



## Policy Provocation – 1

*Evidence Brief for Policy*

# Why Should Indian Police Join Hands With Criminologists?

This evidence brief provides an in-depth analysis of policy options and recommendations

**R Rochin Chandra**

MAY 2019



This evidence brief was prepared by the Center for Criminology & Public Policy, India as part of its Supporting the Use of Research Evidence (SURE) for Policy Initiative.

### Who is this evidence brief for?

Policy-makers, their support staff, and other stakeholders with an interest in the problem addressed by this evidence brief.

### Why was it prepared?

To inform deliberations about policing policies and practices by summarizing the best available evidence about the problem and viable solutions.

### What is an Evidence Brief for Policy?

Evidence brief for policy showcases high-quality, policy-relevant research on issues relating to crime, policing and justice. The views expressed in the evidence brief represent those of the author and not the Center for Criminology & Public Policy, India.

Policy Provocations are available online at [www. http://ccppindia.org/policy-provocations/](http://ccppindia.org/policy-provocations/)

### Share evidence

Send this Policy Provocation to people in your network who might find it relevant.

## About the Author

R Rochin Chandra is Director of the Center for Criminology & Public Policy, India, where he serves as Principal Criminologist. He is also an Assistant Professor of Practice at Janardhan Rai Nagar Rajasthan Vidhyapeeth, Udaipur, Rajasthan. He was formerly working with the Rajasthan Prisons Department as an Adjunct Faculty of Criminology. While there, he was responsible for training and capacity building of prison officials, and reviewing the prison rehabilitation policies. Apart from his stint in public office, he has worked with the International Justice Mission, South Asian Society of Criminology and Victimology, Tata Institute of Social Sciences and UNICEF on key policy issues. An internationally recognized scholar, Rochin's contribution has fetched him a string of awards including the Prestigious 'Outstanding Youth Achievement Award' and 'Stanley. P. Yeldell Academic Excellence Award'. In 2016, he was also conferred with the title of 'Young Change Maker' by Tehelka – an Indian news magazine known for its investigative journalism. Besides claiming top honors, Rochin has authored a number of policy essays, book chapters, research papers and opinion pieces. He is also a member of the editorial board of the International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences, and writes occasional columns for Huffington Post, The Wire, The Guardian, The News Minute and Rajasthan Patrika. He completed his advanced research degree in Criminology from Raksha Shakti University (First Internal Security and Police Science University of India), Ahmedabad and his masters' in Criminology & Criminal Justice from Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India.

## The Center for Criminology & Public Policy, India

The Center for Criminology and Public Policy (CCPP) is an Indian think tank committed to undertaking research, promoting dialogue and debate, and holding policy round tables on critical crime and justice issues. Founded in January 2018, the Center enhances the understanding of costs, benefits and consequences of criminal justice policies among those responsible for governmental actions aimed at preventing crimes, assisting crime victims, and punishing and rehabilitating offenders. A main goal of the Center is to reduce crime and promote justice by increasing the use of criminological research in the formulation of crime and justice policy. Please visit [www.ccppindia.org](http://www.ccppindia.org) for more information.

## Acknowledgements

This evidence brief was prepared with financial support from the Rajasthan Society of Criminology and Victimology (RSCV). The funder did not have a role in drafting, revising or approving the content of the policy provocation.

The author would like to thank the following people for providing him with valuable comments and suggestions: Dr. Hanif Qureshi, IPS, D. Roopa Moudhgil, IPS, Prof. Anthony J. Schembri, Prof. K. Jaishankar, Dr. Syed Umarhathab and Dr. Amit Thakre.

The following people assisted in drafting this brief from an earlier version of the policy provocation: Dr. Sian Lewis, and Andrew and Renata Kaldor.

