General Attitude Toward Police and Group Cohesion Among Student Police Cadets: A Correlational Comparative Study

Dissertation submitted to University of Kerala in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of

Master of Science in Counselling Psychology

By

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the Dissertation entitled "General Attitude Toward Police and Group Cohesion Among Student Police Cadets: A Correlational Comparative Study" is an authentic work carried out by Afsana Ninar, Reg. No. 60423115002 under the guidance of Ms Athmaja Panickar during the fourth semester of M.Sc. Counselling Psychology programme in the academic year 2023-2025.

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DECLARATION

I, Afsana Ninar, do hereby declare that the dissertation titled "General Attitude Toward Police and Group Cohesion Among Student Police Cadets: A Correlational Comparative Study" submitted to the Department of Counselling Psychology, Loyola College of Social Sciences (Autonomous), Sreekariyam, under the supervision of Ms. Athmaja Panickar, Assistant professor on contract of the Department of Counselling Psychology, for the award of the degree of Master of Science in Counselling Psychology, is a Bonafide work carried out by me and no part thereof has been submitted for the award of any other degree in any University.

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Abstract

This study examines how group cohesion and general attitude towards police relate to Student Police Cadets (SPCs) versus non-Student Police Cadets. Using a correlational comparative research design, the study investigates how civic engagement in SPC programs and structured law enforcement training influence psychological constructs like discipline, peer bonding, and trust in authority. The sample comprises teenagers from both SPCs and non-SPCs from a range of educational institutions. The Shapiro-Wilk test for normality, Pearson correlation, and the Mann-Whitney U test for group differences were used to analyse the data. The results demonstrate the formative influence of early civic education on youth by showing a substantial positive association between group cohesion among SPCs and views towards the police. Gender and SPC membership also showed differences, with SPC members exhibiting greater levels of cohesiveness and positive attitude. The findings highlight the usefulness of value-based training in promoting civic engagement, institutional trust, and teamwork, and they provide useful information for community policing, educational policy, and youth development programs.

Keywords: Institutional trust, value-based training, youth programs and peer relationships.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

General Attitude Toward Police and Group Cohesion among Student Police Cadets: A

Correlational comparative Study

India is uniquely positioned with the advantage of having the world's largest youth population. Despite Kerala's excellent Human Development Index ranking, the State government has to improve the skills and capacities of its youth in order to realise their full potential. As the main settings for socialisation, schools play a significant part in assisting kids in developing their social and emotional intelligence. A person's character, knowledge, and personality are all shaped throughout the crucial formative stage of student life. As a revolutionary initiative, the Kerala Police developed the Student Police Cadet (SPC) Project to assist students in applying classroom information in real-life circumstances and making meaningful contributions to society (Centre for Public Policy Research, 2015).

The police are the most obvious representation of authority in any community. With their presence in almost every region of the nation and their responsibility to uphold law and order, they form a robust network that unites communities. Police work is characterised by defined hierarchy, discipline, and structured training. Their job is to uphold justice and safeguard people's rights in a democratic system. The department is a great choice to lead such a youth campaign because students frequently revere uniformed forces, particularly the police. Developing a positive and cooperative relationship between youth and law enforcement is an investment in the future of the country (Centre for Public Policy Research, 2015).

The SPC Project is a school-level initiative that instills principles like discipline, respect for the law, empathy, civic duty, and a stance against social injustices in high school students, thereby transforming them into responsible citizens and future leaders. Along with helping pupils avoid harmful influences like drug usage, violence, and social intolerance, it also seeks to nurture

their skills. Additionally, it fosters their dedication to their environment, society, and family (Centre for Public Policy Research, 2015).

Launched in August 2010 throughout 127 schools in Kerala with 11,176 children, the SPC initiative was co-managed by the Home and Education Departments with assistance from the Forest, Excise, Transport, and Local Self-Government departments (G.O (P) No 121/2010/Home dated 29-05-2010). It eventually grew to 234 schools and over 16,000 cadets. Numerous national and state luminaries, including former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, former President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, several Kerala Chief Ministers, Members of Parliament, MLAs, High Court judges, and senior police officials, have praised the project. For community engagement, SPC has teamed up with groups including BPCL, the Kerala Road Safety Authority, and KELSA. States including Rajasthan, Punjab, Goa, and Tamil Nadu have expressed interest in implementing such models after being inspired by SPC's success (Centre for Public Policy Research, 2015).

The project's beneficial effects on kids, parents, teachers, and police officers were emphasised in a SIEMAT evaluation. The community's increasing demand shows how urgently law enforcement and citizens must work together to secure a safer future.

The SPC project's distinctive qualities include:

- Using the resources and structure already available to the police department
- It supports youth development by serving as a link between the education and law enforcement systems, encouraging young people to respect and abide by the law.
- Encourages pupils to actively address social concerns and assists schools in creating safe spaces.

- Promotes cooperation between local communities and families and the police for the benefit of society.

Young people must identify with democratic ideals and comprehend the function of the police if democratic policing is to be successful. Youngsters ought to learn that the purpose of the law is to safeguard them, not to frighten them. People who follow the law out of moral conviction and understanding rather than coercion are necessary for an educated democracy. Under the direction of the Kerala Police and with assistance from other government agencies, the SPC project aims to raise a generation that is robust, socially conscious, and development-oriented. It highlights virtues like self-control, social responsibility, leadership, and service readiness. "We learn to serve" is the SPC's guiding principle (Centre for Public Policy Research, 2015).

Objective of the SPC project:

- Develop youth who respect and naturally follow the law, practice civic duties, and serve society.

- Promote physical and mental well-being and build self-discipline and resilience.

- Enable students to cooperate with authorities in crime prevention, road safety, and disaster management.

- Empower youth to resist harmful behaviors like drug use, intolerance, and violence.

- Build leadership, creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving skills.

- Promote positive use of technology while reducing digital risks.

- Instill patriotism, respect for others' rights, and a willingness to fulfill civic duties based on the acronym POLICE: Patriotism, Open-mindedness, Large-heartedness, Inclusiveness, Capability, and Effectiveness.

Organizational Objectives:

- Create a law-abiding society.

- Build a strong bond between students and police to foster mutual trust.

- Cultivate leadership, equality, civic values, and a sense of inquiry.

- Offer students firsthand experiences of community policing.

- Encourage social responsibility, service mindset, and community care.

- Prepare youth to stand against threats like terrorism and substance abuse.

- Raise awareness about environmental conservation and disaster response.

- Position SPC as a national student movement akin to NCC or NSS but with a unique mission.

Academics shouldn't be the only focus of education. It must equip people to live in harmony with one another in society. Education must assist create citizens in a democracy who can make significant contributions on a national and international level. Students who receive citizenship education are better equipped to make just judgements that benefit society as a whole. Schools and the Education Department are essential to the success of the SPC training since it aids in the instillation of these ideals (Centre for Public Policy Research, 2015).

Road safety has grown to be a serious concern as the number of vehicles and road networks increases. Early road safety training is essential for young people. As a result, the Transport Department is essential to the SPC program. In a similar vein, direct exposure is the only way to provide real-world environmental education. To enhance the SPC training experience, the Forest Department can sponsor biodiversity seminars and nature camps. SPC cadets need to learn how to handle complicated community issues in order to produce socially conscious young people. With the appropriate authorisation from the State Advisory Committee, departments such as Health, Youth Affairs, and Suchitwa Mission can participate in training (Centre for Public Policy Research, 2015).

Like political ideology, trust and legitimacy are psychological constructs that cannot be observed. The technology to evaluate how much a person trusts police officers and believes the police are legitimate is not yet available. Therefore, similar to ideology, we search for signs of legitimacy and trust. For instance, we can deduce that a person believes that police officers are fair and effective when she indicates in a poll that she has high expectations for their effectiveness and fairness. We assume that a person believes the institution that police officers represent is genuine when she states that she feels a moral need to follow their directions (i.e., she feels that the institution has the right to use its authority, enforce the law, and demand respect.).

This has two implications for the ongoing conversation. First of all, there are many ways to define legitimacy and trust; there is no right or wrong response to the questions, "What is legitimacy?" and "What is trust?" for the straightforward reason that there is no objective standard by which to judge the applicability of any particular definition. Therefore, before creating a precise set of metrics, we must lay down the initial conceptual stance. What do we mean when we talk about legitimacy and trust in the police? Are their components different? Second, if we wish to

understand how legitimacy and trust influence behaviour, precise definitions are essential. For example, it is crucial to define legitimacy and trust if we wish to comprehend how future cooperation with police is influenced by public interactions with officers. A positive relationship between legitimacy and cooperation would imply that deference encourages proactive conduct if legitimacy is only defined and quantified as the perceived duty to obey the police (Centre for Public Policy Research, 2015).

We direct the interested reader to the various "conceptual stock-take" articles that have been published in the social science literature in recent years regarding the definitions of legitimacy and trust in relation to the police and other legal authorities (e.g., Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012; Hamm et al., 2017; Hawdon, 2008; Jackson, 2018; Jackson & Gau, 2015; Tyler & Jackson, 2013). In the pages that follow, we will describe our methodology for defining legitimacy and trust. We begin by defining trust in our own way. What does "trust in the police" mean? In a similar vein, how do people evaluate the police's credibility? Next, we discuss validity.

What is Trust in the Police?

Surveys have been used for a long time to gauge public confidence and trust in the police. One question from the UK's inaugural British Crime Survey, conducted in 1981, has frequently been construed as a gauge of confidence and trust: "Taking everything into account, how good a job do you think police in this area are doing?" In actuality, this question has been asked in each survey wave up until this point. A Gallup poll on police ethics and honesty was conducted in the United States in 1977. The first survey on police confidence was conducted in 1981 and continued as a series starting in 1993 (Tuch & Weitzer, 1997). These and related survey questions are frequently discussed in public, such as the racial "gap" in trust in the US or the apparent drop in public trust in the UK from the 1980s to the 2000s (Bradford, 2011). However, a thorough

comprehension of the fundamental idea was frequently absent from this argument and many criminological discussions of trust. Due to the fact that it was frequently unclear exactly what was being discussed, this lack of conceptual clarity hindered the formation of a solid knowledge of the nature, foundations, and effects of trust in police. As previously mentioned, terms like trust, confidence, satisfaction, support, and (less frequently) legitimacy were all used more or less interchangeably. At first, this was indicative of a larger lack of clarity in the academic literature on trust, where there were a wide range of concepts and definitions. More lately, though, problems have started to be addressed, and there is growing agreement on what trust generally entails.

According to many contemporary definitions, trust is the subjective assessment one makes of the probability that another individual, group, or corporate entity will carry out a desired and valued action in the face of uncertainty (Bauer, 2014; see Baier, 1986; Barber, 1983; Colquitt, Scott, & LePine, 2007; Gambetta, 1988; Hardin, 2006; Mayer et al., 1995 for variations on the theme). Therefore, for there to be trust, there must be three components: a trustee, a trustor, and some action or result that the trustor desires from the trustee. This term has a number of significant ramifications.

First, trust is subjective and cognitive. When determining how much trust to place in a trustee, the trustor must make a judgement about them, drawing conclusions from a variety of sources (such as prior experiences with trust in other contexts, personal relationships with the trustee, an interpretation of their general behaviour, and "gut feeling"). Second, trust is a leap of faith to a certain extent. Placing trust requires a willingness to accept uncertainty since we cannot be assured that people we trust will carry out their promises (Möllering, 2001).

Trust is meaningless when an action or occurrence is assured to take place since there is no chance that the person expecting it would be let down. Third, trust only becomes a significant

element of a relationship when the trustor faces danger due to the degree of uncertainty. Actions or behaviours that are valuable to the trustor are at the centre of trust relationships. While actions or desired results are advantageous, inaction or the inability to achieve a desired result can be detrimental. Fourth and last, in order for trust to develop, the trustor must either choose to ignore or willingly accept the risk that comes with their probability judgement (McEvily, 2011; Schilke & Cook, 2013).

Trust entails a willingness to be vulnerable to the trustee's possible wrongdoings since the trustee may unintentionally or purposely fail to act or accomplish an outcome. This definition of trust, when applied to the police, refers to people's expectations about the officers' valued future behaviours in uncertain situations. If officers are called to respond to an incident, what will happen? Are they going to act appropriately? Will they yield the intended result? Given the inherent unpredictability of human action, these are questions that cannot be definitively answered. If an officer is contacted, one can never be sure that they will arrive on time or that they will act responsibly once they do. They may, however, make judgements regarding the officers' intentions and abilities to carry out specific, valued tasks, and these judgements will influence their willingness to accept vulnerability in relation to the police by acting in ways that put them at risk, such as when they call the police to report a crime or because they need help of some kind.

One of the group's defining characteristics is cohesion, which is crucial from a behaviouristic perspective. The degree to which group members are drawn to one another and are inspired to stick together is known as cohesiveness. The degree of intimacy that members have with their groupings is referred to as cohesiveness. It is seen as the degree to which each member of the group likes the others and the degree to which they all wish to stay in the group. The degree of oneness "in the group" is referred to as cohesiveness, and it is demonstrated by members'

adherence to group rules, feelings of attraction to one another, and desire to join the group. Cohesion, conformity, and attraction are all connected. The cohesiveness of the group will increase with the degree of attraction among its members. The ability of the group members to encourage one another to follow the group norms increases with cohesion. The more members conform, the more they identify with the group and the more cohesive the group is. Generally speaking, group cohesion is the dedication to a group or to group members where all members discover commonalities in their interests and personalities. Another name for it is team cohesion.

