USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY POLICE PERSONNEL’S: A SURVEY

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ABSTRACT
Security of citizens is utmost important in different communities of a region and this is usually maintained by the police department of the region. It is the duty of police to maintain law and order and prevent crime. With advances in technology, social networks have become very popular. They are being used by different departments as per their requirements. Police department also need to modernise and use social networks to communicate and engage with public. To achieve this every police personnel need to be computer literate. So that they can connect with public within their areas and try to prevent crime. This is a survey based paper in which responses from hundred women police personnel's belonging to different age groups and ranks were recorded and results generated. This survey focused on benefits of using social media by police personnel’s.

Keywords: Social media, police, crime, whatsapp, eve teasing

INTRODUCTION
Everything has two sides positive or negative. If used in right direction can lead to upliftment of individuals, organisations, departments, societies and if used wrongly can become a curse. In today’s age every individual is greatly impacted by social media. So its use can be encouraged for security of citizens and maintaining law and order. Author has reviewed a few literatures on social media and police which clearly encourages usage of social media by police personnel’s and highlights its benefits to citizens and countries. A big number of citizens follow police departments on Twitter and Facebook to obtain real-time crisis updates. For instance, the news of Boston explosions broke on Twitter more than 10 minutes before the national media started reporting about it [1]. Online social networks have become very popular in developing nations like India, so police are exploring their effectiveness as a communication channel to maintain law and order [2]. Police departments in developed nations have made considerable efforts and progress to adopt online social networks. On the other hand developing countries are still acquiring skills to use social networks for policing [3]. Online social media have great abilities to change policing experience, enhance transparency, provide correct and timely information and helps to interact with public [4, 5, 6]. Studies show that online social networks are a credible resource for police forces to reach citizens [7]. A large number of citizens in developed countries post content and follow police departments such as Boston police and UK police. Through social media citizens provide useful content to police like situational information of incident areas, help to identify victims, culprits, missing people, lost or stolen vehicles[8]. Another research shows that citizens use online social networks for public coordination during a crisis situations, researchers have categorized public response and shown different communities which developed during crises on online social networks[9,10]. Many surveys, studies by different authors show us a number of benefits of using social networks by police departments in different countries.

METHODOLOGY AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS
A questionnaire was designed and it was got filled by 100 women police personnel’s which included inspector’s, sub inspector’s, assistant sub inspector’s, head constables and constables. This questionnaire was got filled when they were given computer training. Being computer savvy is today’s need in their profession. Both being computer literate and having access to social media for public dealing will help them to improve and uplift their performance both personally and professionally. The main purpose of conducting this survey was how use of social media by police department can help reduce crime, increase communication with public and easy, fast sharing of information during emergency.

![Figure1: Age Group of Police Women Personnel](image-url)
Figure 1 shows that 78% of women police personnel’s belong to age group between 21-30 years, 6% were from 31-40 years of age, 12% between 41-50 years and 4% were in elderly age group between 51-60 years.

**Figure2: Computer Literacy of Police Women Personnel**
Figure 2 depicted that 80% of police women personnel’s were equipped in using computers and only 20% belonging to higher age groups were not computer literate.

**Figure3: Access of Social Media**
Further figure 3 clearly shows that 86% of police women personnel’s have access to social media and very small number that is 14% did not have access to social networking sites.

**Figure4: Use of social media for my own job as police officer**
Figure 4 shows that 82% of police women personnel’s are using social media for their own job as police officer. 10% are not using social media personally for their job and 8% respondent remain neutral.
**Figure 5: Use of social media by police force**

Figure 5 depicted that 96% of police women personnel's strongly agree that they are using social media for their department. None of the personnel's disagree to it and 4% respondents remain neutral.

**Figure 6: Type of social media used for policing activities**

As social media is used by police department for different policing activities. Figure 6 depicts the percentage of different social networking sites and social apps that are used by police department for carrying out policing activities. Analysis showed that Whatsapp was used maximum by police women personnel's and twitter the least. 92% respondents used Whatsapp, 61% Facebook, 43% Youtube, 23% instagram and 16% twitter.

**Figure 7: Target Audience to be reached through social media**

The graph shows the percentage of the target audience to be reached through the use of social media. 77% of the audience is every citizen, 7% are students, 13% are youngsters, and 3% are senior citizens.
While using social media different audience is targeted by police department. Figure 7 shows that 77% respondents agree that every citizen of India should be targeted, 7% believe that students should be targeted, 13% youngsters and 3% senior citizens.

