PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE POLICE IN ISTANBUL: ‘INSTRUMENTALIST POLICING’ AND ‘EXPRESSIVE POLICING’ MODELS

Halil Ibrahim Bahar

Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences
Aksaray University
Turkey

hibahar@hotmail.com

December 2016
The IPES Working Paper Series is an open forum for the global community of police experts, researchers, and practitioners provided by the International Police Executive Symposium (IPES). It intends to contribute to worldwide dialogue and information exchange in policing issues by providing an access to publication and the global public sphere to the members of the interested community. In essence, the Working Paper Series is pluralist in outlook. It publishes contributions in all fields of policing, and manuscripts are considered irrespective of their theoretical or methodological approach. The Series welcomes in particular contributions from countries of the South and those countries of the world which have limited access to Western public sphere.

Manuscripts can be sent electronically to the WPS editor, associateproductioneditor@ipes.info.

Content of the paper is copyrighted by the Author. All rights reserved. Short sections of this text, not to exceed two paragraphs, might be quoted without explicit permission provided full credit is given to the source.

The views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the International Police Executive Symposium.
Public confidence in the police in Istanbul: ‘instrumentalist policing’ and ‘expressive policing’ models

Halil Ibrahim Bahar

Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Aksaray University, Turkey

This article debates public confidence in the police in Istanbul using questionnaire data gathered from 2309 households and interviews with experts in the field. The research revealed that, whilst confidence in the police per se is high, satisfaction with services provided by the police is low. This paradoxical situation may be explained in terms of instrumentalist and expressive models of policing. The results indicate that by focusing on crime control the police may seem successful in terms of the instrumentalist model; however, if physical and social disorder are added to crime control as in the expressive model, the police may not be considered effective. The results suggest that participants want the police to play a role in working to eradicate their feelings of insecurity arising from physical and social negativity.

Keywords: expressive policing, instrumentalist policing, Istanbul, police, public confidence

Introduction

The public’s level of confidence in the police is not just based on the performance of the police themselves, but may also be strongly linked to other public bodies. Hence, the level of confidence should be considered in terms of performance indicators for both the police and the political authorities. Significant indicators of community confidence include the level of the police’s democratic accountability and legitimacy. To be effective, policing requires the on-going support, consent and voluntary cooperation of the public. Such public support and cooperation rests upon the police organisation and the power it exercises being perceived as legitimate (Sunshine and Tyler, 2003). Thus, when data shows a low level of confidence, the police leadership and politicians from the ruling party would seem reluctant to share the data; when results are high they rush to publish. Community confidence may be listed in terms of ‘very high’, ‘high’, ‘very low’, or ‘low’, but this is not based on any objective local or universal standards, because such standards do not exist. In terms of the data presented here, it can be said that every effort has been made to consider and comment upon the results from all possible relevant points of view.

1 Author’s e-mail: hibahar@hotmail.com
As in other countries, public confidence in policing has latterly become a major issue in Turkey, alongside one which has been widely debated in the literature in this field. This was particularly noticeable in Turkey during reforms which accompanied the country’s accession process for the European Union, when police accountability and public confidence in the police were placed on the agenda and became subjects for wide debate. At that time concepts of community policing, which had already been implemented in the US and UK, were seen to be of great importance (Mastrofski et al., 2007; Reiner, 2010; Gözübenli, 2016).

Public confidence is complex in its scope and significance. Skogan (2006) measured public confidence using one summary index of public satisfaction with police effectiveness and community engagement. Other work has differentiated between three components of confidence: effectiveness, community engagement and procedural fairness (Sunshine and Tyler, 2003). Bradford et al. developed this idea by treating effectiveness, community engagement and fairness as empirically distinct dimensions of confidence that together underpin overall satisfaction with the police (Bradford et al., 2009).

This article examines the level of public confidence in the police in Istanbul, taking into account many factors and investigating the police-public relationship from a range of perspectives. These include: to what extent the police are actually meeting the people’s security needs; what motivates people to contact the police in the event of any incident; reactions to police attitudes; what is expected of the police; to what degree the police are meeting such expectations. The article also considers the level of information available to the police in the context of any given problem; whether or not the public believe the police actually solve problems relating to security; to what degree the public are satisfied with services provided by the police.