Group Cohesiveness process:

Cohesion of the group A process can be characterised as a gathering in which a group of individuals connects with one another via a shared program or interest. Additionally, it is a procedure when a team or group of people evaluates their shared abilities and interests.

- Similar interest: Joining a team or organisation is harder than it looks. Certain teams and groups have ground rules that they adhere to. The common interest of all group members can be used to gauge how strict those ground rules are. In light of their shared interests, everyone who wishes to join such a team should abide by all guidelines provided by the team leader. As a result, it's important to realise that every team member remains equally interested in their team composition.

- Group dignity: Each team or group upholds a certain degree of honour and dignity towards its members. And in order to preserve the group's honour and pride, its members provide a number of responsible services that benefit society and all parties involved. Additionally, it is the first step in any group activity, and throughout that process, they do a number of services in accordance with the group's honour and dignity. Additionally, each and every group member participates in these activities.

- Commitment: The term "commitment" refers to an individual's honesty and dedication to the organisation. Every team member most likely needs to demonstrate some level of dedication to their work inside the group, and in order to do so, they must actively participate in group activities. High-performing teams may result from this. Consequently, it is imperative that all team members understand that a group cannot thrive in its future endeavours without dedication.

The definition and meaning of group cohesion must be understood before one can appreciate the significance of the process. One can more fully appreciate how group cohesion works and contributes to group success if they have a firm grasp of these ideas. An equal mindset is a crucial component. People frequently join a group because they have something in common with the other participants. Cohesive environments are ensured by groups that have a clear goal and choose individuals who share those interests. It becomes challenging for a group to operate well when there is no common interest. Communication is another important factor.

To prevent misconceptions and confusion, the team and its members must communicate effectively. Effective communication promotes mutual understanding and helps group members align their points of view. Additionally, trust is essential to preserving group cohesion. Cooperation and respect for one another are based on trust, whether in a team, organisation, or business. To effectively collaborate towards shared objectives, members must have faith in the group's decisions and trust one another. Additionally, each organisation has a distinct goal that directs its operations and services. This goal encourages members to collaborate in order to accomplish the group's mission. Maintaining a group's commitment and direction is facilitated by a well-defined and mutually understood goal. Finally, group cohesiveness is greatly influenced by experience in group situations. Members with previous group experiences frequently provide new

viewpoints and ideas, which enhances the dynamic of the group and encourages creativity. Contributions like these help the group grow and improve as a whole. Basically, the main pillars that improve group cohesion and effectiveness are equal mentality, communication, trust, shared goals, and experience.

Saving time is also another important advantage. The workload is lessened and issues are frequently resolved more rapidly and effectively when work is divided among a group as opposed to an individual. Additionally, communication is enhanced by group cohesion. Members who collaborate closely improve their communication abilities, which improves comprehension and coordination and has a favourable effect on both personal and professional relationships.

Nevertheless, the process of group cohesion has certain drawbacks in addition to these positives. One significant disadvantage is the potential for low productivity when group members lack various viewpoints or have similar thought processes. This can impede development, particularly in settings that require new ideas quickly. Likewise, another drawback is a lack of originality. The output may become monotonous when group members have similar interests or perspectives, which restricts creative results. This results in a lack of innovation, as the team is unable to present fresh or unique concepts, which is particularly important in fields that demand ongoing development. Finally, in cohesive organisations, dominance might become an issue. A team leader can cause animosity and erode group cohesion if they become unduly controlling or fail to treat team members as equals. Therefore, even if group cohesion has many advantages, it's crucial to be aware of its drawbacks to maintain harmony and overall performance within the team.

To effectively collaborate, increase productivity, and promote positive social outcomes in both educational and organisational contexts, it is essential to comprehend how individual attitudes and group work interact. Long-lasting mental images known as attitudes affect how people see the

world, interact with others, and react to social norms and expectations (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). These tendencies, whether positive or negative, can have a big influence on decision-making, involvement, and group cohesiveness. People in groups bring their own preconceived notions, values, and emotional inclinations, which influence other people's actions and attitudes. Group norms, dispute resolution, and performance are all impacted by this relationship. For example, although negative attitudes towards cooperation may encourage resistance, disengagement, or conflict, positive attitudes can result in greater motivation, open communication, and mutual support (Forsyth, 2018). Designing interventions that can increase shared responsibility, lessen bias, and promote inclusivity is also made easier with an understanding of attitudes. When properly organised, group work can be a very successful learning and development tool since it fosters empathy, allows for the sharing of different viewpoints, and creates a feeling of shared identity. Therefore, in order to build cohesive and goal-oriented groups, educators, psychologists, and leaders must have a thorough understanding of how attitudes affect group dynamics.

Group work is a complex, dynamic system that is defined by interpersonal interactions, common aims, social impact, and collective decision-making. It is not just a sum of individual efforts. Group dynamics, according to Forsyth (2018), are the significant processes that take place within groups, such as how members interact, communicate, and affect one another. Group cohesiveness, or the extent to which individuals are drawn to and inspired to stay in the group, is one of the key concepts in group dynamics. External factors like shared objectives or task interdependence have an impact on group cohesion, but so can the attitudes of the people that make up the group. For instance, members are more likely to collaborate, make significant contributions, and uphold harmony if they have a good attitude towards their peers and the group's goal. On the

other hand, negative views can cause mistrust or alienation, which can interfere with group functioning. These attitudes can be rooted in personal bias, preconceptions, or past experiences.

Furthermore, the group's identity and expectations for behaviour can be shaped by the interaction between individual attitudes and group norms. According to Tajfel and Turner's (1986) Social Identity Theory, people get their sense of identity and value from the social groupings they are a part of. People are more inclined to follow group standards, put the group's objectives ahead of their own, and act in a prosocial manner when they have a positive opinion of the group and its members. Role adoption within the group is also influenced by attitudes towards the group and its goals. While some people may be born leaders, others may end up serving as silent observers, facilitators, or critics. A person's willingness to assume these responsibilities depends on a variety of factors, including their attitudes towards authority, accountability, teamwork, and the importance of the group's objective.

Understanding attitudes in group situations is also essential for improving communication and settling disputes. Any group will inevitably have variances in viewpoints, experiences, and methods of operation. Members are more likely to resolve problems in a productive manner when they approach these differences with an open mind and a positive attitude towards diversity. But when group members have inflexible or unfavourable views, these disagreements can turn into major interpersonal problems that lower morale and productivity. Attitudes also have a significant impact on group communication patterns. While people with apathetic or negative views may contribute little, disregard other people's opinions, or oppose reaching a consensus, individuals with a positive attitude towards cooperation are more likely to actively listen, offer constructive criticism, and work together to solve problems.

Attitudes also play a significant role in leadership and followership within groups. Leaders must be attuned to the attitudes of their group members to guide the group effectively. A leader who understands the underlying beliefs and emotional states of team members can tailor their approach to motivation, conflict resolution, and goal setting. Moreover, leaders themselves must exhibit positive attitudes toward collaboration, fairness, and the capacity for growth, as these attitudes often set the tone for the rest of the group. Transformational leadership, which emphasizes inspiration, vision, and individualized consideration, is especially effective in groups where attitudes toward the leader and the task are favorable (Bass & Riggio, 2006). On the other hand, a leader's perceived authoritarianism, partiality, or lack of interest can have a detrimental effect on the group's attitude towards authority and lower motivation levels.

From an educational perspective, group projects are frequently employed as a teaching technique to foster interpersonal communication, critical thinking, and practical problem-solving abilities. However, students' attitudes towards group learning and each other are just as important to the effectiveness of group-based learning activities as their design. For example, while some students may see cooperative learning as beneficial and a means of improving comprehension through peer explanation, others may find it ineffective or cause anxiety because they are afraid of being judged by others. Therefore, in order to guarantee fair participation and fruitful learning outcomes, educators and facilitators need to evaluate and address these attitudinal factors. According to Johnson and Johnson (2009), cooperative learning theory places a strong emphasis on the value of positive contact, interdependence, and individual accountability all of which are impacted by the attitudes of participants. Students are more likely to experience deeper learning and greater group satisfaction when they have favourable attitudes towards both assisting others and receiving support.

Understanding attitudes is also important in applied contexts like counselling groups, community outreach, and law enforcement training (e.g., Student Police Cadets). When it comes to law enforcement cadets, their overall perspective on power and police can have a big impact on their readiness to follow moral standards, uphold human rights, and practise community-friendly policing. Cadets may be more likely to engage in hostile or discriminatory actions in the field if they come into training with strict, authoritarian attitudes. However, the ideals of justice, responsibility, and empathy are more likely to be internalised by cadets who have a positive, service-oriented attitude. Through peer influence and reflective debate, group-based training, discussions, and simulation exercises reinforce shared professional ideals and expose cadets to a variety of viewpoints (Bringsrud & Styrpe, 2015).

Additionally, the psychology literature emphasises that attitudes are malleable and can be altered by social interaction, persuasive communication, and hands-on learning. As a result, practitioners who want to create more productive group settings must comprehend how attitudes might change. People are driven to lessen psychological discomfort when their actions contradict their attitudes, which frequently results in a change in attitude, according to the cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957). For instance, a group member who is first hesitant to participate in cooperative duties may eventually change their mind about group work after realising the advantages of teamwork and accomplishment. Similar to this, treatments like attitude inoculation (McGuire, 1964), which exposes people to opposing viewpoints in a controlled environment, can strengthen good attitudes and shield them from harmful peer pressure or groupthink.

Understanding attitudes and group dynamics has institutional importance in addition to interpersonal and intrapersonal advantages. Higher retention rates, greater creativity, and better

results are more likely to be experienced by businesses and educational institutions that cultivate a culture of positive attitudes towards cooperation. Strong group identities and positive attitudes can be reinforced by institutional practices including group recognition, team-based evaluations, and participatory decision-making. Attitudes both within and between groups have an impact on social cohesiveness, discrimination, and intergroup relations on a larger scale. Members of a group are more inclined to cooperate across social or cultural divides when they have inclusive and egalitarian views, which promotes a more equitable and cohesive society.

Individual attitudes and group cohesion have a significant psychological impact that affects not only social interaction and group performance but also emotional health, self-concept, and long-term behavioural development. As a psychological concept, attitude influences how people view themselves and other people, directs social interactions, and controls feelings in social situations. People are more likely to feel a sense of fulfilment, belonging, and personal worth in a group when they have a favourable attitude towards their group, tasks, or other members (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Feelings of inferiority, fear, or loneliness are common psychological stressors in high-pressure or competitive settings, but they can be considerably mitigated by this sense of acceptance and validation. Negative attitudes, on the other hand, such mistrust, resentment, or prejudice, can cause psychological anguish, social discomfort, and internal cognitive dissonance by causing alienation, withdrawal, or active rejection to group norms (Festinger, 1957).

Another important psychological factor is group cohesiveness, which is the degree of togetherness and closeness among group members. Common traits of cohesive groups include shared identity, emotional support, mutual respect, and goals that are in line. People are more likely to feel emotionally secure, be accepted by others, and be intrinsically motivated when they are part of a cohesive group (Forsyth, 2018). According to Maslow's hierarchy of wants, these

psychological effects are connected to fundamental human desires for respect and attachment. A secure social framework that supports mental wellness is provided by belonging to a cohesive group, which also lessens uncertainty and fulfils the desire for interpersonal connection. Students or workers who feel psychologically safe and appreciated in a group, for instance, are more inclined to voice their opinions, ask for feedback, take intellectual risks, and stick with a project through difficulties all of which foster individual development and team creativity.

Cohesive groups also frequently serve as emotional regulation mechanisms, assisting members in managing stress, failure, or disagreement. Individual psychological burden may be lessened by group members who share emotional experiences and reciprocate empathy, as this increases the likelihood of group problem-solving and emotional processing. On the other hand, joining a disjointed or contentious group might lead to psychological stress, a decline in morale, avoidance behaviours, or burnout. Excessive levels of tension, anxiety, and even depressive symptoms have been connected to low-cohesion groups' members' susceptibility to feelings of rejection, miscommunication, and role ambiguity (Carron, Widmeyer, & Brawley, 1985).

In group settings, attitudes also have an impact on identity formation and self-concept. According to Tajfel and Turner's (1986) Social Identity Theory, people get some of their sense of identity and self-worth from the organisations they are a part of. One's sense of self is improved and pride and loyalty towards the group are fostered by a positive group experience that is marked by cohesiveness and aligned attitudes. This promotes long-term behavioural consistency and the internalisation of group ideals, especially throughout adolescence and early adulthood, when identity development is particularly susceptible to social influence. On the other hand, a person's self-esteem may be threatened and internal conflict may be triggered when they have a negative

or ambivalent attitude towards the group or are excluded from it. This can result in identity uncertainty or unfavourable self-evaluations.

Through peer pressure, accountability, and perceived social incentives, group cohesion also affects motivation and goal orientation. People are more likely to acquire similar attitudes when they are around people who have the same task-focused, achievement-oriented mindset, which increases intrinsic motivation and performance efficacy (Deci & Ryan, 1985). In extremely knit groups where the standards of excellence, perseverance, and cooperation are actively promoted, this "motivational contagion" effect is especially potent. Conversely, even those who are intrinsically motivated may suffer from attitude fatigue, emotional disengagement, or decreased self-efficacy in organisations where indifference, conflict, or a lack of purpose predominate. As a result, the attitudes and cohesiveness that make up a group's collective psychological climate can either strengthen or weaken mental toughness and goal-oriented behaviour.