## Suggested Citation

Chandra, R.R. Why Should Indian Police Join Hands With Criminologists? (Policy Provocation). Udaipur, Rajasthan, India: Center for Criminology & Public Policy, 2019. <http://ccppindia.org/policy-provocations/>

## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	4
<b>1. The Problem</b>	6
1.1. The tunnel-thinking approach continues	6
1.2. Declining effectiveness	6
1.3. Eroding trust	7
<b>2. Analysis and Recommendations</b>	7
2.1 Key recommendations for improving policing services	7
2.1.1 Police-Criminologist research partnerships	7
2.1.2 Benefits of crime data in policing	8
2.1.3 Integration of academic criminologists into police training academy	9
<b>3. Implementation Considerations</b>	10
<b>4. Questions for the Future</b>	14
<b>5. References</b>	15



### Contact Us

Center for Criminology & Public Policy, India  
LG 27, Mangalam Fun Square  
Durga Nursery Road,  
Udaipur - 313001 (Rajasthan)

## Executive Summary

The nature of crime is ever-changing. Consequently, policing and crime reduction strategies must also evolve. With India's modern-day crime profile straining the limited police resources, this evidence brief offers a possible solution: the integration of academic criminologists into the crime fighting operations of the police. It discusses how this model can improve police work and lead to economical, practical and social benefits.

In the West (particularly the US, Australia and the UK) the potential for academic professionals to enhance the capacity of the police is widely recognised, and accordingly police-academic collaboration is well established. These complementary partnerships are embedded and highly valued in forces across these countries. However, in India there remains an aversion and scepticism from the police towards academic or 'outsider' knowledge.

Acknowledging that India's crime and policing dynamics differ significantly from the West, this evidence brief highlights a number of police-researcher partnerships that have already been implemented within particular Indian cities and states (Ahmedabad, Kerala). Such engagements are a two-way street and a mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge rather than – as is often perceived by the police – academics simply imposing external knowledge or critical judgment of police practice. Collaborations such as these have the potential to optimize police resources, reduce crime and build safer communities.

This evidence brief begins by asking some fundamental questions about the mindset of Indian policing, and discussing the limitations of current policing approaches. It then briefly examines the public expectation of the police before analyzing the average police response time, police-to-population ratio, and staff deployment in non-policing duties. Finally, it highlights explains some of the effective models of policing in India, and uses them to present the case for integration of academic criminologists into police departments.

Also provided in this brief are the key considerations for planning and implementing police-criminologist research collaborations, not to mention the proposal to organize a policy meeting – comprising police leaders, policy-makers, academic criminologists and heads of criminal justice universities and think-tanks – to deliberate on the ideas and recommendations presented in this brief.

Although the brief embraces different terms to demonstrate the utility of police-criminologist partnerships, it concludes that police leadership must align its organizational culture and values with effective use of 'outsider knowledge'. By doing this, it argues that police executives will understand the value of science in policing, develop their skills to implement research findings, and place support for the use of evidence in police decision-making.

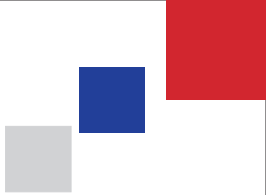
### Summary of Recommendations:

This policy proposal has three key recommendations for institutionalizing best practices in policing.

#### ***1. Encourage Police-Academic Criminologist Partnerships***

Adopting what is known as 'translational criminology', academic criminologists can be called upon by the police to work with them on particular projects and initiatives. Here, the police practitioners and criminologists work in equal partnership to develop and implement policies, programmes and skills based on scientific knowledge.

This is a form of knowledge exchange whereby police officers describe their experiences of day to day crime fighting to academic criminologists, who in turn analyze this information with police data and conduct ethnographic investigations in order to explain conditions that attract opportunities for crime. These findings are



subsequently used by police executives to review their policing strategies (as to what they should be doing and what they should not be doing), while academic criminologists work closely with police to evaluate the impact of their policies, practices and programs. Translational Criminology' is inherently reciprocal in nature, with such partnerships operationalising academic expertise to supplement and add value to existing police knowledge.

## ***2. Sharing Crime Data for Better Safety Outcomes***

When academic criminologists have access to crime data, it allows them to apply their expertise and data analysis skills to draw out trends and meaning. For example, after analyzing data showing the place and time of crime occurrences, they can help police executives understand 'why' certain areas may experience high levels of crime at particular times. Similarly, by accessing police crime data, academic criminologists can explain, for example, the victim-offender characteristics and the likelihood of victimization. These insights may be used by police executives for effective formulation of budget and to discover strategies (e.g., personnel deployment, preventive patrolling, early intervention or crime-prevention programs, etc.) for addressing crime problems.

