



# COVID19 AND LOCKDOWN: PERCEPTION OF INDIVIDUALS TOWARDS POLICE PERSONNEL IN THIS PANDEMIC

Vajagathali M<sup>1\*</sup>, Balajinarayan B<sup>1</sup>, Devaseelan S<sup>2</sup> and Sudhan M<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Social Work, Roshni Nilaya, Mangalore-575002, India

<sup>2</sup>Department of Forensic Science, Srinivas University, Mangalore-574146, India

**Abstract:** The police force is one of the most essential for this world community. Police officers have been sacrificing their lives for the protection of man since ancient times. Wherever a mistake is made, it will be stopped, and the offender will be punished, and justice will be done to the victim. As time went on, the respect of the people towards the police department increased. However, in today's society, the police department is feared and angered by a few people. This is because people embrace and hate the guards for the mistakes made by a few guards, including the guards who behave well and honestly. The reason for conducting this research is to find out what people think about policing in today's epidemic environment and a consistent explanation for it. This study was conducted among 300 individuals comprising both the genders of Udangudi-Thoothukudi district, Tamilnadu. The questionnaire method was used to collect the response from the individuals, and there were 13 questions, including general information, which the investigator designed. A 'Simple Random Sampling Technique' was used to collect the samples, and the research design employed in this study was a quantitative approach to descriptive design. In examining the information obtained, the people have a reasonable opinion of the police department in this context; they are well aware of the difficulties faced by the police officers and have some expectations among the people.

**Index Terms -** COVID19; pandemic; lockdown; police officers; individuals: police duties: awareness

## I. INTRODUCTION

In India, the modern and professional bureaucracy of police was created by the Indian Council act, which was introduced by the British Government in 1861 and introduced a new cadre of police called Superior Police Service. After India's independence, the legal framework was utterly changed, and under the Indian Constitution Article 312 (2) in part XIV, the modern Indian Police Service was created [1]. Since then, the police force has undergone much development and is considered the basic tribunal for resolving the people's grievances by gaining good faith among the people. Police officers are beneficial not only in India but also in other parts of the world. One of the surveys conducted last year reported that the police force in India was in a struggle and that the Indian police force was losing strength in the world police force. In the same report, they mentioned that Delhi, Kerala, and Maharashtra are the best police states, and Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Chhattisgarh are the weakest police states in India [2]. It has become a typical situation for charges to come against the police department in general. This applies not only to our country but also abroad. In such a situation, they conduct surveys among the people about the police officers in the countries and record the people's opinions on the police officers. In India, College students are not satisfied with the police's performance, but they prefer aggressive and community policing [3]. The opinion about the police among people is constantly changing at various times. Many problems arose between the police and the people during the initial period of the COVID19 spreading. The people put forward various complaints about how the police treat those who violated the government rules. However, shutdowns in the past have now been significantly reduced, and people now understand the situation and are acting on the instructions of the police department [4]. A few people still have a different opinion on the top of the police department; this research was carried out in such a way as to know it [5]. This research can be helpful to know the actual view about the police officers among individuals during this pandemic by the collected information. The study attempts to find out whether the youth have a fantastic perceptive thing about police or not. This study aims to find out the perception of college students towards police, find the awareness about the policing work among college students, and know the problems faced by the public in this pandemic situation by the police officers.