Furthermore, social cohesion might serve as a buffer against mental health hazards, particularly in high-stakes or stressful situations, according to psychological study. People report reduced psychological discomfort, fewer burnout symptoms, and increased coping ability in reaction to failure or outside pressure in groups where empathy, support, and acceptance are actively maintained (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). These kinds of organisations function as unofficial therapeutic networks that promote candid communication, affirmation, and stress reduction via common experiences. For instance, group therapy sessions in clinical and counselling settings purposefully foster unity among participants in order to improve treatment results. A sense of universality realizing one is not alone in one's struggles is provided by the therapeutic alliance developed within a coherent group, and this helps with cognitive reframing, emotional empowerment, and psychological healing (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005).

But it's also critical to recognise that when group cohesion becomes overly strict, exclusive, or in line with detrimental group standards, it can have detrimental psychological effects. Cohesion in certain situations might encourage conformity pressure, groupthink, or the repression of divergent viewpoints (Janis, 1972). Out of fear of being rejected or judged, people may adopt attitudes they do not really support, which can cause internal turmoil and emotional repression. Strong cohesiveness is used to subjugate individual liberty, moral judgement, and critical thinking in extreme situations, such as cults or authoritarian groups. Therefore, it is crucial to comprehend the psychological processes that underlie cohesiveness in order to promote mental health and protect against manipulative group dynamics.

All things considered, attitudes and group cohesion have an impact on a variety of psychological outcomes, such as resilience, identity development, emotional well-being, and interpersonal functioning. While negative attitudes can undermine confidence, lead to conflict, and isolate people, positive views foster cooperation, involvement, and trust. In a similar vein, inclusive and balanced group cohesiveness acts as a psychologically supportive framework that fosters motivation, safety, and support. However, it can become mentally harmful if mishandled or misrepresented. Therefore, educators, psychologists, leaders, and social workers who want to establish safe, effective, and psychologically supportive group environments must have a sophisticated understanding of how attitudes and group cohesion work at the psychological level.

A complicated interaction between past experiences, personality attributes, educational background, group makeup, and cultural factors shapes students' attitudes towards group work. In this sense, attitude describes a student's overall inclination whether favourable, unfavourable, or indifferent to participate in group academic assignments. Students' perceptions of the importance of group activities, their motivation to join, their interpersonal behaviour in groups, and eventually

their learning results are all greatly impacted by these attitudes. Understanding students' attitudes towards group work becomes crucial for educators and policymakers alike in contemporary educational systems, where collaborative learning is increasingly emphasised as a tool for developing higher-order thinking skills, social responsibility, and communication abilities (Johnson & Johnson, 2009).

Successful collaborative experiences in the past, when students felt heard, supported, and properly judged, are frequently the source of positive attitudes towards group work. These kids typically view group projects as a chance to discuss ideas, learn from different viewpoints, and develop their understanding via discussion. More drive, initiative, and emotional commitment to the group process are all facilitated by an optimistic outlook. Slavin (1995) asserts that students are more likely to actively participate, support their peers, and internalise academic material and cooperative norms when they perceive group activity as an important component of their learning process. These students frequently believe that working in a group enhances their confidence through peer praise, helps them understand subjects by educating others, and lessens academic stress by sharing responsibility.

However, a number of circumstances, including unequal participation, a lack of trust, bad group management, or prior experiences of social isolation, can also cause pupils to acquire negative or resistant attitudes towards group work. High-achieving students, for instance, can express annoyance when assigned to groups in which other participants contribute less, creating the impression that group projects jeopardise academic integrity and equity (Oakley et al., 2004). Similar to this, students who are shy or socially nervous could feel frightened or uneasy speaking up in front of a group of people, and they might see the experience as stressful rather than helpful. Avoidance behaviour, passive engagement, or a predilection for solitary activities can all be

consequences of these attitudes. If these attitudes are not addressed, they may also prevent the development of critical interpersonal skills and result in a wider disengagement from collaborative learning possibilities.

Learning styles and personality factors can have a role in the development of these attitudes. For example, because they enjoy social engagement and teamwork, extroverted and pleasant students may naturally gravitate towards group projects. Students with high levels of introversion, autonomy, or task-orientation, on the other hand, could like solitary assignments that let them work freely and autonomously. Preferences are also influenced by learning types; verbal and kinaesthetic learners could appreciate lively group debates or presentations, whereas visual learners might feel ignored in environments where verbal communication predominates. These variances emphasise how crucial it is to use diversified teaching methods in order to accommodate and mould a range of student attitudes on group projects.

The way the group task is organised and led also influences the attitudes of the students. Positive attitudes are more likely to be fostered by well-designed group activities that incorporate equitable assessment standards, clear responsibilities, and accountability mechanisms. Students feel encouraged to contribute fully and genuinely when they know that their unique contributions are valued and acknowledged. On the other hand, badly executed group projects that are unclear, unstructured, or lack instructor support can strengthen unfavourable opinions. According to Cohen's (1994) research, students are more likely to participate in group projects that are both cognitively demanding and doable, as well as when social benefits like praise from peers and positive reinforcement are incorporated into the process.

Crucially, student attitudes are greatly influenced by the social atmosphere of the group and the classroom as a whole. Mutual respect and collaboration are fostered in inclusive classrooms

that foster empathy, trust, and positive interdependence. On the other hand, classroom cultures that are judgemental or competitive might foster feelings of social comparison, embarrassment, or fear of failing attitudes that weaken group cohesiveness and make cooperation more difficult. Particularly susceptible to forming unfavourable associations with group projects are students who have been the victims of bullying, social exclusion, or marginalisation. Even little group disputes or miscommunications can cause emotional pain or withdrawal in these students, which feeds into their negative views.

The group's perception of equity and fairness is another important factor. Pupils pay close attention to the allocation of effort, accountability, and recognition. Group members' attitudes improve and their trust in the process grows when they believe that everyone is contributing equitably and getting credit for it. However, students frequently become bitter, disillusioned, or demotivated when imbalances emerge, such as "free riding," dominance by one member, or unequal grading. As a result, educators need to keep a careful eye on group dynamics and use assessment methods that incorporate reflective elements, peer review, and individual accountability.

According to developmental psychology, students' attitudes towards group projects change as they move through various educational phases. Younger children, particularly those in primary school, may find group work enjoyable due to its social features, but they may also find it difficult to manage their time and resolve conflicts. Students grow more conscious of group dynamics, social status, and interpersonal expectations as they develop cognitively and emotionally, especially during adolescence. Depending on their social abilities and prior experiences, this heightened awareness might either increase resistance and fear or promote more mindful collaboration. Though they can still be changed by experience, attitudes are frequently firmly

established by the time individuals enter higher education. Due to past frustrations or a desire for individual academic control, many college students are wary of group work despite its potential for skill development and real-world application (Laal & Ghodsi, 2012).

Students' views towards group projects are also influenced by cultural variables. Students may be more likely to emphasise social obligations, community harmony, and shared success in collectivist societies like many in Asia which might foster cooperative attitudes. Students from more individualistic cultures, on the other hand, might place a higher value on individual success, independence, and directness, which could cause them to doubt or critically assess the advantages of collaborative projects. Teachers in multicultural classrooms need to be aware of these cultural factors and seek to establish inclusive standards that honour various approaches to teamwork.

Lastly, deliberate pedagogical interventions can alter or favourably influence attitudes towards group work. By demonstrating collaborative ideals, talking about the goals and advantages of group projects, honestly addressing students' concerns, and helping them resolve conflicts, teachers can significantly influence students' perspectives. With scaffolding that gradually develops skills and trust, group work should be introduced gradually. Last but not least, intentional educational interventions can change or positively impact attitudes regarding group work. Teachers can have a big impact on students' viewpoints by modelling collaborative values, discussing the objectives and benefits of group work, being open and honest with students' concerns, and assisting them in resolving problems. Group work should be introduced gradually with scaffolding that builds skills and trust over time.

The desire of schoolchildren to participate in rule-bound societies settings governed by formal rules of conduct, shared obligations, and established norms reflects both societal impact and pedagogical intent in the rapidly changing social landscape of today. Communities that emphasise

civic duty, discipline, and group accountability, such as student councils, Student Police Cadet (SPC) programs, scout organisations, eco-clubs, or school settings, are referred to as rule-bound societies. Numerous kids appear to be becoming more interested in these frameworks, according to research and own observations, especially when they foster a sense of purpose, acknowledgement, and belonging.

Children and teenagers imitate behaviours they see as being rewarded or valued in society, according to Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977). Students are encouraged to engage in structured activities that embody these values as communities increasingly recognise leadership, social responsibility, environmental awareness, and active citizenship. For instance, there has been a notable level of student involvement in programs such as the Student Police Cadet Project in India, which was started in Kerala and has since been reproduced in many states. The program's goal of fostering civic engagement, empathy, discipline, and respect for the law is in line with many students' aspirations to contribute to significant social change. According to research on SPCs, students who participate in these programs typically gain better social skills, a stronger sense of discipline, and a deeper knowledge of their rights and obligations (George & Nair, 2021). These results suggest that, especially during adolescence, rule-bound cultures provide an organised setting for moral development, self-efficacy, and identity exploration.

Young people are also becoming more aware of concerns of justice, law, rights, and social order as a result of the current social context, which is characterised by environmental challenges, an increase in global activism, and digital exposure to global civic movements. With the use of social media, educational reforms, and popular movements like "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan" or climate protests like Fridays for Future, students now feel empowered and morally compelled to

make a difference. Increased involvement in orderly, rule-based clubs and organisations that offer real-world influence and recognition is the result of this in schools.

Adolescence is a developmental stage in psychology during which people look for identity affirmation, social belonging, and structure (Erikson, 1968). Rule-bound societies offer precisely that: a well-defined structure that delineates roles, responsibilities, and incentives. This is particularly helpful in the unpredictable and information-rich environment of today, when organised group participation provides stability, control, and constructive peer pressure. Students are more likely to see involvement favourably when schools present such programs as values-driven communities (respect, safety, equity) rather than as punishment-oriented rule enforcement.

The way that schools are changing how people see rules is another element influencing students' attention. School rules have historically been seen as punitive or restricting. Nonetheless, rules are now viewed by progressive educational philosophies as guidelines for cooperation, emotional safety, and respect for one another. For instance, restorative discipline techniques in schools place a strong emphasis on communication, empathy, and responsibility values that are consistent with a cooperative, rule-bound society. Students are more intrinsically motivated to engage when they comprehend the "why" behind laws and are included in decision-making processes.

However, depending on variables including age, gender, socioeconomic status, and educational setting, interest in these societies can differ. Pupils from encouraging, well-run schools that place a strong emphasis on democratic engagement such as letting students help establish classroom rules tend to be more enthusiastic. On the other hand, schools that enforce strict, authoritarian rules may deter participation by fostering animosity or dread. Similarly, views towards leadership roles in rule-bound groups can be influenced by gender dynamics; hence,

efforts to promote inclusive participation are crucial to maintaining student interest across a range of identities.

According to recent studies (such as the UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report and NCERT 2021), students are increasingly expressing a willingness to participate in peer mediation, dispute resolution, and decision-making in educational contexts. This shows that they are interested in the governance and values that underpin rules in addition to the rules themselves. When kids are viewed as active participants rather than passive objects of authority, this kind of interest is fostered.

Need and Significance

Given the increased focus on policing methods and community trust around the world, it is crucial to investigate the relationship between views towards police and group cohesion among those training for law enforcement positions. By analysing these constructs in both Student Police Cadets (SPCs) and non-SPCs, this study offers insightful information. The purpose of the study was to investigate how, in comparison to peers who have not received such specialised training, SPCs' exposure to law enforcement beliefs, structured training, and shared experiences affect their attitudes towards police and feeling of group cohesion. The results not only close a significant gap in the research, but they also lay the groundwork for bettering community involvement tactics and future police training. This study is particularly relevant at a time when the function, responsibility, and efficacy of law enforcement officers are frequently at the forefront of public conversation.

A distinct subset of young people is represented by student police cadets. These people willingly sign up for courses that teach them the fundamental duties, principles, and standards of law enforcement. Modules on discipline, leadership, civic duty, and legal awareness are all part of their instruction, and they are all meant to influence their behaviour and perspective. As a result of

their participation, SPCs are surrounded by a culture that values responsibility, collaboration, and deference to the law. Their psychological development is probably going to be significantly impacted by this regimented atmosphere, especially in regards to how they view authorities like the police and how they behave in social situations. Non-SPC people, on the other hand, might not have received the same level of structured civic education, which could have led to different views and group dynamics.

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of comprehending public perceptions of police, particularly with regard to young people who might one day pursue professions in law enforcement. Institutional teachings, cultural influences, and individual experiences all contribute to the formation of attitudes. Building trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve requires positive views towards policing. These viewpoints can affect prospective officers' willingness to participate in community-based activities, adherence to institutional standards, and ability to make moral decisions. On the other hand, unfavourable or unduly strict attitudes may impede the growth of positive police-community interactions and restrict the adaptability needed in changing field circumstances. Thus, figuring out how these attitudes vary between SPCs and non-SPCs might aid in creating training materials and early interventions that support fair and compassionate views on law enforcement.

By examining the connection between views towards police and group cohesion, this study is especially pertinent to our knowledge of the psychological and sociological factors that influence future law enforcement officers. Analysing how individual attitudes and group dynamics impact the development of ethical and competent police officers is becoming more and more crucial in the context of community-centered policing and public accountability. By concentrating on two different groups Student Police Cadets (SPCs) and non-SPCs this study adds to that larger

conversation. The purpose of this comparison is to determine how attitudes and interpersonal cohesion within groups are influenced by formal training, early exposure to law enforcement beliefs, and teamwork.