## ***3. Integration of Academic Criminologists in the Police Academy***

Adopting the 'Embedded Criminologist' model would see academic criminologists integrated into police academies. Here, they would hold the responsibility of training police probationers and providing them with access to specialist knowledge and skills. This policy would allow police probationers to become sensitized to the scientific aspects of crime, enhance their understanding of criminal behavior, and effectively tackle crime. Alongside this, academic criminologists may also foster a culture of innovation within police academies which is critical to the success of policing.

In the UK, this model is being developed and gradually implemented in the form of Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF). This approach ensures that police officers have consistent and appropriate skills to meet the shifting challenges of addressing crime.

# 1. The Problem

## 1.1. The tunnel –thinking approach continues

In India, crime wasn't a hot topic during the post-independence era – after all, cycle theft made up a large portion of total crimes, and public spaces did not pose a serious threat to the safety and well-being of people. Fast-forward to 2019, and India's crime profile looks very different. The crime rates have increased dramatically, the expression of criminal behavior has turned violent, the street gangs have evolved into organized crime-groups, and the borderless realm of cyberspace has created new criminal opportunities.

Despite vast changes in crime trends, Indian Police rely predominantly on reactive methods of policing – a policy where police involve in responding to a complaint after the crime has been committed. Indeed, there have been few attempts to address crime and public safety concerns through proactive enforcement. But the number of police officers espousing this philosophy – the philosophy of crime prevention and reduction – still make up less than one-fourth of the total strength of the cadre!<sup>[1]</sup> In fact, most police officers view crime reduction as more complex than producing satisfactory performance figures, signaling an embedded 'detection and apprehension culture' in Indian policing.

With risk-averse nature of police service, the public scrutiny of policing has also resulted in police becoming more obsessed with quantifying!<sup>[2]</sup> Crime rates and public confidence are being constantly measured while the importance of what lay behind crime figures and performance data is rarely given any serious attention. This explains why police never deal with the causes of crime and is consequently ineffective in preventing harm to public and communities.

Another problem which discourages police from implementing crime prevention strategies is the lack of adequate resources and funding in core areas of policing!<sup>[3]</sup> Frustrated at the budget allocations, police have tended to dismiss 'experimentation in policing practice' as resource-wasting. This mind-set, shaped largely by governments, diminishes the scope of improving police performance and increasing the public safety outcomes.

Alongside this, Indian police is also criticized for conducting random patrols at selectively chosen areas!<sup>[1]</sup> These patrols generally ignores high-crime times and places, and the concentration of offending among a small group of active offenders. This results in mismanagement of police resources, and colossal waste of taxpayer's money.

## 1.2 Declining effectiveness

What do public want from the police? Several public opinion studies!<sup>[4]</sup> indicate that reducing the fear of crime, and keeping the public safe should be the top priority for police. But unfortunately, the performance of Indian police has been far behind this expectation, and the pace at which it is improving is slower than other modern democracies. For instance, while police in foreign countries are trying to lower their response time for priority-calls – reports of imminent threat to life or public safety – to 4.5 minutes,<sup>[5]</sup> a victim of serious crime in India, still need to wait for scary-long time before the police arrive on scene.

Indeed, critics would argue that there's no excuse for failing to provide quality services to public. But considering the serious shortage of manpower in the police forces, it appears that there is very little policemen can do to cover wide geographical areas, and deal with more calls for help.

Besides poor police-to-population ratio, the Indian Police is also hamstrung by the obligation to provide security services for special events (e.g., haats, cultural events and sports activities), and involving in multi-agency police-intelligence

## 1.3 Eroding trust

India's 'VIP culture' is one of the leading reasons for erosion of public trust in the police. This culture goes well with the doctrine that even though all citizens are equal before law, some lives are more equal (important) than others.

The latest data<sup>[6]</sup> compiled by Bureau of Police Research & Development provides a striking example<sup>[7]</sup> of this inequality; it shows that an average of 3 police personnel are allotted for the protection of every VIP in the country, while 663 ordinary citizens are at the mercy of 1 police member. This explains why police officers are stretched to the limit to cover staff shortages, and struggle to keep up with an increasing people and crime after 6 p.m.