In line with the work of Stanko et al. (2012), this research aimed to move beyond narrow ‘tick-box’ notions of satisfaction. Confidence in the police was not measured by means of a “Do you have confidence in the police?” straightforward question, but was assessed by analysis of figures for police callouts and for information on crime given to the police, across a range of types of crime; reactions to cases in which crimes had been solved also contributed to the measure of public belief in the police. One example of the questions asked of participants was: “If you suddenly felt your safety was threatened who/where would you turn to for help?” High levels of police callouts and of information being given to the police, are indicators of confidence in the police; as is the public’s desire to actually see a police presence in their neighbourhood, whether it be on foot or in vehicles. Not only does such a visible police presence make it easy to contact the police when necessary, people also believe it acts as a deterrent. The public are not at all uncomfortable with a visible police presence; indeed they want high profile policing. It has often been mentioned that policing contains a strong dramatographical element (Manning, 2001) and this study would seem to confirm the importance for the police of a strong, visible presence on the streets coupled with clear provision of information about the work they are doing. It is also vital that police officers exhibit appropriate behaviour and are seen to treat people’s problems seriously (Manning, 2001). Hence, public confidence in the police may rest as much on what the police are seen to be doing, as on what they actually accomplish. Mawby claims that...
In this research, questions designed to reveal the level of public confidence in the police indicated that the level of confidence had fallen. The research found interesting results for police effectiveness in the context of crime prevention. Participants were asked to rate police effectiveness on a scale of 1 to 10 and the mean value was 5.46; similarly they were asked to rate their satisfaction with services received from the police and the mean value was 5.14. These values are low when considered against the figures for the number of police callouts, and those showing the public do believe the police solve crimes. The results of this research show that the public does have confidence in the police; that people do not hesitate to call the police when necessary; and that they believe the police do solve issues arising from crime and security. At the same time, people's level of satisfaction with the police remains around 50%. Why is this level of satisfaction so low? Consideration must also be given to the fact that the measure for the level of satisfaction is very close to that found for the perception of police effectiveness.

Data gathered in this research was generally in line with the results of a similar study carried out across Turkey as a whole by the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV). In TESEV's study it was claimed that the public had a positive view of the police and, when participants were asked to rate confidence in the police on a scale of 1 to 5, the mean value was 3.89. Not only does 3.89 seem a somewhat high value in terms of the scale of 1 to 5, TESEV highlighted this as proof positive and stated that internationally, in countries where there is a high degree of confidence in the police, the value could be 4 or even greater than 4 (Kırmızidağ 2015, p.13). Cao and Burton (2006; p.451) utilised a European and Global Values questionnaire in their work to compare public confidence in, and satisfaction with, the police in Turkey with that of other countries, and comparisons determined that confidence and satisfaction in Turkey were much higher than in the other countries.

Satisfaction with the police per se, and being satisfied with services provided by the police are not the same thing. The former would seem to be a measure of generic police conduct, whilst the latter refers to the actions of the police within much more specific, concrete situations. In this context, when gathering people’s attitudes and thoughts on the police, differences were revealed in the relationship between perceptions and reality. Considering the figures given above, it can be seen that there is a strong relationship between generic confidence in the police and the perception of police conduct; but we also see this confidence is much weaker when applied to the outcome of specific incidents. This difference between perception and reality can be explained as the difference between the public’s expectations of the police and the latter’s actual performance in any given situation. This article will examine such difference, using the data gathered, in the context of the models known as ‘instrumentalist policing’ and ‘expressive policing’ (Baumer, Messner and Rosenfeld, 2003; Stack, Cao and Adamzyck, 2007).
When examining public services from the community’s point of view in the context of the quality of life model, such services have been shown to effect an individual’s perception of his/her quality of life. Many studies have shown that there is a positive relationship between an individual’s satisfaction with the characteristics of the neighborhood in which s/he lives, and their satisfaction with services provided for their safety (Jesilow and Namazzi, 1995, p.68). Hence, those people satisfied with the area in which they reside, should also be satisfied with the police. Another way of looking at this could be that in places with good public services, satisfaction with those services rises, and satisfaction with public services provided by the police should also rise, as they form one part of a range of public services when considered in a holistic fashion.

There are many other studies which show that when individuals do not feel safe in the neighborhood where they live, this has a negative effect on their views of services provided for their safety. Such situations would seem to increase the importance of assessing people’s fear of crime (Wentz and Schlimgen, 2012). Ren et al. (2005, p.61) determined that fear of crime and being a victim of crime have a significant negative effect on levels of satisfaction with security services. More recent studies have shown that individuals, who have previously been victims of crime, go on to have greater fear of crime and possess a concomitant decrease in their level of satisfaction with security services (Uludağ, 2010; Dolu et al., 2010).