The study's importance rests in its capacity to identify particular SPC traits, like disciplined conduct, leadership abilities, and a sense of civic duty, which may improve their capacity to collaborate effectively in group environments. On the other hand, it also looks at the possible gaps or distinctions between non-SPC people who might not have had any previous experience with structured group training but might have other skills like critical thinking or community-based viewpoints. In order to create customised training plans that satisfy the various demands of recruits and optimise their effectiveness and group integration, it is imperative to recognise these variations.

By offering actual data on the relationship between attitude formation and group dynamics in pre-professional settings, this study also fills a significant vacuum in the body of existing knowledge. Few studies have examined the relationship between police attitudes and team effectiveness, especially in early-stage candidates like SPCs and non-SPCs, while several have examined both topics separately. This gives scholarly debates in public management, group behaviour, and police psychology a fresh perspective.

The findings have both practical and policy-oriented ramifications. These insights can be used by law enforcement agencies and training academies to create training programs that are more psychologically sensitive and inclusive. For instance, training courses can be changed to incorporate aspects of the SPC model, including peer leadership, community participation, and organised discipline, for all cadets if the analysis reveals that group cohesion is noticeably greater among SPCs as a result of their early exposure. On the other hand, groupthink and hierarchical

pressure can be lessened by being aware of certain flaws or difficulties in extremely knit groups, such as conformity or rejection to outside viewpoints.

Long-term effects of this research include increased operational effectiveness and public confidence in law enforcement. Effective cooperation, less internal conflict, and increased resilience under duress are all associated with police officers' group cohesion. Officers who work effectively in teams and have favourable views about policing are more likely to respect moral principles, manage community relations appropriately, and react nimbly to stressful circumstances. Consequently, strengthening group cohesion from the very beginning of training can be a first step in developing law enforcement officers that are not only technically proficient but also socially and psychologically sensitive.

Being aware of the ways in which group dynamics and attitudes affect the development of future police officers. For educators, legislators, and law enforcement organisations looking to raise the standard of police training and the general efficacy of policing in society, its conclusions provide useful information.

This study touches on wider societal issues in addition to institutional ones. The need for police officers who are not only technically skilled but also emotionally knowledgeable and focused on the community is growing in many regions of the world. Positive psychological attributes must be identified early and fostered in order to build such a workforce. A useful basis for this development is provided by programs such as SPC, but their efficacy is dependent on continuous assessment and modification. This study supports the idea that early exposure to structured civic education can result in long-term improvements in future officers' attitudes and behaviours by analysing the relationship between attitude and group cohesion.

This study has numerous psychological ramifications. Adolescents and young adults are in a critical phase of identity building from a developmental perspective. Their ideals, self-perception, and social skills can all be profoundly influenced by their participation in structured programs like SPC. Positive attitudes towards police and SPC membership are positively correlated, which implies that these programs have a formative effect on how young people internalise societal duty and authority. At the same time, SPCs' strong group cohesion levels show that they are prepared to work in cooperative, mission-driven settings, which are essential in law enforcement settings.

Statement of the problem

Public opinion of law enforcement is crucial to upholding social order, guaranteeing legal compliance, and encouraging civic engagement in democracies. Personal experiences, media representations, community narratives, and formal education or training are some of the variables that influence people's attitudes towards the police. These beliefs are both formative and significant among teenagers and young adults, especially those training for positions involving civic duty and public safety.

In India, the Student Police Cadet (SPC) program is a systematic, values-based program designed to teach school-age teenagers' discipline, civic duty, leadership, and respect for the law. Through hands-on experiences like leadership camps, police station tours, social service, and law enforcement mentorship, cadets receive training. In addition to encouraging deference to institutional authority, this specialised exposure aims to foster collaboration and teamwork among participants. However, little is known about the psychological effects of these training on cadets' attitudes towards law enforcement and their social behaviour in peer groups.

According to existing research, people who participate in organised civic engagement programs are more likely to grow to have favourable opinions of public institutions and to be more cohesive with one another (Bringsrud & Styrpe, 2015). Observation, modelling, and reinforcement in the social environment shape behaviour and beliefs, according to social learning theory. Thus, it is theoretically more likely that cadets in the SPC program will internalise pro-police views and exhibit better levels of group cohesion when they witness and interact with police mentors and participate in cooperative group activities.

However, ordinary students might not have the same opportunities for interaction, identity development, or institutional trust-building if they do not take part in such structured activities. Their opinions on police might be more shaped by peer discourse, media portrayals, or second-hand experiences all of which aren't always true or positive. Additionally, their group interaction experiences could be more erratic, influenced more by classroom environments than by leadership development and cooperation goals.

In this regard, there is a significant empirical knowledge vacuum on the ways in which structured law enforcement-focused programs, like SPC, impact two crucial psychological constructs:

1. General Attitude Toward Police (GAP) – which reflects an individual's cognitive and emotional orientation toward law enforcement, and

2. Group Cohesion (GC) – which refers to the sense of solidarity, emotional bonding, and commitment within a peer group.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine and contrast these notions between regular students and Student Police Cadets. It will investigate whether membership in the SPC is linked to higher peer group cohesion and more positive opinions towards the police. The study also aims

to determine whether factors like gender have an impact on these psychological results. By doing this, the research advances the fields of adolescent psychology, socialisation, and civic development while also providing useful information to legislators, educators, and law enforcement organisations who wish to strengthen ties between young people and the police, advance civic ideals, and create inclusive training initiatives that promote social integration and institutional trust.

Objectives

- To examine the relationship between general attitude toward policing and group cohesion among Student Police Cadets (SPCs).

- To explore the difference in general attitude toward policing among female and male SPC students.

- To explore the difference in group cohesion among female and male SPC students.

- To compare the general attitude toward policing between Student Police Cadets (SPCs) and non-SPC individuals.

- To compare the level of group cohesion between SPCs and non-SPC individuals.

Hypotheses

- H01: There is no relationship between general attitude toward policing and group cohesion in Student Police Cadets.

- H02: There is no difference in general attitude toward policing among female and male Student Police Cadets.

- H03: There is no difference in group cohesion among female and male Student Police Cadets.

- H04: There is no difference in the general attitude toward policing between Student Police Cadets and Non- Student Police Cadets.

- H05: There is no difference in the level of group cohesion between Student Police Cadets and Non- Student Police Cadets.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Studies based on attitude towards police

Kenneth H. Hoover & R. E. Schutz (1968) conducted a study that emphasised the identification and assessment of fundamental presumptions in an attempt to change attitudes towards police. 75 college students enrolled in their first professional education course made up the group. The spring semester of 1964-65 began and ended with the administration of a semantic differential. Based on the t-test for correlated samples, significant differences were found for 10 of the thirteen ideas that were examined.

Richard Scaglion and Richard G. Condon (1980) conducted a study utilising data from 273 people in four distinct Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, neighbourhoods to gauge public perceptions of the police and their services. Comprehensive socioeconomic and biographical data were included in the study. The results underscored that community relations are significantly shaped by police interactions with the public. The relationship between law enforcement and the public was found to be considerably enhanced by positive, people-friendly policing techniques. According to their findings, the most effective police-community engagement initiatives are probably those that encourage direct communication between officers and citizens.

I Wright & M Peglar (1981) carried out a survey to find out how senior high school students in a British Columbian community felt about the police. A quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design was employed. The RCMP, who oversee the municipality, made an effort to foster more optimistic sentiments during the trial treatments. According to the study, systematic attempts to foster more favourable attitudes towards the police were successful, particularly when the program was combined with more in-depth, follow-up work completed in the Law XI class and experiential activities.

V. Webb, C. Katz (1997) outlines the results of a community survey in which respondents were asked to rank the significance of various police tactics frequently linked to community policing. The results indicate that citizens rate aggressive enforcement efforts the highest and preventive community policing initiatives, which are typically perceived as having an indirect impact on crime, lower. identifies systematic differences in rating patterns by estimating multiple regression models; the most consistent effect across models is that of gender. explains why research including cross-community comparisons is necessary.

Michael D. Reisig & Giacomazzi A (1998) evaluated the opinions of residents in a small, northwest town regarding police performance and policing tactics. There were notable variances in opinions about police performance at the neighbourhood level, but no changes in opinions about community policing programs. The findings indicated that opinions about police performance did not significantly influence how citizens felt about community policing on an individual basis. Therefore, these results challenge the long-held belief that the development of meaningful, cooperative relationships between the public and the police requires favourable opinions towards the police.

Barbara A. Sims, Michael Hooper & S. Peterson (2002) A police-community cooperation for identifying, prioritising, and addressing citizen issues is the foundation of community policing. The results of the 1999 Harrisburg Citizen Survey, which asked people a number of questions on their opinions of their local police, their fear of crime, and their impressions of social and physical incivility in their communities, are presented in this report. "Can citizens' perceptions of physical and social incivilities, their fear of crime, and contact with police predict attitudes towards police, controlling for age, gender, race/ethnicity, household income, and level of education?" is the paper's main study question.

GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARD POLICE AND GROUP COHESION

Matthew C. Scheider, Tawandra L. Rowell & Veh Bezdikian (2003) conducted a study under the community policing philosophy, which states that lowering public fear of crime is now a valid goal for law enforcement. This study investigates the relationship between citizen perceptions of community policing and fear of crime, taking into account other characteristics including citizen satisfaction with police and citizen crime prevention behaviours, using the Twelve Cities Survey, a 1998 addition to the National Crime Victimisation Survey. Police satisfaction and crime prevention practices are proven to be strongly positively impacted by perceptions of community policing. However, fear levels are not directly impacted by how the public views community policing. Fear of crime was positively (rather than negatively) correlated with crime prevention practices in half of the cities that were studied. There is discussion of the implications for community policing initiatives.

J. Schafer, Beth m. Huebner & T. Bynum (2003) explains why research on police attitudes has historically concentrated on extremely general outcome measures. This study looks at variables that reflect the demographic characteristics, experiences, and neighbourhood surroundings of respondents in order to predict how citizens in a Midwestern town will perceive police services. The results emphasise significant aspects of public perceptions of community policing and show the necessity for multifaceted conceptions of citizen perceptions of police services.

Terry Nihart et. al (2005) Much research has been done on how adults feel about the police, but less has been done on how juveniles feel about the police. Fewer studies have used self-report data collected from middle and high school students attending public schools in the Southeastern United States as a data base to examine how juveniles feel about the police in relation to other authority figures in their lives, particularly parents and teachers. Second, we investigate the factors that significantly predict young people's perceptions of the police. We discover a strong and

favourable correlation between children' opinions of the police and how they feel about their parents and professors. Furthermore, a number of other relevant characteristics and the students' opinions towards the police are found to be significantly correlated.

James Frank, Brad W. Smith and Kenneth J Novak (2005) The study examines the information that citizens access while answering questions about their general and specific opinions towards the police using survey responses from 613 residents of a midwestern city. The results imply that individuals base their opinions on a variety of factors, including general opinions about the policing profession, the characteristics of agencies and interactions, and the conduct of officers during interactions. Additionally, citizens' use of the referent does not necessarily match the attitude object (i.e., general queries elicit specialised responses). It is also evaluated how likely it is that police departments will be able to affect public opinion.

Jospeter M. Mbuba (2010) recognises that the biggest differences in college students' opinions of the police are by race, then gender, but not by academic major or previous experiences with the police. In a mid-sized, four-year public university, students were given a set of fourteen statements and asked to rate their agreement or disagreement with each one using a 5-point Likert scale. According to the study, the most important factor affecting college students' opinions on the police was their race. Attitude differences were also significantly influenced by gender.

Wesley G. Jennings et. al (2011) study the connection between violent crime in schools, school security measures, and law enforcement. The outcomes of using student resource officers and addressing issues of gangs, bullying, racial tensions, and student disrespect seem promising in terms of reducing problems on American high school campuses.

Henry Chow (2011) concentrate on analysing a sample of Canadian teenagers' opinions on the police. Design, technique, and strategy Using survey data from 262 students at 14 different

high schools in a community in western Canada, the study examines how teenagers feel about the local police. Criminal victimisation experience, police harassment or mistreatment experience, engagement in delinquent activity, and views toward school among respondents were also studied. The findings showed that respondents' opinions of the police were only slightly favourable.

Henry Chow (2012) investigate public perceptions have the power to significantly impact criminal justice organisations and the laws that govern them. This study looks at how a sample of college students in a Western Canadian city see the police. The findings showed that respondents' opinions of the police were mostly favourable. Socioeconomic status, place of residence, personal safety, criminal victimisation, contact with the police, and experience of police harassment or mistreatment were all found to be significantly correlated with respondents' opinions of the police, according to multiple ordinary least-squares regression analysis.

T A McLean (2012) carried out a Survey method are the main tool used in research on public perceptions of police. Every full-time and part-time student enrolled in classes at The University of Montana during the fall 2011 semester received an electronic version of an online survey instrument in order to gather data for this study. The findings of the study demonstrate that factors resulting from social learning and social bonds, as well as direct and indirect interactions with police, account for a greater portion of the diversity in attitudes towards police than demographic factors.

Yusuf Yuksel & Fatih Tepe (2013) seeks to examine the impact of victimisation, neighbourhood ratings, police work evaluations in relation to community engagement, the quality of police contact, and the sense of safety in the neighbourhood. According to the survey, police work ratings were the most significant indicator of public satisfaction with the police. Citizen satisfaction was moderately predicted by feeling safe. The research supported our hypothesis that

those who have experienced past victimisation or risky situations are less satisfied with the police. The study's findings have ramifications for community policing initiatives meant to boost public trust in law enforcement.