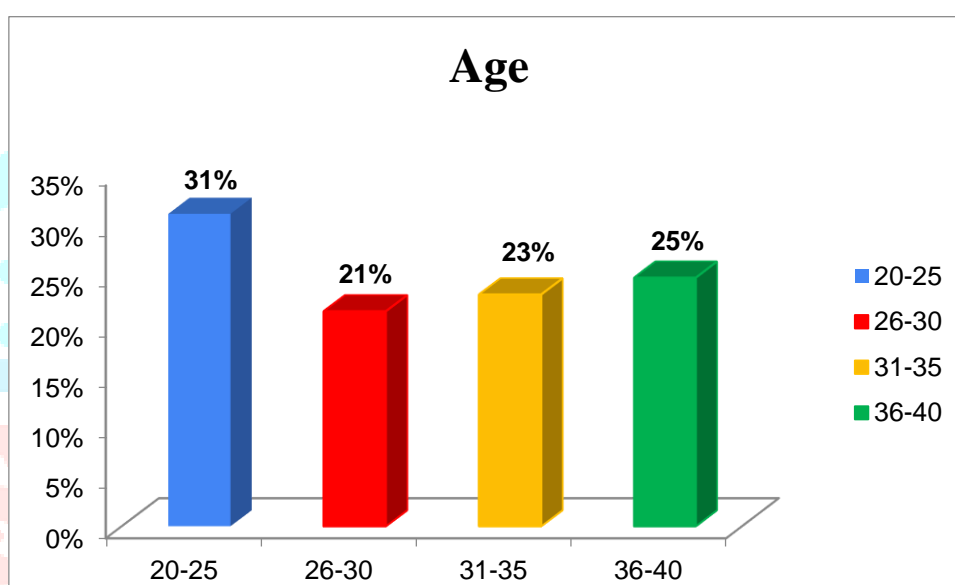
## II. METHODOLOGY

For this study, the individuals of Udangudi-Thoothukudi district in Tamilnadu were taken as the universe, and the investigator has selected randomly 300 individuals from the community comprised of both genders in the district. The sample is selected through the "Simple Random Sampling Technique." The age of the respondents is distributed from 20-40 years and categorized into four groups, i.e., 20-25, 26-30, 31-35, and 36-40. The research design is a quantitative approach to descriptive design structure within the research study is undertaken. In this pandemic situation, the samples were collected from the individuals very safely, and precautionary measures were taken before and after collecting samples. The questionnaire method was used to collect the response from the individuals of the Udangudi-Thoothukudi district, Tamilnadu. There were 13 questions, including general information which was designed by the investigator covering the awareness about the police work, problems faced by the public during this pandemic, problems faced by the police officers during this pandemic, opinion about police officers, and attitudes of police towards the public. First, the respondents were briefed about the aim of this research, and consent was obtained. The self-made questionnaire was administered to them, and the instructions to the participants were given in filling out the same. The questions were asked in English, so we explained them clearly in Tamil to those who did not understand English and got a response from them. For analysis and interpretation, data was organized into tables, charts, and graphs based on the objectives of the study. Data extracted from the survey responses were entered into Microsoft Excel 2010 software for statistical analysis. The data was converted into a frequency table, and the final results were given in the form of a bar graph and pie chart.

## III. RESULTS

### 3.1 General Information

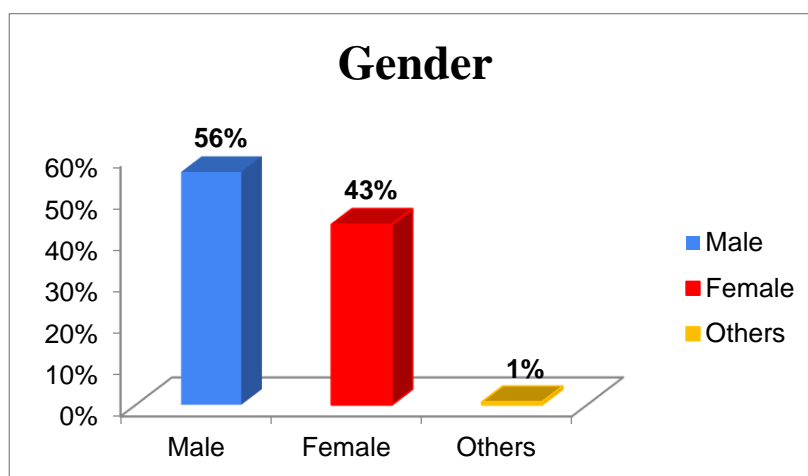
#### 3.1.1 Age of the respondents



**Figure 1.** Number of respondents collected according to age

The above figure shows that the number of respondents according to age, and the researcher has selected age criteria between 20-40 years old and categorized them into four groups, i.e., 20-25, 26-30, 31-35, 36-40. The highest percentage of respondents found between the age of 20-25 is 31%, and the lowest percentage of respondents found between the age of 26-30 is 21%.

#### 3.1.2 Gender



**Figure 2.** Number of respondents according to gender

The above figure depicts the number of respondents collected according to gender, which comprises male, female, and others. The percentage of males, females, and others responded 56%, 43%, and 1%.