## 2. Analysis and Recommendations

What is the way out? It is important to bear in mind that public administration is an institution which provides numerous services to the people. of which, ensuring security and protection of the citizens lie at the core of public administration. Therefore, there is nothing wrong if the Indian Police borrows some of the best practices which could reduce crime, improve public safety, and yet, save the tax payers money. We are not, for a moment, suggesting that we should draw lessons from experiences of foreign countries. Rather, we are pleading for readiness to emulate the models of service followed by some of the states in India.

### 2.1 Key recommendations for improving policing services

#### 2.1.1 Police-Criminologist Research Partnerships

The first model that comes to my mind is the 'Trained Criminologist' form. This model was jointly introduced by Ahmedabad City Police (City Police from now) and Raksha Shakti University (RSU) in 2017. The founding premise behind this model is that the quality of public life will improve if citizens are provided with enhanced safety and protection from police. To meet this commitment, the City Police signed a memorandum of agreement (MoA) with Raksha Shakti University for identifying the patterns of crime across the city and driving evidence-based policing. As a part of this MoA, RSU hired three criminologists, and attached them with city police.

This project threw up several interesting findings about crime occurrences in Ahmedabad, and culminated into giving concrete suggestions for public safety. A close source to the project has confirmed that “[R]SU is now conducting regular follow-up with the Commissioner of Police to ensure that the proposed strategies, aimed at preventing crimes, are effectively implemented”.

How did this partnership work exactly? This partnership served as a two-way street<sup>[8]</sup> in one direction, the city police described the challenges they face in curbing the re-occurrence of body offences – such as murder, attempted murder, and assault – against vulnerable sections of the society; in the other direction, the trained criminologists examined the relationship between different criminogenic factors (e.g., victim-offender relationship, place and time of incident, socio-economic status of victim as well as offender, hunting style of the offender, etc.) surrounding body offences, and disseminated the information about newly-discovered crime patterns to the fellow police.

These exchanges normally occurred during internal strategy meetings, and allowed police executives to consider scientific evidence, as they decide how to address the safety of disadvantaged population. Such an approach to decision-making represents what former U.S. National Institute of Justice Director, John Laub describe as translational criminology<sup>[8]</sup> – a concept where academics and police practitioners work as equal partners in applying scientific knowledge to develop policies and programs.

### **Distillation:**

- *By assessing and analyzing the crime data of where and when crime is occurring, criminologists can help police executives target hot-places, hot-times and hot-people. This model of policing, driven by knowledge gleaned from criminologists, can address hot-spots and reduce criminal opportunities through deterrence.*
- *By engaging in research partnerships with criminologists, police can better understand the crime problems in the community, and come up with innovative ways to address them. Upon analysis of the crime data, criminologists can conduct social investigations using ethnographic methods and help police understand as to what makes certain places, times, and people hot? In essence, social investigation will unravel the causes of crime and allow police executives to devise intervention programs that will produce best public safety outcomes.*
- *By partnering with criminologists, police agencies can engage in a two way exchange between research-based knowledge of the criminologist and the experience-based knowledge of the police practitioners. Such interactive, two-way exchange partnerships are crucial to discover and implement best policing practices.*

### **2.1.2 Benefits of Crime Data in Policing**

Availability of crime data is another striking feature of Trained Criminologist model. Throughout the project, trained criminologists were authorized to access the crime data compiled by State Crime Records Bureau (SCRB), Gandhinagar. This arrangement was made possible because the police executives wanted to achieve a greater understand of 'what's going wrong with their policing' and 'how can they improve their public safety outcomes'. Equipped with strong data analysis skills, the trained criminologists, however, responded effectively to these demands. They used critical data sources to review the strategies pursued by the police department, and delivered high-quality description of the conditions that caused crimes to persist. Added to these insights were the characteristics, frequency and likelihood of criminal victimization which enabled the city police “[t]o target their resources (e.g. patrolling, deployment and surveillance) on high-crime areas and those at greater risk of violent victimization.”<sup>[9]</sup> This strategy, also known as predictive policing using hot-spot analysis, helped prevent crime before it took place.