C. V. Bhaskar & S. Soundiraraj (2013) investigated whether students' attitudes towards English Language Learning (ELL) change when they enrol in college after finishing their high school education. The results demonstrate that students' attitudes towards language study have improved. According to the study, in order to develop good learners, English language instruction in schools needs to improve.

D. U. M. Bakar et. al (2020) concentrate on Students, who are at a higher risk of road accidents and infractions, can benefit from legal counselling activities that raise their awareness of traffic laws. According to this study, legal counselling activities that raise students' awareness of the law are one of the best ways to support those who are among the biggest causes of accidents and traffic infractions. Students are at least provided the information and comprehension of appropriate traffic procedures and the criminal penalties that can be imposed if they commit a traffic infraction when the legal awareness of traffic is increased through legal counselling methods.

Gina Nurfaidah et. al (2025) undertook a study with the goal of examining how the Kesambi Cirebon City Police handle student fight instances and the actions taken by law enforcement. An empirical legal approach using descriptive and qualitative methods is the research methodology. The findings of the study demonstrate the repressive and preventive measures taken by the Kesambi Cirebon City Police, including student raids and the Police Goes to School program. Repressive and preventive measures, however, have not been able to fully address the underlying causes of student fights.

GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARD POLICE AND GROUP COHESION

Studies based on group cohesion

A. A. Cota et al (1995) conducted a study based on group cohesiveness is a multifaceted construct having main and secondary dimensions. The authors characterise cohesion as a multidimensional construct with primary and secondary dimensions after critically analysing the literature on unidimensional and multidimensional models of cohesion. While secondary dimensions can be used to describe the cohesion of particular group types, primary dimensions can be used to describe the cohesiveness of all or most sorts of groups. There is discussion of the primary and secondary dimensions of group cohesion.

W. R. Forrester & Armen Tashchian (2004) write a paper that examines how student work groups' performance outcomes are impacted by cohesiveness. Social cohesion was a strong predictor of team performance, but not of team effort or work satisfaction, according to data gathered from a sample of 216 students. Team effort, team effectiveness, and team work satisfaction were all substantially and favourably correlated with task coherence. According to these results, students saw teamwork as more beneficial for accomplishing task objectives than for meeting social demands.

Milly Casey-Campbell & Martin L. Martens (2009) evaluates the discrepancies in the literature on group cohesion and performance and advocates for longer-term research and a stronger theoretical foundation. In order to resolve these discrepancies, researchers must first ground their work in more comprehensive theoretical frameworks, then ascertain whether there is a shared cause for the cohesion–performance association, and finally, employ longitudinal studies that employ more advanced analytical models.

G. Burlingame, D. McClendon & J. Alonso (2011) carried out a study that clarifies In the literature on clinical and empirical group therapy, cohesion is the most widely used relationship

construct. The most widely used definitions and researched metrics of group cohesion are reviewed in this article. The weighted aggregate correlation between outcome r =.25, k (40), N (3,323), and z = 6.54 (p <.05) with a 95% confidence interval of.17 to.32 was statistically significant, according to the results. Furthermore, it was discovered that the size of the link between the cohesiveness outcome and five moderator variables was significantly predicted.

L. Greer (2012) An outline of group cohesion research's history is given in this study. This special issue on group cohesion gives you the chance to expand your own ideas about the ongoing importance of cohesion in small group research. It summarises significant turning points in the literature and ends with a cutting-edge theoretical review of the role of cohesion in a cross-disciplinary setting sports team. We welcome your thoughts, opinions, and answers.

Jamie B. Severt & A. Estrada (2015) carried out a study on group cohesion, which has a complex structure with interpersonal, group, social, and task components and serves affective and instrumental purposes. The roles and structure of cohesiveness have not gotten much attention in this literature, despite the fact that meta-analytic data has shown strong links between cohesion and performance. According to this integrative framework, group cohesion has two primary purposes: an instrumental and an affective one.

Matthew T. Theriot & M. Cuellar (2016) recognise that the presence of school resource officers presents new difficulties for students' rights and brings up complicated concerns. One simple and well-liked method for making schools safer and more secure is the use of school resource officer (SRO) programs, which place sworn law enforcement officials in classrooms. The deployment of these officers in schools, however, brings up difficult questions and presents fresh obstacles to students' rights, such as the possibility of arbitrary search and seizure, improper disclosure of private information, and a decline in students' sense of security.

Francis D. Boateng (2016) compare the opinions of Ghanaian university students about the police force to those of the broader public, which explains how people feel about the police. This study was guided by two research questions: (1) How do college students feel about the police? and (2) What elements affect how college students view the police? According to the findings, university students in Ghana have a modest level of faith in the police. Students assessed the efficacy and fairness of police procedures critically. Ethnicity, marital status, educational attainment, and vicarious experiences of police corruption all affect students' judgements of efficacy and fairness as well as their degree of confidence.

P. Bello & J. Steyn (2019) the study that served as the basis for this essay aimed to clarify how students viewed the South African Police Service. A sample of 682 (n=682) participants was selected using a quantitative approach. The results showed that students usually had a negative opinion of the police, and that this opinion impacted their confidence in police officers. There were notable differences between how male and female students viewed the police.

Donald L. Yates (2019) an article that was conducted provides an example of how police personnel feel about community policing. There is a community policing theory put out. This hypothesis lists a number of factors that affect attitudes towards community policing. For the purpose of estimating the causal model of the several factors that describe attitudes towards community policing, we use Analysis of Covariance Structures (Lisrel). Additionally, we evaluate the proposed model's overall goodness of fit. The results of Lisrel demonstrate that "commitment" and "support" have a detrimental impact on stress. These external factors also have a big impact on frustration. Additionally, the findings indicate pressure to adversely impact police perceptions.

Claire Thornton, Phillip E. Miller & K. Perry (2020) investigated the relationship between group cohesion and indicators of student achievement in higher education (HE) courses at three

English colleges. At the conclusion of the first and second semesters, 107 first-year sports students who had completed the Perceived Cohesion Scale for Small Groups (PCS) participated. The findings showed that cohesion and attendance had a positive correlation ($r = 0.4$, $p = 0.01$), but no other associations were found. According to the findings, classroom administrators should prioritise fostering cohesion because it may be crucial for increasing college attendance.

Studies on Student Police Cadets

Mary Ann Chacko (2019) studied the Kerala Student Police Cadet (SPC) program from an anthropological perspective, emphasising how female students' involvement in the program reflected their conception of citizenship. The SPC's khaki uniform, which represented equality between boys and girls, was viewed as gender-neutral in contrast to traditional gender-specific school uniforms. Even though the program places a strong emphasis on female empowerment, the study found that the liberties that came with the SPC role frequently had restrictions, especially when they were influenced by masculine notions of protection. This sparked debate regarding how girls' responsibilities in public settings are impacted by this kind of conditional empowerment.

Kannan G. S. (2019) carried out a cross-sectional study to investigate the SPC project's execution and effects in the capital district of Kerala. Structured surveys and in-depth interviews with program participants, including former cadets and Community Police Officers, were used to gather data. The study came to the conclusion that the SPC effort was successful in reaching its target audience and that it had a significant impact on the values, abilities, and behaviours of participants, demonstrating the program's efficacy in youth development.

Mary Ann Chacko (2020) further investigated the SPC project by examining its impact on leadership development and social mobility among Keralan government high school students. Students from private English-medium schools choose to transfer to the English sections of

government schools in order to participate in the SPC program, according to the ethnographic study, which showed an unexpected pattern. These kids gained more social and cultural capital as a result of this change, putting them in a position to become future leaders with less need for additional development. The study demonstrated how the SPC training provided all cadets with beneficial exposure and hands-on learning opportunities while simultaneously reinforcing class divisions within the educational system.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARD POLICE AND GROUP COHESION

Research Design

In order to investigate the relationship between group cohesion and views towards police among Student Police Cadets (SPCs) and non-SPCs, the current study used a correlational comparative research approach. This method is appropriate because it enables the comparison of these interactions between two different groups as well as the discovery of possible links between variables (such as attitudes and cohesion). Without changing any of the variables, the researcher can assess the degree and direction of the association between group cohesion and attitudes towards policing thanks to the correlational component of the design. In the meanwhile, the comparative component offers a framework for examining the distinctions and parallels between SPCs and non-SPCs, emphasising the ways in which exposure to law enforcement settings and previous structured training may have an impact on the formation of group-based attitudes and behaviours. In addition to producing valuable insights that can guide training procedures, policy creation, and future studies in the fields of group psychology and police education, this non-experimental methodology is suitable for examining naturally occurring factors in authentic contexts.

Population and participants

Adolescents and young adults who are either engaged in the Student Police Cadet (SPC) program or not (non-SPCs) at specific educational institutions make up the study's population. The participants were selected to represent two different groups: non-SPCs, who have not had any formal engagement, and SPCs, who have received structured training and exposure to policing-related principles and activities. This distinction makes it possible to compare the degree of social cohesion and attitudes towards policing between people who were exposed to law enforcement early on and those who weren't.

In order to preserve consistency and lessen external variability, the sample was chosen by purposive sampling, which guarantees that both SPC and non-SPC participants come from comparable age groups and educational backgrounds. About [insert number, if known] people, evenly split between the two groups, make up the entire sample size in order to enable efficient correlational and comparison analysis. The study intends to investigate how varying experiences and orientations towards law enforcement impact group behaviour and views of policing by choosing participants from both groups.

Inclusion Criteria

Student Police Cadets (SPC):

- Students actively enrolled in the Student Police Cadet (SPC) program.

- Demonstrated participation in SPC training, activities, or events.

- Recognized as SPC members by their respective schools or program authorities.

Non-Student Police Cadets (Non-SPC):

- Students not enrolled in or affiliated with the SPC program.

- Enrolled in the same grade levels (e.g., classes 8, 9, or 10) as SPC participants.

- No prior or current involvement in SPC-related activities or programs.

Exclusion Criteria

Student Police Cadets (SPC):

- Students who have discontinued or withdrawn from the SPC program.

- Students involved in disciplinary actions leading to suspension or removal from the SPC program.

Non-Student Police Cadets (Non-SPC):

- Students with prior experience or partial involvement in the SPC program.

- Individuals with incomplete or missing data relevant to the study.

Tools

1. ***Socio demographic sheet***

- Name

- Age

- Gender

- Grade

- SPC membership status

- School name

2. ***General Attitude towards Police (GAP) Questionnaire***

A standardised tool for evaluating people's opinions and general attitudes towards police personnel is the General Attitudes towards Police (GAP) Questionnaire. Greis et al. (2021) initially created and validated this scale to gauge people's feelings, thoughts, and assessments about the function, conduct, and moral character of law enforcement personnel in society. The 14 items on the GAP scale measure important aspects of public perceptions of police, such as safety, morality, justice, trust, and abuse of authority. Both positively and negatively worded statements are

included in the questionnaire to provide a balanced assessment of the general sentiments of the public.

- Yes = Agreement with the statement

- No = Disagreement with the statement

This binary format was chosen to make the scale more accessible, especially for adolescent participants or those unfamiliar with Likert-type scales. Each item is scored based on whether the participant gave a favorable or unfavorable response:

- Positively worded items (e.g., "I feel safe around police officers"):

    Yes = 1, No = 0

- Negatively worded items (e.g., "Police officers abuse their power"):

    Yes = 0, No = 1 (reverse scored)

Sample Items

- "I like police officers."

- "I feel safe around police officers."

- "I believe the majority of police officers abuse their power."

- "I trust the police."

To make data collection and interpretation easier for this study, the questionnaire was modified to provide a dichotomous (Yes/No) response format:

All item replies are added up to determine the final score, which ranges from 0 to 14. While lower scores suggest more critical or negative opinions, higher scores show more positive general sentiments towards the police.

Reliability

In earlier studies, the GAP questionnaire showed strong construct validity and reliability (Greis et al., 2021). After adjusting for demographic factors, the scale was able to accurately predict participants' opinions regarding the appropriateness of police use of force in Study 2 of the initial research. According to reports, the 14-item version's internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) is adequate ($\alpha > 0.80$), indicating strong dependability.

Validity

Greis et al. (2021) demonstrated the construct validity and predictive validity of the General Attitudes towards Police (GAP) Questionnaire during its initial development and validation. Through a series of statements that represent both positive (such as fairness, morality, and trust) and negative (such as power abuse and misuse of authority) aspects, the scale was created to measure a coherent construct of general public opinions towards the police.

3. *Group Cohesion Scale – Revised*

Chin, Salisbury, Pearson, and Stoll (1999) created the Group Cohesion Scale-Revised (GCS-R), a standardised self-report tool, to gauge how cohesive a group or team is seen by its members. It is frequently used in organisational, educational, and psychological studies to gauge how devoted and connected people are to their group. Interpersonal relationships, common objectives, emotional bonding, and group commitment are just a few of the aspects of group cohesion that the GCS-R is intended to measure. It offers information about how participants feel

about their group setting, which may be indicative of overall efficacy, member satisfaction, and group performance.

The scale consists of 25 items, each rated on a 4-point Likert scale, where:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree

- 2 = Disagree

- 3 = Agree

- 4 = Strongly Agree

In the group context, respondents are asked to provide answers based on their candid impressions and experiences. To reduce response bias, the items are worded both positively and negatively. Some negatively worded things are also reverse scored to guarantee proper evaluation.

Domains Assessed

Although the scale yields a total cohesion score, it is informed by key components of group functioning, including:

- Sense of Belonging: The extent to which individuals feel accepted and valued within the group.

- Group Morale and Spirit: The overall emotional climate and motivation within the group.

- Commitment to Group Goals: The level of shared dedication to achieving collective objectives.