3.2 Awareness about the police department

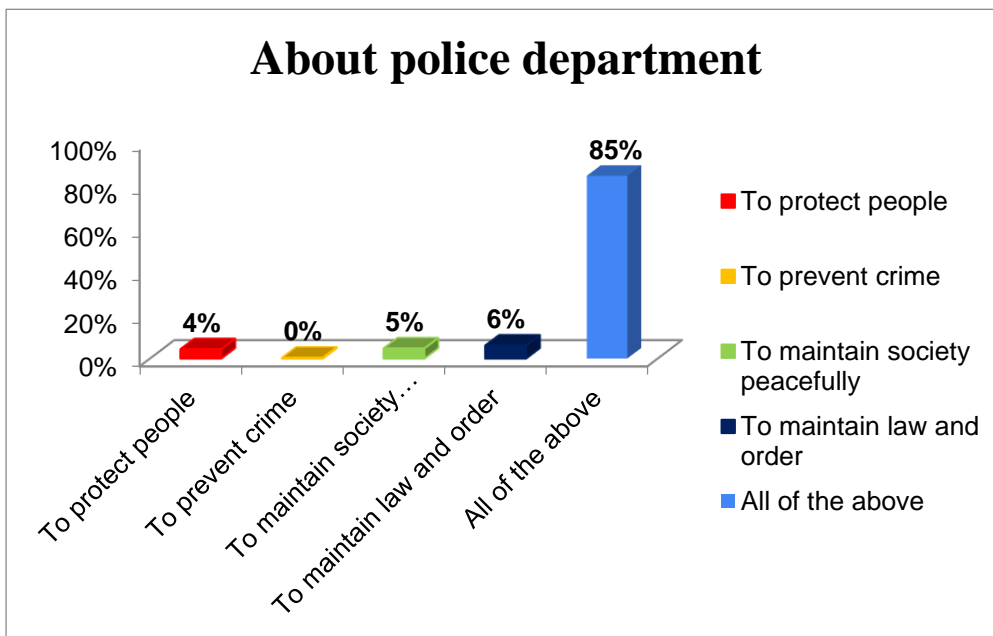


Figure 3. Level of awareness about the police department among individual

The above figure indicates the level of awareness about the police department among individuals and found that most people have conscious about police work and duties. It was found to be 85% of individuals have an awareness of the work and duties of police.

3.3 Problems faced by the public in this pandemic

3.3.1 Following government guidelines in this pandemic

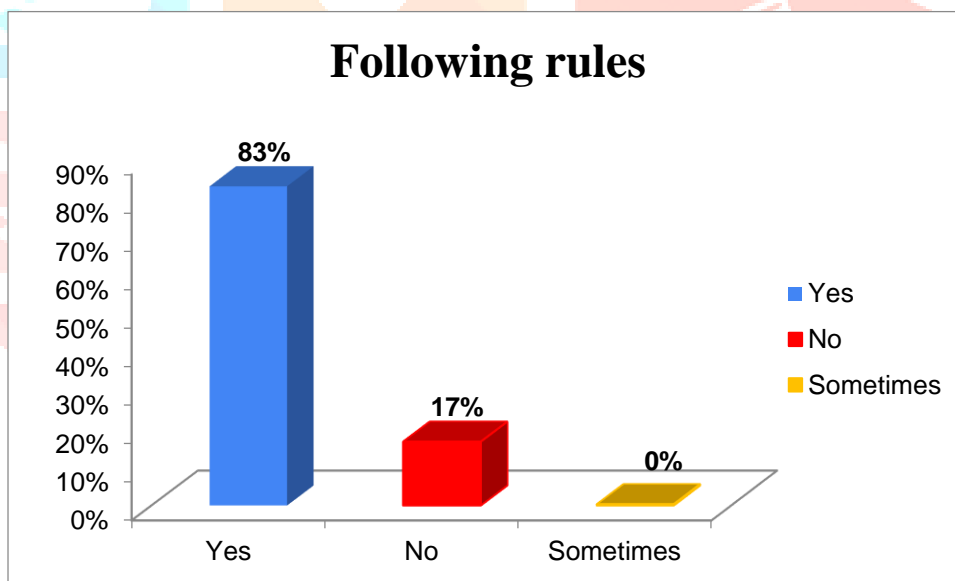


Figure 4. Following rules and regulation in this pandemic

The number of people obeying the rule and following the Government's safety guidelines is shown in figure 4. Based on the data collected, most people, i.e., 83% of individuals, obey the rules and regulations. 17% of people said that they could not be able to follow the instructions due to their job, working schedule, etc.