Hence, this model reinforces the view that criminologists (unlike other police staff...) can assist IPS officers in knowing how, when, and where to focus their limited resources, besides evaluating the effectiveness of their strategies. In fact, these benefits (to police practices and research...) have already been acknowledged by Ahmedabad Police Commissioner, A.K. Singh, as he recommended the state government for regular appointment of criminologists in police units.”<sup>[10]</sup>

### **Distillation:**

- *By using crime data and high-powered data analytics (e.g., ArcGIS, SPSS, R, Compstat), criminologists can inform policing strategies and evaluate its effectiveness.*
- *By allowing criminologists to access crime data, police executives can achieve a greater understanding of crime trends and the nature of crime.*
- *By using their own crime data, police agencies can assess the impact of their policing and find the programs and practices that produce best possible public outcomes.*



### 2.1.3 Integration of Academic Criminologists into Police Training Academy

Finally, we would cite the 'Embedded Criminologist' model, which is institutionalized in Kerala Police Academy (KPA). This model places a firm emphasis on indoor training, and is led by an academic criminologist. The adoption of this model came as a result of close scrutiny of the state police, after National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) ranked Kerala among the most crime-prone states in the country (see Crime in India Compendium (2008) by NCRB; and also NCRB statistics 2012).<sup>[11]</sup> This scrutiny raised broader questions about police practices and their capacity to carry out public safety responsibilities. For example, can police investigate a problem of crime without knowing the causal factors of crime? Whether the skills level of the officers is right for the roles they perform or they merely graduate as professionals without equivalent education? Do the police officers have access to the evidence about what works in cutting crime, and the training and information required to help them?

Simply put, the Kerala Police Administration recognized the need to 'reorient' its police officers with new skills and knowledge to meet the 'public security' challenges of the future – and it was despite the low expenditure of state on police training. But regardless of the current performance of Kerala Police, we ought to ask ourselves one rhetorical question: aren't the police forces across the country facing an acute skills shortage, and still distrust the scientific discoveries? Yes, they do. And, it appears that embedding criminologists inside police academies could make their workforce more contemporary, skilled and autonomous.

#### **Distillation:**

- *By embedding criminologist inside police training schools, police probationers can be equipped with new skills and knowledge to tackle the changing nature of crime.*
- *By allowing criminologist to take charge of indoor training activities, police probationers can develop emotional intelligence (a key leadership skill), and understand the importance of research and statistics in designing and implementing the best possible approaches to prevent and respond to crime.*
- *By hiring criminologists in police training set-ups, police probationers can be exposed to innovative policing concepts like hot-spot policing, intelligence-led policing, etc. Learning these concepts would also help increase their understanding of crime and criminal behaviour.*
- *Besides these concepts, an embedded criminologist can also provide hands-on-training on crime mapping technology to police probationers (e.g., ArcGIS, QGIS and SPSS) which will eventually increase the crime-fighting capacity of police agencies.*

### 3. Implementation Considerations

#### Barriers to implementation

##### Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes, and Motivation of Academic Criminologist

- A section of criminologists may not have a solid knowledge base to offer a different perspective on the problems and issues police agencies may deal with.
- Core competencies like methodological skills and statistical analyses skills useful for the police agencies may not be held by criminologists hailing from law and social work fields.
- A majority of criminologists may not have the orientation or experience to work in partnerships with police.

##### Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes and Motivation of Police Practitioners

- There are fewer advocates within the policing community calling for agencies to participate in partnerships with researchers. This is because of the absence of a shared 'police-academic infrastructure' for discussing the research needs of the police service and the role of research evidence in policing.

#### Strategies for implementation

##### Involvement of the right people

- Police-criminologist research partnerships will be successful, if the research partner: i) has a strong theoretical base of criminology; ii) has the ability to perform complex statistical analyses and work with crime mapping applications (e.g., Arc GIS, and Compstat); and iii) has firm grasp over survey designs, sampling, evaluation design and ways to improve data quality.
- Candidates holding Masters/ MPhil/ PhD in Criminology must be given preference over those who studied Criminology as an elective in law schools, for effective engagement in partnerships with the police.
- Candidates who are comfortable working in police environment, willing to address questions of interest to the police department, understand the local police culture, appreciate the needs and demands of the police agency, and are flexible in their methodological approaches to research are ideal to effectively fill the research partner role.<sup>[12]</sup>
- Candidates who show that they value the knowledge of practitioners and express the desire to assist police agencies – and not judge them – will further facilitate partnerships.