- Support and Cooperation: The degree to which members help and rely on each other.

- Emotional Bonding and Unity: The feeling of emotional connection among group members.

Higher scores indicate better perceived group cohesion. The Group Cohesion Scale-Revised (GCS-R) has total scores ranging from 25 to 100. Strong group cohesion, reciprocal support, common objectives, and emotional ties between participants are all reflected in a higher score. A lower score, on the other hand, indicates weakened group bonds, less collaboration, and possible disengagement from the group. Mean scores can be compared across subgroups, such as gender, role, or group type, to examine variations in perceived cohesion and spot trends in group dynamics. These scores can also be examined to evaluate the general functioning of the group.

Reliability

Numerous investigations have shown that the Group Cohesion Scale Revised (GCS-R) has a high degree of internal consistency. High dependability is indicated by an overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient that normally falls between 0.85 and 0.91. This implies that the underlying concept of group cohesion is consistently measured by the scale's components. When employed, individual subscales have also demonstrated acceptable to excellent internal dependability. According to reports, test-retest reliability is sufficient, meaning that when group conditions stay the same, the scale yields consistent findings across time.

Validity

Due to its strong alignment with theoretical notions of group cohesion and its favourable correlation with related domains including member engagement, team satisfaction, and group performance, the GCS-R has demonstrated good construct validity. The thorough discussion of important aspects of group cohesion, such as interpersonal support, shared objectives, and

emotional connection, lends credence to the content validity. Studies demonstrating that greater GCS-R scores are predictive of more robust group outcomes, including greater engagement, less conflict, and improved collective efficacy, have demonstrated criterion validity. Furthermore, the measure has proven to be discriminantly valid, successfully distinguishing between groups with high and low levels of cohesiveness in both academic and organisational contexts.

Procedure

To increase accessibility and participation, a mixed-mode strategy will be used to gather data for this study, combining offline and online techniques. Google Forms will be used to facilitate the online data collection, and paper questionnaires will be used to collect offline responses. This two-pronged strategy gives participants options according to their technological availability and convenience. The entire study procedure will be conducted with strict adherence to ethical principles. Each questionnaire will include an informed consent form that explains the study's goal, the voluntary nature of participation, and the steps taken to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the data.

Participants will receive guarantees that their answers will only be utilised for scholarly research and that no information about them will ever be shared. Additionally, students will be made aware of their freedom to leave the study at any time without incurring any penalties. To maintain privacy and ethical standards, all gathered data will be safely saved and managed with the highest care, guaranteeing that the study procedure complies with accepted criteria for ethical and responsible research involving human subjects.

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Ethical Consideration

To preserve the rights, dignity, and welfare of all participants, this study will be carried out strictly in accordance with accepted ethical standards and guidelines. Prior to starting the study, ethical approval will be sought from the relevant Institutional Ethics Committee. A thorough information sheet and consent form will thoroughly inform participants about the purpose and nature of the study, and participation in the research will be completely optional. This document will describe the study's objectives, methods, anticipated length of participation, possible risks and rewards, and participant rights, such as the freedom to decline participation or leave the study at any time without facing any repercussions.

All adult participants will be asked to provide written informed permission. When it comes to minors (like schoolchildren), both the youngsters' own assent and the consent of their parents or legal guardians will be sought. Participants will be reassured that their candid answers are greatly appreciated and that there are no right or incorrect answers. All participant information will be kept completely anonymous and confidential during the study. Responses will be coded and safely stored in password-protected digital files that are only accessible by the researcher; no personally identifiable information will be gathered.

All information gathered will be used only for scholarly research and presented in aggregate form, making it impossible to identify specific participants. Additionally, the study will guarantee that volunteers won't experience any psychological, emotional, or bodily harm. During data collecting, every attempt will be made to establish a welcoming and non-threatening environment. Furthermore, the research would adhere to ethical standards including beneficence, fairness, and respect for humans as stated in the American Psychological Association's (APA) and the Indian Council of Social Science Research's (ICSSR) guidelines. Any participant who exhibits

discomfort or distress during the study will receive the proper support, and their continuing participation will be carefully and sensitively reevaluated.

Data Analysis

A key element of quantitative research is statistical analysis, which is the methodical use of statistical methods to characterise, condense, and interpret data in order to derive significant conclusions (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2016). Descriptive and inferential statistics are the two main categories into which it falls. Simple metrics like mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage are provided by descriptive statistics, which give an overview of the fundamental characteristics of the data and aid in comprehending its distribution and central patterns (Field, 2018). The demographic factors and scores on the group cohesion and police attitude scales were presented in this study using descriptive statistics.

Conversely, inferential statistics enable researchers to test hypotheses and draw generalisations about a population from sample data (Coolican, 2014). The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to evaluate normality and see if the data satisfied the assumptions needed for parametric tests. This test is regarded as a potent technique for examining the null hypothesis that the data are normally distributed, and it works especially well with small to intermediate sample sizes (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965). Appropriate statistical methods were chosen in accordance with the normalcy test results.

The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, which gauges the direction and intensity of linear correlations between two continuous variables, was employed to evaluate the association between group cohesion and police attitude (Pallant, 2020). The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to confirm the test's assumptions of normal distribution and interval-level data. Additionally,

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the Mann–Whitney U test was used to examine group differences, specifically between SPC (Student Police Cadet) and non-SPC participants, on important factors like attitude scores and cohesiveness levels. When the assumption of normalcy is broken or the data is ordinal, this non-parametric test is used to compare differences between two independent groups (Nachar, 2008). A thorough analysis of the study hypotheses was made possible by the combination of various statistical techniques, which also guaranteed that the analysis was suitable for the research design and data characteristics.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARD POLICE AND GROUP COHESION

Table 1

The sociodemographic characteristics of participants.

Baseline characteristics	n	%
Gender		
Male	130	50
Female	130	50
SPC membership status		
SPC	130	50
Non SPC	130	50

Note: This table lists the sociodemographic details of the research participants. 260 people in all took part in the research. Their gender distribution was equal, with 130 of them being male (50%) and 130 being female (50%). Likewise, 130 participants (50%) were SPC (Student Police Cadet) members, while the remaining 130 participants (50%) were not students. This equitable allocation guarantees group comparability for further examinations.

Table 2

Normality of the population

	df	Sig.
GAP	260	.000
GC	260	.210

Note: This table displays the findings of the Shapiro-Wilk test, which was used to determine if the two main variables under investigation Group Cohesion (GC) and General Attitude towards Police (GAP) were normal. Finding out if parametric statistical approaches are suitable for additional analysis requires the use of the normality test. With a non-significant p-value of.210 (higher than the traditional alpha limit of 0.05), the test showed that the GC scores were normally distributed and that there was no discernible departure from a normal distribution. The distribution of GAP scores, on the other hand, deviates significantly from normalcy, as evidenced by the significant p-value of.000. As a result, the presumption of normalcy is broken by the GAP variable. These findings suggest that non-parametric options or data transformation strategies should be taken into consideration for analysing GAP, even when parametric tests may be employed for the GC variable.

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Table 3

Correlation between the variables General Attitude Toward Police and Group Cohesion.

Variables	General Attitude Toward Police	Group Cohesion
General Attitude Toward Police	-	.316**
Group Cohesion	.316**	-

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Note: This table presents the findings of the Spearman correlation analysis that was performed to investigate the connection between Group Cohesion (GC) and General Attitude Towards Police (GAP). The results of the research showed a statistically significant positive correlation between the two variables (r =.316, p <.01), suggesting that more positive attitudes towards the police are linked to better levels of group cohesion. The rejection of Hypothesis One thus demonstrates that there is a substantial correlation between group cohesion and public attitudes towards the police. According to this research, people's attitudes towards police tend to be more favourable when they believe that their group is more cohesive.

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Table 4

Gender difference in General Attitude Toward Police and Group Cohesion among Student Police Cadets.

	Gender				
	Male		Female		Decision
Variables	M	SD	M	SD	
GAP	10.03	3.09	12.66	2.1	Reject the null hypothesis
GC	69.48	6.95	71.66	6.73	Retain the null hypothesis

Note: This table shows the mean scores and standard deviations for Group Cohesion (GC) and General Attitude Towards Police (GAP) for male and female Student Police Cadets (SPCs). The average GAP score for men was 10.03 (SD = 3.09), while the average for women was 12.66 (SD = 2.10). The null hypothesis was rejected since the research revealed that the gender difference in GAP was statistically significant. Males scored 69.48 (SD = 6.95) on the Group Cohesion scale, while females scored slightly higher at 71.66 (SD = 6.73). The null hypothesis is upheld, nonetheless, because this difference was not statistically significant. These results imply that while opinions of group cohesion do not change substantially by gender, views towards police are influenced by gender, with women displaying more positive attitudes.

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Table 5

Difference in General Attitude Toward Police and Group Cohesion score based on SPC membership status.

	SPC membership status				
	SPC		Non SPC		Decision
Variables	M	SD	M	SD	
GAP	11.35	2.95	8.48	4.02	Reject the null hypothesis
GC	70.57	6.90	64.69	7.31	Reject the null hypothesis

Note: This table complied the General Attitude Towards Police (GAP) and Group Cohesion (GC) mean scores and standard deviations for Student Police Cadet (SPC) members and non-members. SPC members reported a mean GAP score of 11.35 (SD = 2.95), whereas non-SPC members reported a mean score of 8.48 (SD = 4.02). Members of SPC also scored better on the Group Cohesion scale than non-members (70.57, SD = 6.90 vs. 64.69, SD = 7.31). Since both differences were determined to be statistically significant, the null hypothesis for both variables was rejected. According to these findings, SPC membership is linked to stronger perceived group cohesion and more positive sentiments towards the police.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary of the work

The current study sought to determine if gender and Student Police Cadet (SPC) membership status significantly influenced the link between General Attitude Towards Police (GAP) and Group Cohesion (GC). SPSS software was used to perform statistical analyses as part of a quantitative research strategy. The Shapiro-Wilk test was first used to determine if the two main variables were normal. The findings showed that General Attitude Towards Police was much out of the norm, although Group Cohesion was regularly distributed. Despite this, additional parametric analysis was made possible by the huge sample size and the parametric tests' resilience to mild normality violations, when combined with careful interpretation.

The study's primary goal was to investigate the connection between Student Police Cadets' (SPCs') Group Cohesion (GC) and General Attitude Towards Police (GAP). The two variables had a somewhat positive association that was statistically significant, according to the findings of Pearson's correlation analysis. According to this, cadets' opinions of the police improve as their sense of group cohesion grows. The theoretical claim that people's perceptions of institutional authority can be greatly influenced by the social context in which they operate is empirically supported by this study. When seen through the prism of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which holds that people get some of their sense of who they are from belonging to and identifying with social groups, the observed link becomes very significant. This idea holds that people's perceptions of external structures, especially organisations like law enforcement, can be influenced by a strong sense of identity and belonging to a group. A cohesive group setting is likely to reinforce favourable associations with authority figures, especially the police, in the case of

SPCs, who operate inside a highly structured, discipline-oriented program that emphasises collaboration, civic duty, and law-abiding behaviour.

Furthermore, the function of social capital in fostering civic engagement and the larger framework of institutional trust are consistent with this finding. Group cohesiveness, which is defined by close interpersonal ties and mutual support, can be viewed as a type of bonding social capital that strengthens a sense of belonging and shared accountability. In these situations, people are more inclined to view the police as essential components of the social structure that protect the interests of all, rather than as detached enforcers. This could be the reason why SPCs who score higher on group cohesion also have more positive opinions of the police. This association has ramifications for educational and developmental psychology as well, particularly during adolescence, a time of identity building, value internalisation, and vulnerability to peer pressure. In situations where public faith in law enforcement is compromised, programs such as SPCs, which actively involve young people in structured, prosocial group activities, may operate as a buffer against negative cultural narratives surrounding policing. Cadets' worldview is probably shaped by the common experiences and group norms of the SPC cohort, which emphasise discipline, respect for one another, and law-abiding behaviour. This leads to more favourable and constructive views of the police. Although group cohesion has a significant influence on police views, it is not the only element, according to the correlation's moderate strength.

Individual attitudes may also be impacted by additional factors like media representations, cultural norms, community-level dynamics, and personal or family interactions with police enforcement. Nonetheless, the fact that this strong positive link exists emphasises how crucial it is to create harmonious social situations in order to improve institutional trust and civic attitudes. For legislators and law enforcement organisations looking to enhance youth participation and public

relations, this conclusion is also practically significant. It implies that programs supporting group-based youth development, especially those infused with the principles of civic duty, discipline, and teamwork as demonstrated by the SPC program can be extremely important in enhancing the public's opinion of the police. Such programs may indirectly support long-term societal advantages, such as improved community-police cooperation and decreased friction between young people and law enforcement, by encouraging a feeling of unity and shared purpose among participants. In addition to confirming the study's initial premise, the strong association between group cohesion and overall attitudes towards police provides new insights into how organised peer groups might act as formative spaces for fostering favourable institutional attitudes. It shows that group-level psychological processes are essential to fostering a more cooperative and trust-based relationship between residents and the police, and it highlights the significance of collective experience, social identity, and community participation in influencing attitudes of authority.

Examining gender-based variations in Student Police Cadets' General Attitude Towards Police (GAP) and Group Cohesion (GC) was the study's second goal. Female students had higher mean scores than their male counterparts, indicating a statistically significant gender difference in views towards police. This implies that teenage girls have generally more positive opinions of police enforcement, especially those participating in the SPC program. The perspective of gendered socialisation may help to explain these findings, as women are more likely to be socialised to value the qualities of rule compliance, safety, and protection that are commonly linked to police institutions.