3.3.2 Punishment for violating rules

In this pandemic, some people can't follow the government rules and regulations due to their job, working conditions, etc. When they are violating the rules, they must face the consequences and punishments. Figure 5 represents the punishments usually given by the police officers during this pandemic when they violate the rules. 32% of people said that the most common punishment given by the police is an immediate fine and 31% of people said that sometimes they forgive and send us without a fine or any other punishment.

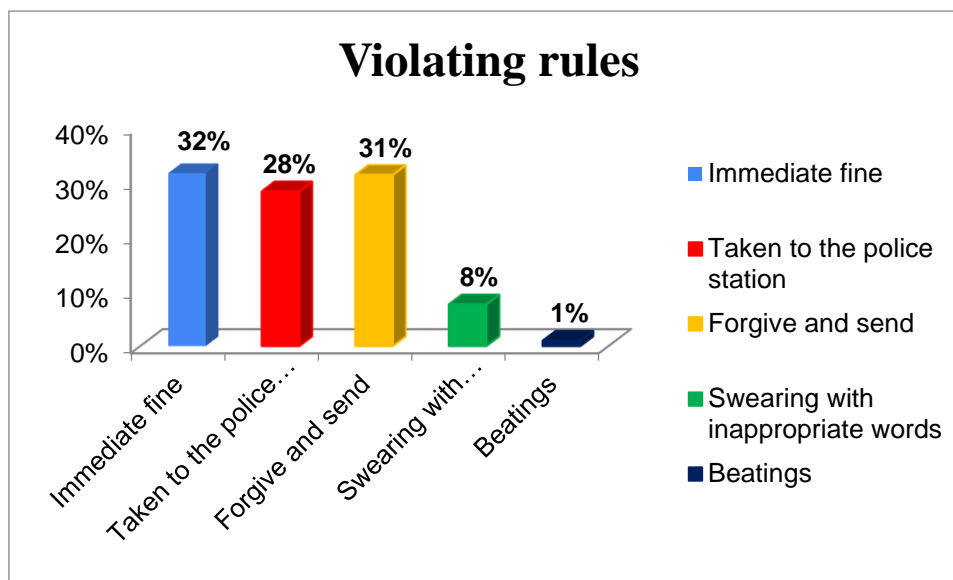


Figure 5. Punishment for violating rules

Based on the response, it was found to be fewer individuals were told that if they violate rules, they will be (28%) taken to the police station or (8%) swearing with inappropriate words or very rarely getting (1%) beatings from police officers.

### 3.3.3 Victim of COVID19

In every place, at least 1 out of 10 individuals were daily affected by COVID19. Figure 6 shows that the hominy individuals and their neighbors are being affected by COVID19. The majority of the individual said that they are not a victim of COVID19, i.e., 74% of people. Those who are affected [26% of people] by COVID19 the researcher asked whether they faced any harassment from the police side during institutional quarantine.