##### Identify the right people

- Effective engagement with research partners will require police practitioners who show an appreciation for policing research and commitment to its utility in informing police policies and practices. Additionally, police partners have to be open to new ways of working and show willingness to involve outsiders.<sup>[13]</sup>

### Barriers to implementation

#### Turnover in Key Partnership Participants, Practitioners and Researchers

- Quality of interpersonal relationship is the key to forming partnerships and as a result turn over in key participants, practitioners and researchers may pose barriers to development and success of practitioner–researcher partnerships. For instance, it is possible for police practitioner taking a lead role in project to promote, transfer and retire. Similarly, a criminology researcher with specific skills might leave the project to take up a position with another institution. These changes can hamper the progress of the partnerships such that the project may be terminated.
- Furthermore, research projects rolled out on pilot basis can potentially threaten partnerships, as evaluation and impact assessment of research partnerships are generally done after the completion of pilot phase – not as an integral part of the research project. This practice carries a risk that police partners who were associated with the pilot project in a lead role would not be able to participate in evaluation study because of them being transferred to some other district/ city or given charge of different police agency.

### Strategies for implementation

- A national study conducted by Chandra (2017) found that police leaders who had a PhD either in Police Science/Criminology/ Criminal Justice/ or Psychology were more likely to have an interest in research and that their departments are more likely to have collaborated with criminal justice or university researchers.<sup>[1]</sup>

#### Promote a culture of engagement

- The communal goals of police–academic criminologist partnerships can be better achieved, if police think–tanks like the Bureau of Police Research & Development and India Police Foundation hold regular events (e.g. conferences/ seminars/ workshops) that foster collaborations between 'research users' and 'research providers'.
- These events would lead to the formation of trust and interpersonal relationships between police practitioners and researchers besides promoting mutual respect for the knowledge and expertise each party offers.

#### Permanency of Personnel

- Coping with turnover would require both parties to ensure that key partnership personnel stay in place. But this strategy may not always be feasible. Thus, for the partnerships to materialize, it is required that new individuals are brought up to speed, new interpersonal ties be developed, and buy–in must be re–established to revive the project.<sup>[12]</sup>
- In order to ensure the permanency of research partners, it is recommended that the position of Embedded Criminologist be created and institutionalised within police department. By adopting this policy, police partners can retain the skills and knowledge to advance the research projects, while also create a fleet of criminology researchers who could be attached with the Office of Commissioner/Superintendent of Police, and District/State/National Crime Records Bureau. Creating a hierarchy will further allow police departments to recruit and position researchers as Assistant Criminologist, Associate Criminologist, and Principal Criminologist (this idea was proposed by Prof. K.Jaishankar during a person interview).

### Barriers to implementation

#### Communication between police practitioners and academic criminologists

- Ideally, research partnerships between police and academic criminologists should be more interactive in terms of knowledge exchange. But a national study conducted by Chandra (2017) found that research partners communicate the developments of the project only on three main occasions!<sup>1</sup> One: at the time of officially establishing the research partnerships; two: while collecting data from police agency; and three: after the analysis is done and the final report is complete.
- The study further noted that geographical remoteness from police departments may discourage research partners from keeping the police (generally the project head) informed about the status of the research project.

### Strategies for implementation

- If the above policy is endorsed, it will be easier to cope with turnover of police practitioners. This is so because, research partners from outside may take a longer time to develop interpersonal relationships with new commanding staff, as opposed to criminology researchers working inside the police department on a permanent position. Moreover, the negative effects of turnover can be significantly reduced if research is used in the day-to-day function of policing. This will lead to the formation of interdependent relationships between 'research users' and 'research providers'.

*\*Please note that National Crime Records Bureau has been merged with Bureau of Police Research and Development.*

#### Joint-Communication Strategy

- Effective collaboration would require open discussions about the needs, expectations, goals and potential barriers early on in the partnership.
- Throughout the project, both parties should maintain constant dialogue through internal strategy meetings, phones, and emails, and inform each other about issues, changes and progress!<sup>12</sup>
- Interim reports could be shared with police partners in order to allow them to share their perspective about the project, and to implement new policing strategies according to crime patterns identified during research.
- Providing a workspace within police department, preferably at the state crime records bureau, would allow command staff to regularly call upon research partner to summarize and explain the available scientific evidence on the nature of crime problems and the impact of evaluated crime reduction programs. This way, there will be a higher level of involvement and interaction between police practitioners and research partners.