There have been empirical studies utilising both macro and micro measurements, which have confirmed that, in comparison to the equivalent in other countries and to other similar bodies within Turkey itself, the Turkish police are well run and have gained both the satisfaction and confidence of the general public (Muş et al., 2014, p.567). It must be borne in mind that, as the level of satisfaction with policing rises, this facilitates an increase in the level of police performance and contributes to their accountability (Zengin and Taşdöğen, 2014; Gözübenli, 2016).

The most striking result of our survey of 3140 households in Istanbul was that, despite confidence in the police per se being high, satisfaction with services provided by the police was low. This article proposes that confidence in the police and satisfaction with the services they provide are not the same thing. The difference may seem paradoxical but can be explained in terms of the instrumentalist and expressive models of policing. The instrumentalist model deems successful policing to comprise a focus on crime control, however, the expressive model claims this is insufficient and issues of social and physical disorder must also be included in the work of the police. This was reflected in the qualitative data gathered in this research, in which participants felt a clear focus on crime control was insufficient, and the police should play a role in addressing issues of physical and social negativity which lead to insecurity within the community.

It could be that the difference seen between satisfaction with the police in general, and satisfaction with specific services provided by the police, can be reduced to an issue of subjective versus objective
viewpoints. To increase confidence in the police, and in the services they provide, would seem to necessitate raising the quality of life in any given neighborhood: imposing new templates for community living and strengthening ties to the community. To achieve this requires the adoption of a ‘whole policing’ approach for which much responsibility would lie with local and central leadership.

**Methodology**

Data presented in this article was collected by the International Strategic Research Organization as part of the four year, 2008–2012, Istanbul Urban Safety Project. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the study. Quantitative methods included a questionnaire survey and analysis of secondary data. With regard to the qualitative dimension of the research, semi-structured, open-ended interviews took place with a number of senior officials involved in urban safety in Istanbul. Almost 100 such interviews were carried out with Istanbul MPs, neighborhood leaders, representatives of the Governor’s office, senior personnel in Istanbul city-wide and district education authorities, officials from the police and judiciary, academics from Istanbul-based universities, leaders of primary and secondary schools, private citizens and representatives of the chambers of commerce and manufacture. This stage was seen as the establishment of relationships between a wide range of stakeholders in urban safety in Istanbul, together with the facilitation of dialogue and coordination between public and private organizations.

**Sampling**

In terms of the questionnaire survey, the sample was prepared using baseline data from the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) and it was planned to apply multi-level, stratified group techniques. However, it transpired that this would necessitate extremely large samples, the administration and management of which would have been beyond the scope of the project, hence the decision was taken to utilize probability sampling. Random sampling was deemed inappropriate for a city the size of Istanbul in which each district and neighbourhood may contain a wide range of social and physical conditions. In the event, baseline data led to a representative sample of 3140 households.

Following the pilot exercise, 3140 questionnaires were distributed to households of which 2309 (73.5%) were returned with all questions answered, save for some gaps in the optional personal details. The 2309 household participants can be broken down into 1315 females and 994 males aged between 18 and 65 (X = 38.35; SS = 10.7). Of these participants some 1659 (72.8%) identified as married and 484 (21.2%) were single; levels of education in this sample ranged from primary school or lower 450 (19.7%); middle school completed 580 (25.4%); finished high school 891 (39.1%); and 358 (15.7%) were university graduates. Some 1187 (52%) of the participants claimed to be unemployed.

**Data collection instrument**
The questionnaire made use of demographic variables alongside questions directly related to the subjects under consideration. These questions were designed by research staff within the Istanbul Urban Safety Project following a broad search of the available literature. Participants were requested to provide their gender, age, level of education, occupation and marital status. Specific questions related to policing were: “If you suddenly feel your safety is threatened who is the first person you turn to? At any time in your life have you encountered a situation about which you felt the police must be informed? If you answered ‘Yes’ did you inform them? If the police want detailed personal information when you are informing them what would you do? How would you expect the police to behave when dealing with an individual not suspected of a crime? How would you expect the police to behave when dealing with someone suspected of a crime? What must the police do to make you feel safe? Do you think the police are aware of the causes of crime in your neighborhood? Can the police solve problems relating to your safety?” Data was analysed using SPSS data analysis software.