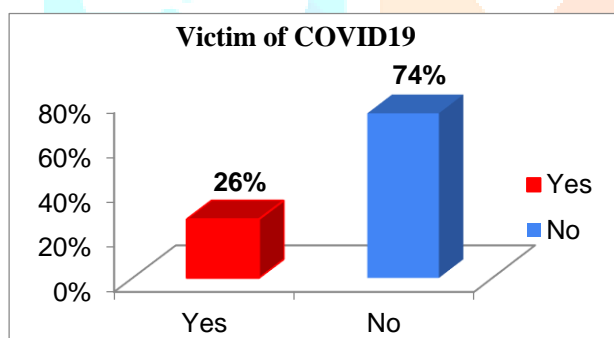


Figure 6. Victim of COVID19

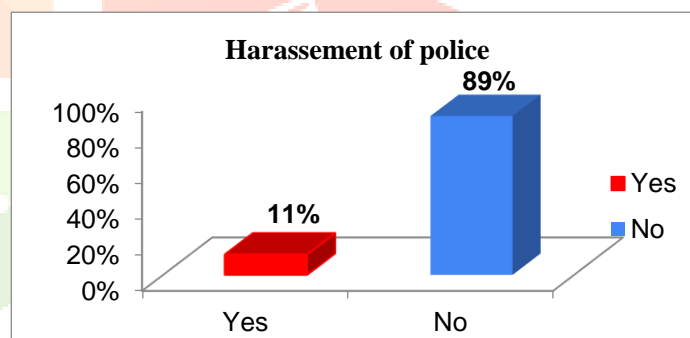


Figure 7. Harassment of police

About 11% of people have been harassed by police officers when they were affected by COVID19, and the majority of the people, i.e., 89%, said that they did not face any difficulties from the police officers when they are in institutional quarantine is shown in figure 7.

### 3.4 Opinion towards police among individuals

The main reason for conducting this research is that there are differences in opinions and problems between the police department and the public in the current situation. In the meanwhile, everyone knows that the biggest problem that happened recently. So if knowing the opinion about the police department among the people, be consistent in solving some problems. In the coming data, the researcher has explained the impression of people towards the police department.

#### 3.4.1 Difficulties faced by police personnel

Figure 8. Difficulties faced by police officers

The above figure represents the difficulties faced by the police personnel during this pandemic, and the individuals have seen the problems handles by the police officers in this pandemic. The difficulties are high risk of getting a virus, overtime duty, emotional detachment from family, pressure from superiors, and all the above. About 76% of people said that police officer face all of these problems during this pandemic situation.

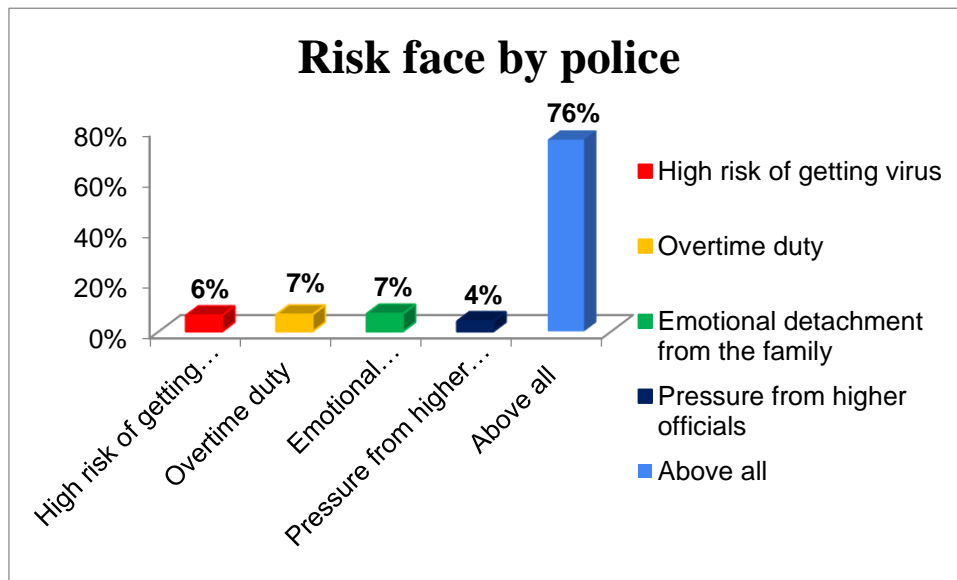


Figure 8. Difficulties faced by police officers

### 3.4.2 Behavior of police

The police officers are working 24X7 to safeguard people and maintain society peacefully. Each police officers showing different behavior to the public. Figure 9 shows that the behavior of police officers in this pandemic situation found that 55% of people said they behave strictly, few of them said that there is no change in the behavior (18%), and they behave very politely (18%).