**Figure 8: Usage of social media by police helps to solve and prevent crime**
Figure 8 shows that usage of social media helps police personnel’s to prevent and solve crime cases. 94% respondents strongly agree and 6% disagree over it.

**Figure 9: Social media a platform to connect and communicate with general public**
Figure 9 shows that 98% of the respondents believe that social media is a strong platform to connect and communicate with general public while only 2% disagree to this fact.

**Figure 10: Social media helps police officials to share information quickly and respond to tips from civilians**

Research Paper
Figure 10 shows that 72% of the respondents agree that social media can be used by police for sharing information quickly and responding to queries from civilians, whereas only 28% disagree to this fact.

Figure 11 depicts that 97% of respondents agree upon that social media can be used by police to help find missing, endangered or distressed people while 3% of respondents disagree over it.

Figure 12 shows that social media can be used by police personnel for different policing activities. Responses show that 78% believe that social media can be used for crime investigation, 24% think for listening or monitoring purposes, 22% for intelligence gathering, 62% think to notify public of crime, 43% to notify public of emergency and 28% for community outreach.

Figure 13: Issues that public can report through social media
Social media is a two way communication platform. If police can use it for policing activities, general public can also use it for reporting certain issues. Figure 13 shows the responses of respondents in reporting different issues on social media. 36% believe that issue like eve teasing can be reported, 66% over traffic problems, 59% think cases on domestic violence can be reported, 38% on child labour and 58% believe different theft incidents can also be reported.

Figure 14: Slow adoption of social media by many police personnel's is due to lack of computer knowledge

Maximum police personnel’s are using social media personally and professionally. For every police personnel to use social media requires that they should be equipped in using computers. So Figure 14 shows that 88% respondents agree to the fact that slow adoption of social media by many police personnel’s is due to lack of computer knowledge, 2% disagree over this fact and 10% respondents reply remain neutral.

Figure 15: Use of inflammatory text by police personnel's on social networks can create problems in their profession

Figure 15 shows that 90% of police women personnel’s agree that if inflammatory text is posted on social networks by police personnel’s can create problems professionally and 10% disagree over it.
RESULT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BENEFITS OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA BY POLICE PERSONNEL’S</th>
<th>AGREE (PERCENTAGE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. IT HELPS TO SOLVE AND PREVENT CRIME</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. IT HELPS TO CONNECT AND COMMUNICATE WITH GENERAL PUBLIC</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. IT CAN BE USED BY POLICE FOR SHARING INFORMATION QUICKLY AND RESPONDING TO QUERIES FROM CIVILIANS</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. IT CAN BE USED BY POLICE TO HELP FIND MISSING, ENDANGERED OR DISTRESSED PEOPLE</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
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<td>5. IT CAN BE USED FOR DIFFERENT POLICING ACTIVITIES</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CRIME INVESTIGATION</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LISTENING/MONITORING</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTELLIGENCE GATHERING</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOTIFY PUBLIC OF CRIME</td>
<td>62%</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOTIFY PUBLIC OF EMERGENCY</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNITY OUTREACH</td>
<td>28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. IT CAN BE USED BY PUBLIC FOR REPORTING CERTAIN ISSUES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVIL TEASING</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRAFFIC PROBLEMS</td>
<td>66%</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOMESTIC VIOLENCE</td>
<td>59%</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHILD LABOUR</td>
<td>59%</td>
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<tr>
<td>THEFT</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1

CONCLUSION

Author conducted a survey of 100 women police personnel’s belonging to different age groups and ranks. 78% of them were in age group from 21-30 years and only 4% were in age group from 51-60 years. 80% of them were computer literate and 86% of them were accessing social media for both personnel and professional reasons. Analysis shows that 82% of them were using social media for their own job as a police officer for enhancing their capabilities at work place. Further 96% of them were using social media for police department. Most widely used social network is whatsapp, 92% respondents were using it, then next was facebook which was accessed by 61% of respondents. Police personnel’s are using social media so that they can target every citizen of the nation, 77% of respondents agreed over it. Table1 clearly illustrates that social networks are helpful to police in solving criminal cases, preventing crime ,for finding missing ,endangered or distressed people, connecting with public, interacting with them, sharing information quickly, responding to different queries of public and to carry out different policing activities. Social media can also be used by public to report their issues online. It is a platform if in coordination with general public used properly without spreading any rumours about incidents and without using any inflammatory text will lead all of us towards a crime free nation.

REFERENCES