In the sociocultural setting of India, where public concern for women's safety has grown, policing is frequently presented in the media and in educational discourses as a defence against gender-based violence. Women may internalise a more favourable view of police as guardians as

a result of this representation, which would explain why their GAP scores are higher. According to psychological research, women typically display higher levels of pro-social attitudes and institutional trust, particularly in situations where they feel recognised or represented (Tyler & Huo, 2002). These views could be further amplified by SPC program initiatives that support gender inclusion or deal with issues pertaining to women in the community. However, men may interact with authority from a distinct social and experiential perspective.

According to Erikson (1968), teenage guys are more likely to question authority, act in ways that desire autonomy, or interact with institutional authority more frequently in ways that cast it in a negative light. These factors could account for the comparatively lower attitude ratings of male participants, who might have a more sceptical or detached perspective on police authority. Interestingly, there were no discernible gender differences in Group Cohesion (GC), despite a gender difference in GAP. Cadets of both sexes expressed comparable degrees of interpersonal connection, solidarity, and support among their peers. This implies that in regimented, homogeneous settings such as the SPC program, gender has little bearing on group cohesion.

These programs place a strong emphasis on group training, self-control, common objectives, and role-based identification, all of which may act as equalising strategies to reduce emotional and perceptual disparities between genders. The structured routines, team-building exercises, and inclusive principles promoted by the SPC project certainly help generate a strong sense of belonging among all participants, regardless of gender identification. These results support the more general concept that, although gender can affect views towards organisations like the police, group cohesion and belonging especially in structured, values-based adolescent development programs may be more universal. This realisation has useful ramifications for the planning and execution of comparable youth engagement programs, showing that, although

addressing gender-specific needs through customised interventions is beneficial, promoting common group experiences can overcome perception gaps and increase group cohesion.

When discrepancies were examined according to Student Police Cadet (SPC) membership status, a more pronounced and persistent trend became apparent. The findings found that SPC members scored significantly higher in both General Attitude Toward Police (GAP) and Group Cohesion (GC) compared to their non-member peers. This finding offers compelling empirical evidence for the value of structured civic education initiatives, such as the SPC, in building interpersonal relationships and institutional trust. Enrolment in the SPC program seems to foster a stronger bond with law enforcement as well as a more profound interaction with principles like social responsibility, discipline, and teamwork.

Regular and meaningful exposure to policing institutions not only as distant authorities but also as mentors and community collaborators may be the reason for SPC members' improved GAP scores. Through leadership training, community outreach initiatives, awareness campaigns, and drills, cadets have intimate encounters with police officers, which probably demythologises the function of law enforcement and humanises the people who make up the system. These encounters could foster more favourable cognitive connections with police authority and lessen distrust and dread. These results align with the larger body of research on community-based policing programs, which shows that constructive interactions with law enforcement, especially in early life, can greatly increase public trust (Skogan, 2006; Tyler, 2004). The program's structured group atmosphere efficiently builds emotional bonding, mutual support, and collective identity, as seen by the raised GC scores among SPC members. Cadets regularly participate in cooperative chores, group performances, shared responsibilities, and team-building activities, all of which are crucial for fostering cohesiveness. Peer solidarity and a sense of belonging, which are essential

components of group cohesion, appear to be fostered by the common struggles and successes experienced inside the SPC framework.

This shared identity is further reinforced by the SPC's uniform, symbolism, and ritualistic components, which are consistent with research in youth development programs that emphasises the importance of ritual and symbolic engagement in fostering group identification (Turner, 1969; Eccles & Gootman, 2002). With modules covering law, ethics, leadership, and social service, the SPC curriculum actively fosters moral and civic socialisation. These elements not only give cadets information, but they also help them match their personal values with those of the institution. Because of this, members of the SPC might adopt a civic mindset that sees police as collaborators in upholding justice and order rather than as repressive agents. Their more positive views of the police are probably largely the result of this internalisation.

Without these supervised civic engagements and structured contacts, non-SPC students can form their opinions about the police based on second-hand information from sources like peer narratives, media representations, or sporadic encounters that frequently lack context or subtlety. Their comparatively lower GAP and GC scores can be explained by their more critical or uninterested viewpoints as a result of this lack of direct interaction. These results highlight the SPC program's transformative potential as a civic empowerment effort that enhances young people's social-emotional competencies through group cohesion while simultaneously influencing their opinions of law enforcement. The program's ability to improve individual and group psychosocial outcomes has important ramifications for the development of juvenile policies, public safety training, and initiatives to foster trust between institutions and the public.

Furthermore, the Student Police Cadet (SPC) program actively fosters important psychosocial skills including cooperation, group decision-making, and conflict resolution—all of

which are essential building blocks for improved group cohesion (GC). From leadership exercises and group discussions to role-plays and community interventions, these programmatic components are interwoven into the framework of SPC activities to promote an environment of respect, accountability, and interpersonal understanding. Such experiences foster a sense of collective effectiveness, which is crucial for creating cohesive peer units, in addition to strengthening cadets' capacity to work well in a group. The program's comprehensive impact on GC and General Attitude Towards Police (GAP) highlights its twofold impact on forming youth development at the interpersonal and institutional levels. This result supports the larger body of research that claims young civic engagement initiatives are crucial in influencing the socioemotional growth and public attitudes of teenagers. Adolescent psychosocial well-being depends on favourable peer dynamics, which are facilitated by programs like SPC in addition to building positive ties with law enforcement (Flanagan & Levine, 2010; Lerner et al., 2005). Cadets have regular opportunity to develop social capital, demonstrate leadership, and resolve conflicts because of the SPC environment's structure and goal-directedness. These experiences are known to increase trust, empathy, and group identification.

Another factor that highlights the transformative power of experiential learning frameworks is the reported difference in GAP and GC between SPC and non-SPC students. The SPC program adopts a practical, applied learning approach in contrast to traditional classroom-based education, which frequently places an emphasis on memorisation and individual academic achievement. This includes problem-solving exercises, public service projects, outdoor leadership camps, and real-life simulations, all of which are intended to stimulate cadets' social, emotional, and cognitive development. These exercises encourage a greater internalisation of civic and ethical principles by simulating real-world problems and requiring students to use theoretical knowledge

in group situations. The development of attitudinal dispositions including empathy, fairness, respect for authority, and social accountability is facilitated by experiential learning environments, which have been demonstrated to activate higher-order thinking and moral reasoning skills (Kolb, 1984; Dewey, 1938). These results, which represent the internalisation of programming principles through active engagement, show up as improved attitudes towards police and increased group cohesion within the framework of SPC training. This implies that teenagers' pro-social orientations and favourable institutional attitudes may be fostered more effectively by structured exposure to values-based experiential learning than by passive instruction. The results demonstrate how the SPC program successfully blends civic education, social skills training, and leadership development, making it a model of integrative youth participation. Its influence goes beyond enhancing public opinion of the police; it also cultivates a strong peer support network based on cooperation, mutual trust, and a common goal. The case for expanding experiential, community-based programming in school systems as a way to support holistic youth development and cultivate a culture of engaged, responsible citizenry is strengthened by this twofold impact on peer connectivity and institutional views.

The results of this study also align with the tenets of the Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), which holds that people pick up attitudes, behaviours, and values through imitation, reinforcement, and observation. Cadets in the Student Police Cadet (SPC) program are exposed to law enforcement officers and peer leaders on a regular basis. These individuals act as role models for the cadets, demonstrating qualities like discipline, respect for authority, accountability, and civic-mindedness. In addition to being seen, these actions are also favourably reinforced by opportunities for leadership, verbal appreciation, and acknowledgement. Pro-social attitudes, such

as positive opinions of the police and improved peer cohesion, are normalised and internalised with the aid of such reinforcement processes.

Participants who are not SPC, on the other hand, are less likely to have such reinforced and intense modelling experiences. Their lower scores in Group Cohesion (GC) and General Attitude Towards Police (GAP) may be partially explained by the lack of structured role models, performance-based reward, and directed peer collaboration. Thus, these results lend credence to the idea that organised social contexts are important in determining how adolescents grow cognitively and interpersonally. The case for an interdependent relationship between peer group dynamics and institutional perspective is strengthened by the observed positive association between GAP and GC. One tenable explanation is that teenagers who feel a great feeling of acceptance and trust from their peer groups are more likely to feel the same way about outside authority, such as the police.

This is in line with studies that indicate social trust is a generalised trait that is frequently formed in early social contexts before being carried over to institutions (Putnam, 2000). On the other hand, an adolescent's psychological safety may be improved by a favourable opinion of law enforcement, which is frequently seen as a representation of social order and protection. This, in turn, may promote more candid, cooperative, and harmonious interactions with peers. The research on adolescent development frequently discusses the reciprocal relationship between social bonding and institutional trust, especially in studies on prosocial behaviour, school climate, and civic identity formation (Flanagan et al., 2007; Youniss & Yates, 1997).

The psychological significance of belongingness is another noteworthy aspect that the study emphasises. The SPC program is special because it gives cadets a sense of unity rooted in common values and group efforts, in addition to duties and responsibilities. The program cultivates

a strong sense of purpose, inclusivity, and mutual accountability by establishing students as stakeholders in school and community progress. As cadets start to consider themselves as essential components of a greater social goal rather than just as individuals, this immediately leads to increased levels of group cohesion. This community-centered mentality is further reinforced by the regimented nature of the SPC framework, which includes group drills, uniformed identities, service projects, and public recognitions. This encourages cadets to behave and think in the best interests of the group. Adolescent identity formation and psychological health are closely related to belongingness. Adolescents are more likely to display adaptive coping mechanisms, high self-esteem, and a stronger sense of life purpose when they feel appreciated and included in a group, according to numerous studies (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, it is possible to view the higher GC scores among SPC participants as a sign of improved moral growth and emotional resilience that the program fosters, in addition to being proof of successful socialisation. By training teenagers to be socially linked, morally rooted, and institutionally involved citizens, the SPC program seems to serve both civic and developmental purposes.

The results of this study provide important policy insights into how the Student Police Cadet (SPC) program can be a transformative civic engagement program for young people. The findings unequivocally show that higher group cohesion (GC) and more positive general attitudes towards the police (GAP) are linked to SPC membership. These results highlight how crucial organised, values-based programs are for fostering peer relationships, institutional trust, and adolescent collective responsibility. Programs like the SPC become essential venues for early civic socialisation in light of the growing need to foster confidence between youth and the police in a complex sociopolitical environment.

This clearly affects the execution and growth of policy. First, there is a strong argument for expanding the SPC program to include more educational institutions, such as private schools and underprivileged rural communities. In addition to giving more diverse youth populations chances for leadership, community service, and constructive police engagement, expanding the program's reach could democratise access to civic education. Second, the SPC's training modules should be continuously evaluated and improved to include inclusive pedagogies, integrate law enforcement-related critical thinking elements, and guarantee gender sensitivity in both curriculum and delivery. Programs must aggressively foster discourse on justice, rights, and accountability in order to foster not only discipline and compliance but also morally and intellectually responsible civic engagement.

Notwithstanding its advantages, the study needs to be viewed in light of its restrictions. Despite having a statistically adequate sample size, the study was only conducted in one area, which would have affected the findings' external validity and applicability to other situations in India. To give a more representative picture, future studies should try to incorporate multi-site sampling across a range of cultural, economic, and urban-rural populations. Social desirability bias is another risk associated with the use of self-report measures, especially for SPC cadets who might have felt pressured to provide replies that are in keeping with their program or that are socially acceptable. In academic settings, where students are aware of power dynamics or feel watched, this worry is heightened and could distort genuine expression.

The study's cross-sectional design is another drawback. Although correlations between variables like gender, SPC membership, GC, and GAP were found, causal conclusions cannot be made. Understanding how attitudes and cohesiveness change over time and whether the effects of the SPC program last into adulthood might be made possible by longitudinal research.

Additionally, qualitative elements like focus groups and interviews can be used to capture the complex motives, experiences, and introspection of SPC cadets that cannot be fully revealed by quantitative data alone.

This study does have some notable strengths, though. The focus on youth programs that are institutionally embedded, the inclusion of pertinent demographic factors, and the thorough statistical analysis offer a strong empirical basis for future studies. Particularly in the context of Indian socio-education, the study makes a significant contribution to the expanding corpus of research on peer dynamics, institutional perception, and young civic development.

The study's primary goals were well met, and it provided insightful information about the social and psychological factors that influence young people's participation in organised civic activities. Peer belongingness and institutional trust are linked, as seen by the strong positive association found between group cohesion and general attitudes towards police, especially among SPC cadets. While group cohesion remained consistently high across genders, gender emerged as a significant determinant in moulding police attitudes, with females displaying more positive impressions. This suggests that shared experiences inside structured programs had a uniting effect. Most significantly, cadets reported far greater levels of both GAP and GC than non-members, indicating that SPC participation was a key distinction. These findings support the notion that civic role modelling, mentorship, and experiential learning in initiatives such as the SPC can promote pro-social conduct, social integration, and critical interaction with authority. The SPC program helps to create not just disciplined people but also compassionate, cooperative, and socially conscious citizens by providing adolescents with meaningful roles, regulated responsibilities, and supportive group environments. Interventions like the SPC are an evidence-based approach to fostering positive youth–state interactions in a time when public faith in institutions is eroding,

particularly among younger populations. To create a society that is cohesive, engaged, and morally based, policymakers, educators, and social development professionals must acknowledge and support such models.