Data findings and analysis

Table 1: Police and safety needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you suddenly feel your safety is threatened who is the first person you turn to?</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>65.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close friends/friends</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My immediate family</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other relatives</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Giving information to the police

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
At any time in your life have you encountered a situation about which you felt the police must be informed?  
18.6%  81.4%

If you answered ‘Yes’ did you inform them?  
89.9%  10.1%

Table 3: Conduct during the informing process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If the police want detailed personal information when you are informing them what would you do?</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would change my mind about informing</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apart from my name and surname, I would not give them any other personal information</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would give them detailed personal information</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would give false information</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would just inform them about the crime, would not even give my name</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: General behaviour expected of the police

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you expect the police to behave when dealing with an individual not suspected of a crime?</th>
<th>Hard, authoritarian</th>
<th>Official, detached</th>
<th>Friendly, helpful</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>63.7%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you expect the police to behave when dealing with someone suspected of a crime?</th>
<th>Hard, authoritarian</th>
<th>Official, detached</th>
<th>Friendly, helpful</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>61.7%</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Services expected from the police in terms of personal safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What must the police do to make you feel safe?</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There should be more uniformed police on foot patrol</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There should be more police patrolling in cars and on motorbikes</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police should actually visit the site of a crime</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police should take information given to them seriously</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Police awareness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you think the police are aware of the causes of crime in your neighborhood?</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definitely not aware</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not aware</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware</td>
<td>60.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitely aware</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Ability of the police to solve problems related to personal safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Can the police solve problems related to your safety?</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I believe they definitely cannot</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe they cannot</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe they can</td>
<td>71.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe they definitely can</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The question asked in Table 1 was designed to measure general attitudes to personal safety. People’s safety needs can never be finite. We deliberately did not include wording such as ‘if something bad happened to you’ because safety needs, or feeling unsafe, may often not occur as a result of some concrete situation. People may feel insecure without any apparent specific cause. In the event, 65.5% of respondents would turn to the police if they felt unsafe, placing the police at the head of the list of possible choices.

Looking at Table 2, it can be seen that the vast majority of people who had encountered an incident about which the police should be informed, had passed on the information. Table 3 would seem to provide further confirmation of the public’s willingness to provide information to the police, with a high number being prepared to give detailed personal information alongside information pertaining to a crime.

Table 4 shows the public would like to be treated in a friendly, helpful fashion by the police, save for cases in which the person being dealt with is suspected of a crime, when participants want the police to be hard and authoritarian. Skogan (2006) recorded the need for victims to be treated helpfully by police who are willing to listen and show concern. Furthermore, his work showed the attitude of police when dealing with victims, which can be termed ‘the process’ is seen to be more important than any ‘outcome’ such as catching the perpetrator of a crime or recovering stolen goods (Skogan, 2006, p.104).

In Table 5, we are see the strikingly high number of participants who would like to see more police on the streets, whether on foot or in vehicles, as a means to make them feel safe. Table 7 reveals that no less than 77.8% of participants, an extremely high figure, believed the police can solve crimes. The questions featured in Tables 1-7 were designed to measure confidence in the police. A straightforward question on whether or not you have confidence in the police, merely paves the way for debate. By ascertaining to what extent participants would give information to the police, whether or not the police would be their first port of call when a need arises, if they would like to see more police on the streets, if they have ever been privy to information that could be useful to the police and whether or not they believe the police can solve crimes, a set of criteria for measuring confidence in the police has been established. This research showed the strong relationship between communicating with the police and actually giving them information pertaining to crimes. It revealed the need for more high profile policing. It demonstrated that participants not only believed the police were aware of the causes of crime in their neighborhood, but also that they had confidence in the police’s ability to resolve such issues.

Considering the 81.4% of people in Table 2 who claimed to have never encountered a situation worthy of police involvement, along with the 77.8% of respondents who believed the police can solve crimes, would seem to support the numerous studies that have shown the police are rated more highly by
individuals who had no contact with them in the previous year than those who had had such contact (Bradford et al., 2009, p.20).

It can be said that consideration of related responses to all the questions displayed in Tables 1-7 reveals a high level of confidence in the police. In addition, there would seem to be a benefit to not relying solely on crime statistics, whether they have fallen or risen, and the possible impact of arresting perpetrators, when measuring satisfaction with services provided by the police. Criteria based on procedural equity and/or police attitudes, judicial outcomes and/or the distribution of services, working within the law and shared common values, should all be part of the process (Kırmızidağ, 2015, p.14).