### Barriers to implementation

#### Funding and Costs to Police Department

- Funding is seen as the biggest barrier to research partnerships by police practitioners. Some feel that funding is necessary to alleviate initial concerns with respect to partnerships with researchers, while others are wary of partnering with researchers without funding because their resources are already spread too thin.
- Research projects that are entirely funded by the government or funding agencies also create barriers to partnerships sustainability. The risk with such grants is that the project might end as the grant funding ceases.
- Advocates of research partnerships say, if there is a desire for improvement and a will to utilize research and external researchers, funds can be arranged through various sources after the grant ends. However, some practitioners feel that the collaborative project would only drain agency's resources and time, if the research partnership was not successful.

### Strategies for implementation

#### Financial Support from Public Safety Schemes/ Community Development Programmes

- Central and state government schemes emphasizing on 'public safety' and 'police-community relations' can be a sustainable funding option to support police-criminologist research partnerships. Funds from these sources can be used to hire academic criminologists, (the criteria of which is proposed earlier), who can demonstrate the benefits of those resources, and their value to the police department for a permanent position, which can be subsequently institutionalized within police department.
- The advantage of institutionalizing the position of Criminologist within police departments is that these professionals (criminology researchers) will then become government employee and will be eligible to receive remunerations as per government policy.
- Trained Criminologist Project in Ahmedabad, for instance, operated on the same lines!<sup>10]</sup> The Ahmedabad City Police received a grant of nearly Rs. 10 lakhs from Suraksha Shetu Society to implement evidence-based policing. Suraksha Shetu Society is a public outreach programme of the Gujarat Home Department which assists, supports, undertakes and supplements activities related to public safety and well being. The project roped in three Criminologists for a year, during which time their performance was assessed for a permanent position.
- Similarly, Maharashtra Prisons Department in 2017 signed an MOU with Tata Trusts, under which 19 social work criminologists were contracted to work across six prisons in a three-year pilot project with Prayas as knowledge partner!<sup>14]</sup> This project is still underway, and the government may institutionalize a permanent position for social work criminologist, if their services were found beneficial to prison administrators.

#### Integration of Criminologists into Police Agencies

- Kerala Police overcame the financial barriers to Police-Criminologist partnerships by creating an exclusive post for Criminologist at the Kerala Police Academy, and the serving candidate is being remunerated by the government, in the same way as other police cadres.

## 4. Questions for the future

This brief provides an in-depth analysis of the policy options that could be considered by the government to increase the capacity of police departments to understand crime problems, and develop proactive ways to prevent those problems from recurring. More specifically, it recommends policy-makers to integrate academic criminologists with police departments for better use of limited-resources, increased public safety, and lesser economic costs to taxpayers.

Although the brief offers implementation guidance for developing police-criminologists research partnerships, there are several questions that beg discussion with police administrators and policy makers. For example: what would be the stages of implementation of this policy? How will it interfere with the current way of how police works? How long should the pilot project run for? To what level can criminologists access crime data and interact with station house officers as part of the project? What is required of criminologists throughout the research project? How do we evaluate the impact of the partnership and measure its success? If deemed successful, how will the state appoint criminologists in police units?

In order to deliberate on these issues, we urge the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) to conduct a policy meet comprising State Police Chiefs, Directors of Police Training Schools, Vice-Chancellors of Police Universities, Practicing Criminologists, and Heads of the Department of Criminology across India. Besides practitioner and academic communities, BPR&D must also ensure that the Minister of Home Affairs is involved in the policy conversation. Inserting Union Home Minister into this meeting is critically important because he is the highest authority (in Indian Government...) for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces.

How will the presence of Union Home Minister make a difference to the policy meet? By participating in the policy meeting, the Union Home Minister will be able to understand: a) the benefits of police-criminologist partnerships to actual policing and budget formulation; and b) the urgent need to integrate crime analysts with police units for collection, collation, indexing, and analyzing data relating to crime and criminals.