Conclusion

Particularly in the context of Student Police Cadets (SPC) and non-SPC populations, this study offers valuable insights into the intricate relationship between individual attitudes and group cohesion. The results show that while group cohesion emerges as a crucial psychological factor influencing teamwork, identity, and interpersonal trust, perceptions of authority, discipline, and societal responsibility are significantly shaped by students' attitudes towards the police. The program's value-based orientation, civic involvement, and structured training seem to promote greater levels of group cohesion and more positive attitudes towards law enforcement among SPC participants. Non-SPC people, on the other hand, could not have been exposed to these frameworks, which could lead to more neutral or diversified perspectives and less group cohesiveness.

The findings highlight the psychological significance of norm-bound, values-based learning environments, which provide teenagers with a feeling of direction, moral stability, and belonging. Because they are both learnt and changeable, attitudes act as emotional and cognitive filters that affect how people interact with their peers, superiors, and society at large. Similar to this, group cohesion supports students' emotional health, sense of social identity, and ability to resolve conflicts in addition to facilitating productive collaboration. Collectively, these factors support the growth of emotionally stable and socially conscious people.

This study also shows how students' worldviews may be favourably shaped, civic consciousness can be developed, and respect for one another can be fostered through involvement in organised, rule-oriented programs like the SPC. These programs are important examples for raising the next generation of morally upright, involved citizens in the contemporary social milieu, which is characterised by a growing emphasis on community policing, democratic ideals, and youth empowerment. The results highlight the necessity for educational programs that improve group cohesion and positive views towards law enforcement to be given top priority by educational institutions and policymakers, particularly through experiential, inclusive, and participatory approaches.

Therefore, the study confirms that creating a youth population that is mentally sound, socially conscious, and engaged in democracy requires encouraging good attitudes and harmonious group dynamics among students, whether through SPC or other comparable venues. Future legislative decisions, educational initiatives, and psychological treatments that seek to foster the ideals of collaboration, responsibility, and trust in educational institutions and society at large can be influenced by these ideas.

Implications

The study's conclusions have important ramifications for community policing, youth development initiatives, and educational policy. First of all, the obvious link between group cohesion and favourable perceptions of the police emphasises how crucial it is to promote social connectivity among adolescent groups. This implies that group-based, participatory frameworks that foster collaboration, a sense of shared identity, and emotional support should be given priority in treatments meant to increase youth–institutional trust. The Student Police Cadet (SPC) program in particular stands out as a useful example of civic involvement and character development,

providing real-world examples of how structured mentoring and experiential learning may mould prosocial and personal attitudes. SPC members' improved Group Cohesion (GC) and General Attitude Towards Police (GAP) make a strong case for the expansion and integration of these programs into more schools in a variety of sociocultural contexts. Furthermore, the discovery that female pupils have more positive opinions of the police emphasises the necessity of gender-sensitive civic education modules, guaranteeing that both boys and girls have an equal opportunity to interact positively with law enforcement.

More generally, these findings guide the creation of youth development plans that balance civic engagement with mental health. Through meaningful peer engagement and mentorship, programs like as SPC foster social capital in addition to teaching discipline and community awareness. Using methods that go beyond textbook knowledge, policymakers and educators should take advantage of these discoveries by incorporating principles of empathy, respect for authority, and collective responsibility into mainstream curriculum. Additionally, the close connection between institutional trust and peer group bonding provides important information for community policing reforms, indicating that interactions with young people should be relational and continuous rather than reactive or episodic. Therefore, long-term investments in youth-police partnerships that are based on mutual respect, communication, and community objectives should be taken into account in future policy. Finally, the study supports broader theoretical frameworks on social learning, civic identity, and adolescent development by emphasising the transformative potential of belongingness and structured exposure providing a multifaceted pathway for creating future citizens who are responsible, informed, and cohesive.

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Limitations

A number of limitations must be noted, even if the current study provides insightful information about the connection between group cohesion and attitudes towards police among Student Police Cadets (SPCs). First off, the study's geographic limitation—being restricted to a single district or region may have an impact on how broadly the results may be applied to other regions of India or to situations elsewhere. Disparities in police-public relations that are cultural, regional, and institutional may have an impact on how young people view the police and participate in group-based initiatives like SPC. Second, causal inference is limited by the research's cross-sectional design. The directionality of the relationship between variables like GAP and GC cannot be conclusively proven, despite the fact that strong correlations were found. To monitor changes in development and causal pathways over time, longitudinal studies would be more suitable.

The data's self-reported character, which makes it prone to social desirability bias, is another significant shortcoming. It's possible that participants especially SPC members inflated their reported sentiments towards police or peer cohesiveness by responding in a way that they thought was appropriate or favourable inside the institutional structure. This issue is particularly relevant because the SPC program's regimented and discipline-focused atmosphere may quietly instill a favourable opinion of authority persons in cadets. Additionally, the research could not account for unmeasured confounding variables that could have affected both GAP and GC results, such as previous experiences with the police, family influence, personality traits, or socioeconomic position.

Despite being statistically valid, the tools employed to quantify GAP and GC might not be completely contextually sensitive. Standardised scales may not fully convey the complexity and varied sociopolitical factors that impact constructs like "attitude towards police." In order to better

understand the lived experiences that underlie the quantitative trends, future research should benefit from a mixed-methods approach that includes qualitative interviews or focus groups. Despite these limitations, the study provides a firm framework for future inquiry and programmatic development.

Suggestions for further study

The results of this study shed important light on the psychological and social effects of the Student Police Cadet (SPC) program, especially with regard to group cohesiveness (GC) and general attitude towards police (GAP). The scope of the current study, however, also identifies a number of directions for further investigation that may enhance our knowledge of group dynamics and the interactions between adolescents and the police in organised civic programs. First off, the current findings would be much improved by longitudinal research designs. Attitudes towards peer relationships and institutional authority change with age, maturity, and prolonged program exposure, even though this study only offered a snapshot of attitudes and perceptions at one particular moment in time. More accurate tracking of behavioural, emotional, and attitudinal changes could be achieved through longitudinal studies that follow SPC cadets over a number of years from enrolment to completion. This research would shed light on whether the cohesive peer dynamics and positive attitudes towards the police that have been found are long-lasting and whether they correspond to actual civic behaviours like following the law, acting prosocially, and eventually serving in the public sector.

Furthermore, increasing the sample's geographic and demographic diversity can help future studies. Because the current study was restricted to a single district, it might not fully represent the range of sociocultural differences that exist throughout India. Researchers could investigate contextual elements including regional policing practices, public-police relations, and community

norms that may affect students' opinions by conducting studies in several states urban and rural, north and south, tribal and metropolitan. This could assist in determining whether the effects of the SPC program are generally applicable or require adaptation to local requirements and cultural sensitivity.

Comparative studies comparing SPC cadets and non-cadets who take part in other organised youth development or civic engagement programs are also urgently needed. The National Cadet Corps (NCC), Scouts and Guides, Junior Red Cross, and the National Service Scheme (NSS) are a few examples. Comparative statistics may show if the improvements in GAP and GC are exclusive to the SPC framework because of its particular connection to law enforcement, or whether comparable trends show up in other programs that emphasise public service, leadership, and discipline. These comparisons may also be useful in evaluating the SPC model's efficacy in relation to other adolescent initiatives that are carried out nationally.

Using qualitative approaches to enhance and complement quantitative results is a crucial topic for further study. Although statistical data offer a solid foundation for generalisation, qualitative methods like focus groups, in-depth interviews, or narrative case studies may shed light on how and why kids form particular bonds with their friends or have particular opinions about the police. Examining the real-life experiences of SPC cadets during field trips, camps, or volunteer work, for instance, may shed light on the processes by which virtues like cooperation, empathy, and justice are internalised. This mixed-methods technique may provide a comprehensive viewpoint that connects human experience with numerical data. Additionally, the investigation of mediating and moderating factors may greatly improve our comprehension of the connection between GC and GAP. Future studies should look into how student opinions might be impacted by things like parental attitudes towards the police, individual encounters with law

enforcement, academic achievement, personality qualities, and social media influence. For example, regardless of their SPC training, teenagers who see police misconduct on social media may grow to have negative sentiments. On the other hand, people who have a lot of support from their families or schools may be more resilient and hold onto their positive opinions. In addition to elucidating causation, identifying such intervening variables would allow program developers to strategically address obstacles to institutional trust.

Another topic that is ready for investigation in the digital age is the function of media and online conversation. Through social media sites like Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp, young people are becoming more involved in social and political issues. Future studies should look at how formal SPC training interacts with both positive and negative media representations of police to influence students' emotional and cognitive reactions. Do students' perceptions of their mentors change after watching widely shared recordings of police brutality? Are the ideas learnt in SPC sessions reinforced or diminished by media exposure? Given the rapid spread of false information and the digital culture of young people, these are urgent problems.

Future research could assess the efficacy of particular SPC curricular components from a programmatic standpoint. The impacts of leadership camps, mentorship programs, police station visits, or public safety drills on GAP and GC, for example, might be isolated through experimental or quasi-experimental research. Finding the components that result in the biggest increases in cohesiveness and trust could help guide evidence-based changes to the program's design. Given the noted disparities in attitudes between male and female participants, research might also examine the effects of various program components on participants based on their gender.

Beyond the current study factors, there is also value in investigating the psychological advantages of SPC membership. Structured participation in civic education may also have a

favourable impact on ideas like self-efficacy, resilience, emotional intelligence, moral growth, empathy, and conflict resolution abilities. Although they are outside the purview of this study, these qualities are crucial to teenage development and would increase scholarly knowledge of the long-term psychological and social benefits of the SPC program.

Lastly, the implications of these findings for educational and policy reform should be investigated in future studies. Research can evaluate the potential effects on attitudes of the general student body of incorporating police-community interaction models into school curricula (apart from SPC). Data-driven recommendations on expanding the SPC program, integrating its fundamental ideas into regular education, or modifying it for use in other nations facing comparable issues with public trust and law enforcement could be helpful to policymakers.

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APPENDICES

i.   Socio Demographic Detail

Please fill your details:

Name:

Age:

Class:

Gender

- o   Male

- o   Female

- o   Other

Instructions to follow:

- **Don't skip any questions (please answer all the questions).**

- **After reading each question carefully, kindly provide your genuine responses.**

ii.   INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I' m Afsana Ninar from Loyola College of Social Sciences (Autonomous), Sreekariyam, TVM invited to participate in a research study. Your participation will help me to successfully complete my post-graduation dissertation on topic "Correlational comparative study of general attitude toward policing and group cohesion among student police cadets". All information collected will be kept strictly confidential.

Participant's signature: Date:

iii.   General Attitude toward Police (GAP) Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. These questions will ask you about your general attitudes toward police officers. Note, your information will not be given to outside entities. It is for internal research purposes only.

1. I like police officers.

    ○ Yes   ○ No

2. I feel safe around police officers.

    ○ Yes   ○ No

3. I believe that the majority of police officers like to misuse their authority.

    ○ Yes   ○ No

4. I believe that the majority of police officers treat people fairly.

    ○ Yes   ○ No

5. I believe that the majority of police officers abuse their power.

    ○ Yes   ○ No

6. I believe most police officers are nice people.

    ○ Yes   ○ No

7. I think police are good role models.

    ○ Yes   ○ No

8. I think the majority of police officers enforce laws fairly.

    ○ Yes   ○ No

9. I trust the police

○ Yes   ○ No

10. I think police care about justice.

○ Yes   ○ No

11. I think the majority of police officers treat people equally.

○ Yes   ○ No

12. I think police officers are reasonable people.

○ Yes   ○ No

13. I feel safe when I see police in my community.

○ Yes   ○ No

14. I think police officers are moral people.

○ Yes   ○ No

iv.   The Group Cohesion Scale-Revised

Instructions: The following items are about your perception of your group's development at this time. Rate each item on the four-point scale provided below by filling in the "bubble sheet". Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in your perception of the group's functioning. Circle one response below each statement to indicate how much you agree or disagree.

1. Group members are accepting of variations in each other's culture, customs, habits, and traditions.

    Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
     agree   Disagree

2. There are positive relationships among the group members.

    Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
     agree   disagree

3. There is a feeling of unity and togetherness among group members.

    Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
     agree   disagree

4. Group members usually feel free to share information.

    Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
     agree   disagree

5. Problem solving processes are disrupted if one or two members are absent.

    Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
     agree   disagree

6. The group members feel comfortable in expressing disagreements in the group.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

  agree   disagree

7. Problem solving in this group is truly a group effort.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

  agree   disagree

8. Group members influence one another.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

  agree   disagree

9. We are strongly committed to a shared mission.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

  agree   disagree

10. I dislike going to group meetings.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

  agree   disagree

11. Discussions appear to be unrelated to the concerns of the group members.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

  agree   disagree

12. Most group members contribute to decision making in this group.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

  agree   Disagree

13. Group members are receptive to feedback and criticism.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

agree   disagree

14. Despite group tensions, members tend to stick together.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

agree   disagree

15. It appears that the individual and group goals are inconsistent.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

agree   disagree

16. An unhealthy competitive attitude appears to be present among group members.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

agree   disagree

17. Group members usually feel free to share their opinions.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

agree   disagree

18. Some members are quiet, and minimal attempts are made to include them.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

agree   disagree

19. Group members respect the agreement of confidentiality.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

agree   disagree

20. People are concerned when a group member is absent.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

agree   disagree

21. Group members would not like to postpone group meetings.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

  agree   disagree

22. Many members engage in "back-biting" in this group.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

  agree   disagree

23. Group members usually feel free to share their feelings.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

  agree   disagree

24. If a group with the same goals were formed, I would prefer to be a member of that

    group.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

  agree   disagree

25. I feel vulnerable in this group.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly

  agree   disagree