The questionnaire also included a question on whether or not participants felt the police were effective in terms of crime prevention, to which responders were asked to rate police effectiveness on a scale of 1 to 10. Results gave a mean of 5.46 with standard deviation of 1.7. This reveals yet one more indicator of the level of satisfaction with police services in Istanbul.

Participants in the interviews carried out within this study, mentioned the important role played by informal audit mechanisms in the evolution of public attitudes towards the police. They emphasized the importance of the physical environment, together with physical and psychological security within a social context, stating that any weakening of the social fabric in a neighborhood will also lead to anxiety within the community. This would seem to place perceptions of security on the anxiety agenda, and add another dimension to the debate on personal and physical safety.

Indeed, personal safety should be considered in both narrow and broad terms, with the two being both different and complementary. Anxieties related to public order and crime would lie within the narrow concept of personal safety; with the broader view including social stability and, as stated by our interview participants, the preservation of community values and maintenance of informal community audit mechanisms. Furthermore, the broader view also encompasses situations in which people will avoid certain places at specific times of day due to their worries over safety, patterns of social interaction become limited and individuals actively avoid communicating with strangers.

The community has different expectations of the police. The formation of their expectations is affected by the nature of the actual community, the socio-economic peculiarities of the area, the crime rate and so on. It would seem that the issue of integrating the police into the community, changing the role of the police from one of mere crime control to a much broader profile which includes a social dimension, has begun to be debated. Loader (1997) highlighted that the establishment of a unified national police force was symbolic of intensification in this context. This
would also lead to changes in the community’s expectations of the police and an increase in indicators of societal change and diversity.

In measuring public confidence in the police, as previously noted, two different models of policing were employed: Firstly, the instrumentalist model of policing, with the second one being the expressive model (Baumer, Messner and Rosenfeld, 2003; Stack, Cao and Adamczyck, 2007). The instrumentalist model confines policing to the fight against crime; the expressive model broadens their role to include social control and the extent to which this can be achieved by police integration into the community (Freiberg, 2001; Jackson, 2004). In the much broader view of the expressive model, police effectiveness is defined by the level of social order and integration into the community. This approach does not limit the role of the police to that of merely fighting crime. Instead, the police must also work to preserve social values and strive to establish themselves as an integral part of the community. It would appear that alongside their traditional obligations, the police need to also undertake a more symbolic role. The latter would involve the police in representing social values, norms, social integration and alienation; alongside performing their functional duties, they would give equal weight to this more representative role. Evaluation of the police would cover their existing instrumentalist role in fighting crime, together with their representative role in the establishment and preservation of social values according to the expressive model.

When examining anxieties related to confidence in the police and fear of crime, consideration should also be given to social conditions (Jackson and Sunshine, 2007). In their research, it emerged that the community expect the police to preserve social order. Indeed, the police were seen as a representative prototype of basic social norms. When such norms and values were weakened, it was seen as the responsibility of the police to return norms and values to their previous condition (Sunshine and Tyler, 2003). In the interviews conducted for this research, an important point was made which echoed the findings of Sunshine and Tyler (2003), namely that the police are seen as both a symbolic and practical vehicle for the re-establishment of social order in cases where it has become degraded. Furthermore, the interviewees also stated that fear of crime should be included in this context, as it is actually related more to social order, courtesy, trust and social stability than to any actual real fear of becoming a victim of crime. Participants pointed out that when fear of crime is more prevalent, there is an increase in belief that informal social control is weak, which leads to dissatisfaction with, and a reduction of confidence in, the police.

The qualitative results in this research highlight the fact that one of the main sources of criticism of the police arises from problems of social disorder. As was determined by Garland (2001), and reiterated by our interviewees, people’s anxieties over risk and crime, disorder in a particular neighborhood or generic negativity over social disorder, are seen by the community to be the responsibility of the police, even when that is clearly not the case. When disorder is observed in any one place or region, it is seen as evidence of police ineffectiveness. As has been shown in other studies, social disorder leads to a lowering of confidence in the police. Social complexities lead to a weakening of local norms, formal and informal rules and regulations, and to a breaking down of the social fabric.
In this situation the public seek an authority to re-establish and strengthen traditional norms. That authority is the police (Jackson and Sunshine, 2007). The public's view of security and policing is broad and profound (Loader and Walker, 2007). It has been claimed that, from the public’s point of view, social and economic issues, together with the fear of crime, have an equivalent effect on confidence in the police as that borne by matters directly related to crime (Loader and Walker, 2007).