Are academic criminologists better equipped to operate crime analytics softwares and analyze police data? Does the knowledge of crime and criminal behavior make academic criminologists more relevant for the position of crime analyst inside police agencies? Should the eligibility criteria be amended to make Criminology as mandatory qualification for the direct recruitment of top cadres (including sub inspectors & other higher ranks) in police service? These are the questions worth asking at the policy meet – in addition to the ones discussed above.

The purpose of these questions is to reach a consensus on who exactly is the most suitable candidate to advance research and training programmes in police agencies. Is it criminology graduates or non-criminology graduates? Do we need a statistician who could simply measure and predict crime or someone capable of bringing about change in the things that a statistician measures or predicts?<sup>[15]</sup> If the members of the policy meeting respond to these questions effectively, changes to the existing recruitment and selection policy can be effected in the Model Police Bill, 2015 and State Police Acts respectively.

## 5. References

- [1.] Chandra, R.R. (2017). Contemporary Status of Indian Criminology: A Qualitative Assessment (MPhil Thesis). Raksha Shakti (Police & Internal Security) University.
- [2.] Lumsden, K., Goode, J. (2016). Policing Researcher and the Rise of Evidence Base: Police Officer and Staff Understandings of Research, its Implementation and 'What Works'. *Sociology: Sage Journals*. pp.1-17. doi: 10.1177/0038038516664684
- [3.] Sane, R., Sinha, N. (2017, April 11). Budgeting for policing. *Live Mint*. Retrieved from: <https://www.livemint.com/Opinion/DR8kPY8VKUDyMlK2OHUfM/Budgeting-for-the-police.html>
- [4.] Muir, R. (2016, September 23). Great Expectations: what do the public want from the police? The Police Foundation. Retrieved from: <http://www.police-foundation.org.uk/2016/09/great-expectations-what-do-the-public-want-from-the-police/>
- [5.] Benchmark City Survey. (2015). Retrieved from: <https://www.opkansas.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/benchmark-cities-survey-city-and-department-demographics.pdf>
- [6.] Data on Police Organizations. (2017). Bureau of Police Research and Development Website: <http://www.bprd.nic.in/WriteReadData/userfiles/file/databook2017.pdf>
- [7.] Ghoshal, S. (2017, September 18). How to fix a culture where 3 cops protect each VIP and one does every 663 citizens? *HuffPost India*. Available at: [https://www.huffingtonpost.in/2017/09/18/why-removing-red-beacons-from-cars-didnt-magically-fix-indias-vip-culture\\_a\\_23213087/](https://www.huffingtonpost.in/2017/09/18/why-removing-red-beacons-from-cars-didnt-magically-fix-indias-vip-culture_a_23213087/)
- [8.] Laub, J.H. (2011). What is Translational Criminology? National Institute of Justice. Available at: <https://www.nij.gov/journals/268/Pages/criminology.aspx>
- [9.] Shaikh, S. (2017, July 2016), Tempers rise with temperature: Raksha Shakti University. *Times of India*. Retrieved from: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ahmedabad/tempers-rise-with-temperature-raksha-shakti-university/articleshow/59615378.cms>
- [10.] Criminologists roped in to study crimes against SC, ST's. (2017, February 9). *Times of India*. Retrieved from: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ahmedabad/criminologists-roped-in-to-study-crimes-against-scs-sts/articleshow/57048263.cms>
- [11.] Crime in India Report. (2012) Retrieved from National Crime Records Bureau Website: <http://ncrb.gov.in/StatPublications/CII/CII2012/Statistics2012.pdf>
- [12.] Alpert, G.P., Rojek, J., Hansen, J.A. (2013). Building Bridges Between Police Researchers and Practitioners: Agents of Change in a Complex World. Available at: <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/244345.pdf>
- [13.] Schembri, A. J. (2006). Bringing Research to Policy Makers and Practitioners. (Keynote Address). American Society of Criminology.
- [14.] Bose, S.S. (2016, June 1). State MoU with Tata Trusts for improving jails. *Times of India*. Retrieved from: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nagpur/State-MoU-with-Tata-Trusts-for-improving-jails/articleshow/52526925.cms>
- [15.] Sherman, L. (1998). Evidence Based Policing. Ideas in American Policing. Available at: <http://www.policefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Sherman-1998-Evidence-Based-Policing.pdf>