द्वारा
 - पत्र द्वारा
 - वायरलेस / वॉकी टॉकी सेट
 - नवीनतम आदेश हमें सूचित नहीं किये जाते हैं
 - अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)
6. पुलिस ब्रीफिंग कितनी बार होती है?
- प्रतिदिन
 - साप्ताहिक
 - द्वि साप्ताहिक
 - हम नियमित बैठक नहीं करते
 - अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)
7. नवीनतम आदेश प्राप्त करने का सबसे प्रभावी साधन कौन सा है? [किन्हीं तीन विकल्प को चुनें]
- वाट्सऐप संदेश
 - लिखित संदेश (एस.एम.एस.)
 - वीडियो संदेश / कॉन्फ्रेंसिंग
 - ऑडियो संदेश / कॉन्फ्रेंसिंग
 - पुलिस स्टेशन से रोल कॉल के दौरान पुलिस अधिकारी द्वारा
 - स्वयं थाना प्रभावी द्वारा
 - स्वयं गश्ती / पेट्रोलिंग कर्तव्यों द्वारा
 - स्वयं ड्यूटी स्टेशन पर पर्यवेक्षक के दौर के दौरान
 - स्वयं ब्रीफिंग द्वारा
 - पत्र द्वारा
 - वायरलेस / वॉकी टॉकी सेट
 - अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)

उपरी स्तर तक संपर्क बनाए रखने में

8. जब आप ज़मीनी स्तर के चुनौतियों का सामना करते हैं तो आप उसके बारे में किससे बात करते हैं? [उचित उत्तरों का चयनित करें]
- सहकर्मी के साथ
 - वरिष्ठों के साथ
 - किसी के साथ नहीं
 - मैंने किसी भी ज़मीनी स्तर की चुनौतियों का सामना नहीं किया है
 - अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)
9. आपके चुनौतियों के प्रति क्या आपके वरिष्ठ संवेदनशील हैं?



- a. वे मुझे सुनते हैं और चुनौतियों का सामना करने के लिए कदम उठाते हैं
 - b. वे मुझे सुनते हैं लेकिन चुनौतियों का सामना करने के लिए कोई कदम नहीं उठाते हैं
 - c. नहीं, वे संवेदनशील नहीं हैं
 - d. अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)
10. यदि आपके पास पुलिस गतिविधियों को बेहतर बनाने के लिए कोई सुझाव है, तो आप अपने सुझाव किसके साथ साझा करते हैं? [उचित उत्तरों का चयनित करें]
- a. सहकर्मी के साथ
 - b. वरिष्ठों के साथ
 - c. किसी के साथ नहीं
 - d. पुलिस की प्रतिक्रिया में सुधार के लिए मेरे पास अब तक कोई सुझाव नहीं
 - e. अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)
11. क्या आपके वरिष्ठ आपके सुझाव को सुनते हैं?
- a. वे भविष्य की प्रतिक्रियाओं के लिए मेरे सुझावों को शामिल करते हैं
 - b. वे मेरे सुझावों को सुनते हैं और प्रोत्साहित करते हैं लेकिन उन्हें लागू नहीं करते हैं
 - c. मेरे सुझावों को सुनने के लिए उनके पास ज्यादा समय नहीं होता
 - d. वे मेरे सुझावों को खारिज करते हैं / वे मेरे सुझावों को सुनने के लिए तैयार नहीं होते
 - e. अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)-
12. आप अपनी नौकरी से संबंधित चिंताओं को कार्य स्थल पर किसके साथ साझा करते हैं? [उचित उत्तरों का चयनित करें]
- a. सहकर्मी के साथ
 - b. वरिष्ठ के साथ
 - c. किसी के साथ नहीं
 - d. मुझे अब तक ऐसी कोई चिंता नहीं हुई
 - e. अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)
13. क्या आपके वरिष्ठ आपकी चिंताओं को सुनते हैं?
- a. हां, वे ध्यान से सुनते हैं और मेरे साथ सहानुभूति रखते हैं
 - b. नहीं, वे मेरी चिंताओं को अनसुना कर देते हैं
 - c. अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)-
14. अपने वरिष्ठों के साथ बातचीत करते समय आपको किन किन चुनौतियों का सामना करना पड़ता है? [उचित उत्तरों का चयनित करें]
- a. हम उन्हें परेशान नहीं करना चाहते क्योंकि वे बहुत व्यस्त हैं-
 - b. जब भी हम उनसे बात करते हैं अक्सर वे नाराज़ या अप्रसन्न हो जाते हैं-
 - c. COVID-19 के कर्तव्यों के कारण हमारे पास उनसे सम्पर्क करने का समय नहीं होता है-
 - d. वरिष्ठों के साथ संवाद शुरू करना पुलिस संगठन संस्कृति के नियमों का हिस्सा नहीं है
 - e. उनके साथ वार्तालाप करने का कोई उचित मंच /निर्धारित समय नहीं होता है (जैसे प्रतिक्रिया सत्र)
 - f. उनसे आसानी से बातचीत करने का अवसर खोजना मुश्किल होता है जहाँ वे एकांत में हों।
 - g. व्यावहारिक रूप से व्यक्तिगत संवाद करना संभव नहीं होता है इसलिए हम फोन, व्हाट्सएप या लिखित सन्देश द्वारा बात करते हैं।
 - h. अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)-