The ‘broken windows’ theory posits that, if the smallest signs of disorder are not rectified, this will lead to greater disorder and crime (Wilson and Kelling, 1982). Accordingly the public expects the police not only focus on crime and victimization, but also to play an effective role in all forms of social disorder. Hence, in addition to the instrumentalist and expressive approaches, consideration should be given to an ‘accountability model’ for policing, which requires the police to be seen as a vehicle for social control. In this context the police are a body which is obligated to respond to all requests and endeavour to carry them out (Skogan, 2009).

As we have previously stated, for the police to be successful and to maintain social order, there must be involvement from other bodies outside the police. It can be said that, in the maintenance of social order, economic policy and the culture of the community have an important role to play. Indeed, social order can only be maintained if the necessary policies to ensure successful policing are in place, if informal social control is functioning properly and if other parties are willing to work in partnership (Reiner 2010). Qualitative data from police participating in this study shows the importance of practices to deter criminals undertaken by other public bodies in locations such as parks, gardens and bus stops, where people congregate at certain times of the day. The same participants also noted that to increase public confidence in policing, the police must maintain a highly visible presence.

In Turkey it would seem responsibility for dealing with all the problems of crime and victimization across all sections of society, rests with the police. Data gathered in Istanbul served to reinforce this view. Furthermore, expectations of the police are very diverse. It can be said that social institutions concerned with the economy, politics, law, education and the family, are not currently fulfilling their responsibilities in terms of addressing the causes of crime and taking appropriate preventative measures. Conditions which give rise to crime and its commission can only be addressed if a multi-agency approach is adopted. Such a multi-agency approach would involve public institutions and bodies, other than the police, in envisioning a process for social control. Such a framework may even make progress toward some resolution of the causes of crime. Indeed, if other institutions take on such responsibilities it should lead to an increase in satisfaction with the services provided by the police.

**Conclusion**

This research has shown that the general public have confidence in the police and do not hesitate to turn to the police when necessary. For example, ninety percent of participants said they would contact the police if they found themselves in trouble, or if they were aware of an incident in which they felt the police should be involved. Furthermore, the vast majority stated they felt the police were aware of problems in their neighborhood and had the ability to solve those problems. All of which indicates
a high level of confidence in the police. At the same time, when the results for generic police achievement and satisfaction with the police are considered, it is striking that the figures fall to around 50%. This situation would seem to indicate that, whilst people have a high measure of confidence in the police and public authority per se, it cannot be said that the same high measures extend to people’s views of the success of police work and their satisfaction with the police. This could be based upon the vacuum between perception and reality, which can only be filled if the public’s expectations of the police become more realistic; and the police work to meet those expectations effectively.

As mentioned above, data generated from this research on confidence in the police in Istanbul was generally in line with results found in TESEV’s survey of confidence in the police across the whole of Turkey (Kırmızıdağ, 2015, p.13). TESEV’s results demonstrated that people did not hesitate to call out the police when necessary, they were keen to bear witness or to share information with the police; in other words, the community was happy to work in partnership with the police. Indeed, results in this context produced higher values than those for simple confidence in the police. Kırmızıdağ went on to point out that, even when the community has little faith in the police, they were still content to work openly in partnership with the police. Such partnership working may be impossible in countries like those of Scandinavia where the public would seem to have little or no confidence in the police, whilst in Turkey it would seem that whether or not people have confidence in their police forces, there is still a tendency towards working with them (Kırmızıdağ, 2015).

In terms of what constitutes public attitudes towards the police, it would seem prudent to consider different viewpoints. According to one point of view, social order and symbols of that order are more influential in forming public attitudes than anxieties about security and crime. What appears to be most important to people is the idea that the police understand, share and act upon people’s concerns, and that the police motivation for acting is seen to be right: whether this action is on behalf of the people or in ways that may curtail or even remove their freedom. This social alignment seems to be founded upon public assessment of the police to be a ‘civic guardian’ which secures public respect and embodies community values (Loader and Mulcahy, 2003; in Stanko et al., 2012). Another important matter in the formulation of such attitudes is the extent to which the public see the police as legitimate. There would seem to be a direct correlation between viewing the police as legitimate and having confidence in the police. As well as undertaking crime control, there is a desire to see police involvement in establishing social stability and a moral order. Such a role would involve the police in work outside their normal duties and in areas within which they do not have direct responsibility. It should be borne in mind that, when the police engage in matters for which they have little or no liability, they are seen to be very successful. This concept was deemed a paradox by Reiner (Reiner, 2010).