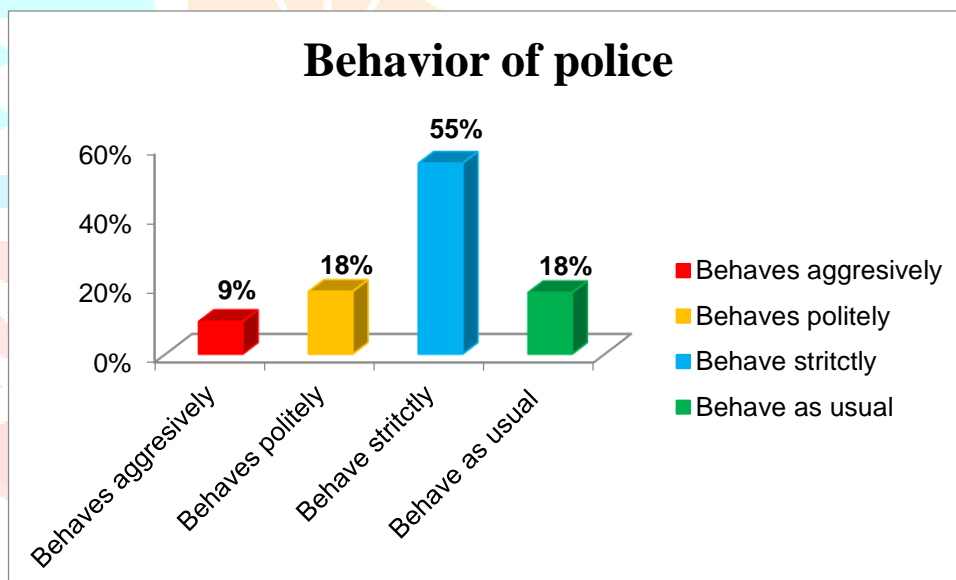


Figure 9. The behavior of police officers in this pandemic

Then there was a question asked about the current behavior of the police officers is suitable for society or not. Figure 10 represents the majority of the individuals (84%) told that police officers are behaving strictly is suitable for the society in this pandemic situation.

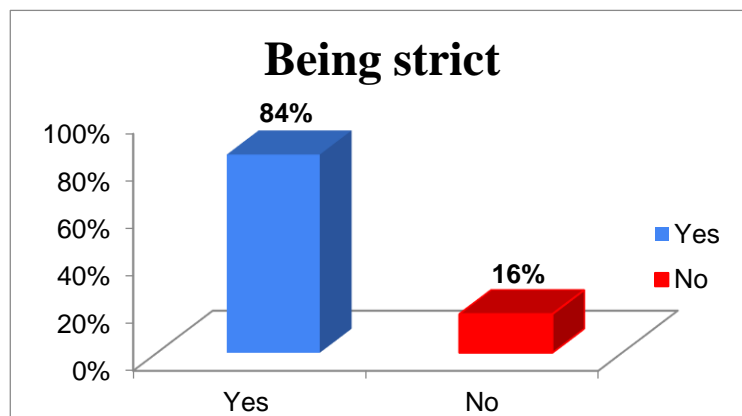


Figure 10. Being strict is correct or not

### 3.4.3 Police officers leave their family and work tirelessly

People are well aware of the work of the police and the hardships they face in this epidemic environment. Because 75% of people said those police officers leave their family and work tirelessly, and few said 21% they may be working far from family.