प्रेरणा, संस्था और विवेकपूर्ण निर्णय



15. COVID-19 महामारी के दौरान आपके कर्तव्यों की प्रशंसा आपके वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों और विभाग द्वारा किस तरह किया जाता है? [उचित उत्तरों का चयनित करें]
- वे सार्वजनिक रूप से पुलिस मंचों पर, रोल कॉल के दौरान या किसी अन्य मंच पर हमारे कार्यों की प्रशंसा करते हैं
 - हमारे वरिष्ठ अधिकारी हमें पुरस्कृत करते हैं और प्रशंसा पत्र देते हैं
 - प्रेस में हमारे अच्छे काम और हमारे नामों का विवरण होता है
 - वे व्यक्तिगत रूप से हमारे कार्य को सराहते हैं और धन्यवाद करते हैं
 - ऐसे कर्मों को आमतौर पर स्वीकार नहीं किया जाता है
 - मर्यादा से बाहर जाकर काम करने पर हमारी आलोचना और डाँट भी पड़ती है
 - हमारे कार्यों की अपेक्षा जनता सराहना करती है ना की पुलिस विभाग
 - अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)
16. COVID-19 से संबंधित गतिविधियों द्वारा व्यक्तिगत होने वाले जोखिमों को नज़रअंदाज़ करते हुए कड़ी मेहनत करने के लिए आपको निम्नलिखित में से किससे प्रेरणा मिलती है? [उचित उत्तरों का चयनित करें]
- पुलिस अधिकारियों के रूप में यह हमारा कर्तव्य है कि हम हर हालत और जोखिम में अपने नागरिकों की सेवा करें-
 - मैंने और मेरे सहयोगियों ने मिलकर तय किया कि हमें ये गतिविधियाँ करनी चाहिए-
 - मानवता के नाते कार्य करना मेरा कर्तव्य है-
 - पुलिस सेवा हमें किसी भी चुनौती का सामना करने के लिए प्रशिक्षित करती है-
 - वरिष्ठों हमारी सराहना करते हैं और अच्छी तरह से काम करने के लिए हमें मान्यता देते हैं -
 - वरिष्ठों द्वारा दिए गए आदेशों को अनदेखा नहीं किया जा सकता है-
 - कर्तव्यों का अवज्ञा करना मेरी नौकरी और आजीविका के लिए उचित नहीं होगा-
 - पे कट या पूछताछ सहित सजा का डर
 - अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)
17. लॉकडाउन प्रबंधन में हुए अपने अनुभव का वर्णन कैसे करेंगे?
- अपने वरिष्ठों द्वारा दिए गए आदेशों का मैंने सख्ती से पालन किया।
 - मैंने आदेश को अपने दिमाग में रखा लेकिन धरातलीय परिस्थितियों के अनुसार उनमें छोटा मोटा बदलाव करना पड़ा
 - मुझे और मेरे सहयोगियों को निर्णय लेने की पूरी स्वतंत्रता थी और हमने माहौल को समझते और स्थिति के आधार पर निर्णय लिया।
 - अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)
18. नागरिकों द्वारा लॉकडाउन कर्फ्यू के दौरान उत्पन्न उलंगघन में आपने परिस्थितियों को कैसे संभाला ?
- मैंने ऐसी किसी भी स्थिति का सामना नहीं किया
 - लॉकडाउन उल्लंघन के खतरों के बारे में बताते हुए उन्हें घर वापस जाने का निर्देश दिया।
 - वे खतरे को समझें और दोहराएं नहीं यह सुनिश्चित करने के लिए मैंने बल का भी प्रयोग किया।
 - दिए गए आदेशों के अनुसार मैंने उन पर जुर्माना लगाया।
 - अन्य (कृपया और उल्लिखित करें)-



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Source: Office of SO, Jhabua District, Assisting migrants (May 2020)



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