The police in Turkey have seemingly reached an important stage with regard to the recording of crime (Bahar and Fert, 2008, p.103). However, it would also seem that research into victimization and confidence in the police is insufficient. The results of this study indicate that the public’s view of police success, together with its confidence in the police, is based upon three main factors. The first of these is the extent to which an individual feels him/herself to be safe. In this context matters which can be deemed environmental issues: the extent to which the neighborhood where an individual lives is run down, whether or not there is a high incidence of street crime in the area; must be taken into account
as they can have a negative impact on views of police success and confidence in the police. The second factor is the media’s practice of mystifying crime and presenting the police in a negative manner. The third and final element is the degree to which the police are seen to be effective, both in the local neighborhood and at the actual occurrence of any incident.

From data gathered for this research it can be said that the role of the police belongs within a much larger framework, and other bodies with an interest in security should commit to their responsibilities instead of relying on the police. It should be clarified that crime and social disorder are not social constructs, but arise from factors peculiar to the individual, a concept that is widely accepted within the community. If problems rooted in the social fabric are removed from the equation, it can be seen that they had the effect of increasing expectations of the police.

When this issue of impossible expectations was addressed with participants in the interviews, it emerged that the police were seen to be responsible for issues that had nothing to do with actual policing, but clearly lay within the field of social disorder. The police were held accountable for situations such as: when rubbish had not been collected; graffiti appeared on walls; dereliction beginning to spread within a neighborhood; street lighting being deemed insufficient; when people, especially women, felt unsafe in parks and gardens and other parts of the city at specific times of day. Clearly in any matters related to safety, however remote that link may be, the first and only institution that comes to mind is the police. Therefore, it appears that the community must have a perception of confidence in the police. However, the level of this confidence cannot be raised solely through efforts made by the police. According to data from the interviews, satisfaction with services provided by the police will only increase when local leaders focus upon work to eradicate factors that lead to crime and social disorder, and all institutions at both a local and central level function effectively in the context of ensuring public safety.

Participants in the interviews claimed that structural improvements in neighborhoods would lead to a higher quality of life and establish a strong social and urban identity that, in turn, would result in a rise in perceptions of security. Hence, for the city of Istanbul, the police cannot be designated as the only actor held responsible for urban security. Policing policies based solely on prevention and deterrents will never succeed in establishing a secure environment. To do this requires comprehensive, macro policies with all relevant actors working in partnership. Furthermore, it can be said that institutions other than the police would not seem to currently have the necessary knowledge or experience to be able to ensure security, share responsibility or work effectively together in partnership.

Urban planning, however, must not be based purely on measures to prevent crime. Work to make cities safer must be evaluated in the context of urban planning. Alongside consideration of the previously mentioned instrumentalist and expressive models of policing, Istanbul’s city design must
also include two other important approaches. The first of these is the concept of ‘defensible spaces’ which are locations that address the need for physical prevention measures. When incorporated into city planning, such spaces may reduce opportunities for crime and act as a deterrent (Newman, 1972). Secondly, consideration should be given to the concept of ‘new urbanism’ (Talen, 2013). New urbanism aims to give residents ownership of the city, encouraging them to fully utilize its facilities and be immersed in community interaction, to the point where they are aware of socio-economic differences within the community and the disadvantages arising from those differences may, at the very minimum, be reduced. These two approaches must be implemented in tandem which, for Istanbul, would involve residents of the city, institutions, technology and policies. Yet again, as has previously been repeatedly stated, such implementation requires genuine partnership working between all interested parties.

Notes on the Author

Dr. Halil Ibrahim Bahar is a professor of sociology at the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Aksaray University, Turkey. Dr. Bahar graduated from the Police Academy, Faculty of Security Sciences in Ankara. He received his M.A. in 1991 and Ph.D. in 1995 from Leicester University, Department of Criminology, in the UK. From 1995 to 2015, Dr. Bahar taught sociology, sociology of institutions, criminology and victimology at the Police Academy. His research interest includes policing, formal and informal methods of social control, urban security and terrorism.

References