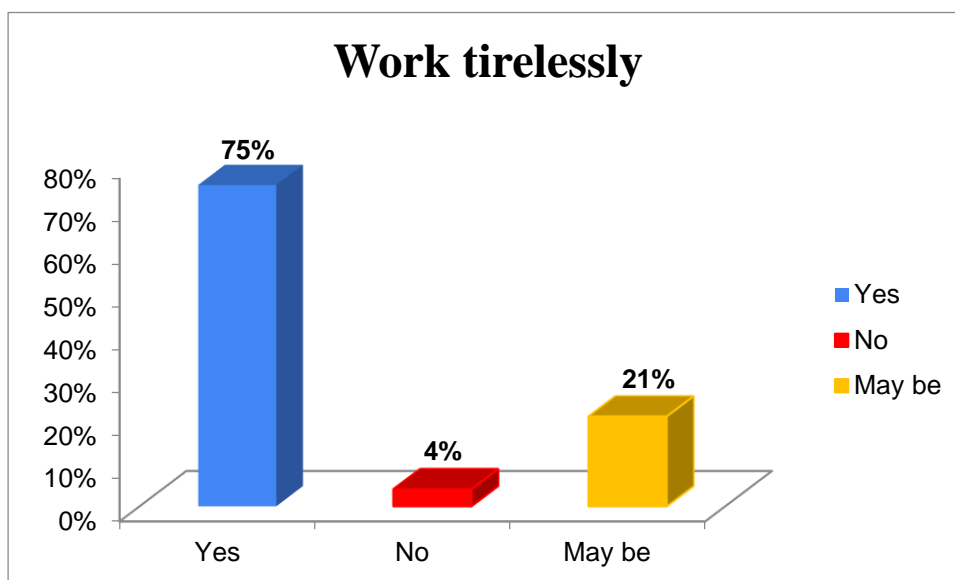


Figure 11. Police leave their family and work tirelessly

### 3.4.4 Police working favour for rich

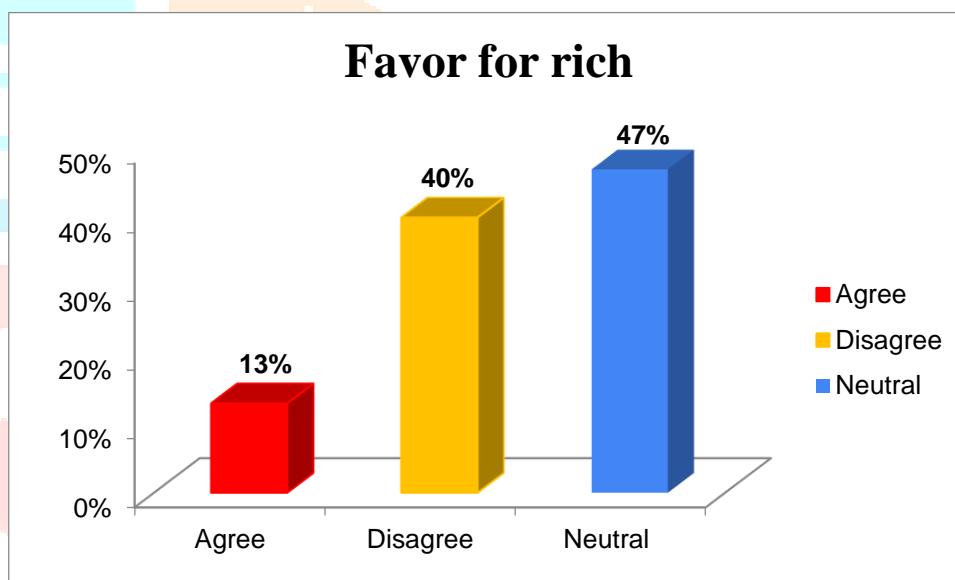


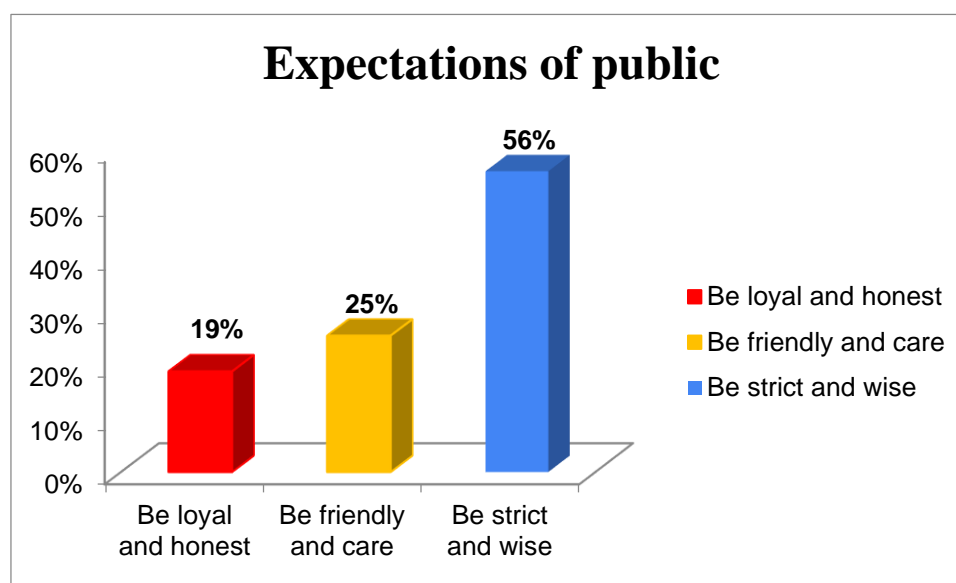
Figure 12. Police officers working favor for rich

There is a perception among the people that the police department usually listens to the rich. To know whether that intention exists among the people in this context, too, a question was asked to the public i.e., is their police working in favor of the rich in this pandemic situation. In that nearly half of the 47% of people said that they are working neutral, 40% of people disagree that they are working for the rich and very few 13% said that they are working for the rich is represented in the above figure.

### 3.5 Expectation from the public towards police behavior

The below figure represents what people expect from the police and how the police should treat people. About 56% of people said that the police officers should be strict and wise, 25% of people expecting the police to behave friendly and caring, and 19% said the police officers should be loyal and honest to the public.





**Figure 13.** The expectation of the public towards police

#### IV. RESULTS

It was found that most people have a conscience about police work, i.e., 85% of individuals have an awareness of the work and duties of police. Based on the data collected, the majority of peoples, i.e., 83% of individuals, obey the rules and regulations. 17% of people said that they could not follow the instructions due to their job, working schedule, etc. Punishments were usually given by the police officers during this pandemic when they are violating the rules. It was found that 32% of people said that the most common punishment given by the police is an immediate fine and 31% of people said that sometimes they forgive and send us without a fine or any other punishment. In collected information, most individuals are not victims of COVID19, i.e., 74% of people. Those who are affected [26% of people] by COVID19, about 11% of people have been harassed by the police officer when they were affected by COVID19, and the majority of the people, i.e., 89%, said that they did not face any difficulties by the police officers. About 76% of people said that the police officers are facing the following difficulties in this pandemic, i.e., high risk of getting a virus, overtime duty, emotional detachment from family, and pressure from superiors. Most commonly, how the police officers are behaving strictly 55% of people said this and a few them said that there is no change in the behavior (18%) and they behave very politely (18%). 75% of people said police officers leave their family and work tirelessly, and a few said 21% they may be working far from family. The expectation of the public towards police is 56% people said that the police officers should be strict and wise, 25% of people expecting the police should behave friendly and caring, and 19% of people said the police officers should be loyal and honest to the public.

#### V. CONCLUSION

In examining the information obtained under the reason for conducting this research, the people have a reasonable opinion of the police department in this context; they are well aware of the difficulties faced by the police officers and have some expectations among the people. So the point of this research is that people are proving through this research that there is no anger or disagreement over the police department and that the police officers are not impaired by shutting down the misconduct of a few police officers.

#### Acknowledgment

It is with absolute pleasure that I record my gratitude to my college School of Social Work, Roshni Nilaya, Mangaluru, and Dr. Saritha D'Souza, Head of the Department, School of Social Work, Roshni Nilaya, Mangaluru, for their counsel and guidance during the preparation of this research and I would also like to thank Mrs. Sofiya Lawrence, Principal, Nagalakshmi Ammal College, Madurai for being supportive and for allowing to conduct this research.

#### Declaration statement

I declare that the manuscript entitled "COVID19 and Lockdown: Perception of Individuals towards Police Personnel in this Pandemic" shall not submit to any other journal or magazine.

#### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict interest to report

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Krishnamurthy, D. S. (2017). Unit-2 Salient Features of the Constitution of India. YOU.
- [2] Lokiniti. (2019). Status Of Policing In India Report 2019-Police Adequacy And Working Conditions. Delhi: Common Cause & Lokniti-Centre for the Study Developing Societies (CSDS).
- [3] Yuning Wu, E. G. (2012). An Exploratory Comparison of Policing Views Between Indian and U.S. College Students. *International Criminal Justice Review*, 68-82.
- [4] Biswas, D. &. (2020). Policing During the Time of Corona: The Indian Context. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*.
- [5] Shahidullah, S. M. (2012). Comparative criminal justice systems: Global and local perspectives. Jones & Bartlett Publishers.