

PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF POLICING DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN: A MODALITY ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT: *Police as a phenomenon with public service essence state responsibility is deemed to be crucial. The purpose of this study was to investigate the public perceptions and experienced-based feelings and reactions to police during the Pandemic time. The study chose the public comments posted online as reactions to and opinions of a particular police incident that went viral in the netizens' world. Using Halliday's systemic functional grammatical tool i.e., modality, the study analyzed the data. The findings and some recommendations are discussed.*

KEYWORDS: police, India, modality, Facebook comments, Covid-19

INTRODUCTION

Police and public expectations go together (Walker & Katz, 2012). As such, the policing directions and dimensions are much likely to revise and change in a lie with the public expectations from the police of any land (Chan, 1996). Time changes. Needs and doings also arise and adjudgments are aligned (ibid). Policing has a significant influence on people's mindset and reaction to public service and justice (Roberg et al., 2000). This is why, scholarly attention has often time been directed to policing in different parts of the world, especially on the policing aspects, and ideas (Bittner, 1990; Klockars, 1985), visioning of future of police (Bayley, 1994), politics and police (Reiner, 2010). In a broader lens, police and public, and community in terms of law and order and interactions are studied (Reiss, 1971; Radelet & Reed, 1973). Police power and politics and neighborhood safety are also examined and reexamined from time to time (Freund, 1904; Bowling, 2019; Wilson & Kelling, 2017). What literature lacks are the policing and public reactions during the pandemic. This study bridges the gap. The professionalism of, and public service by the police during a pandemic is critical as the public desires for police service and assistance suddenly rise. Thus, this study finds its significance in the exploration of public comments on social media posts on Indian policing and comes up with the modality meaning of their lived world of experience of police behavior, attitudes and services during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Objective and research questions

This study aims to explore public perceptions and experiences of policing events as usual and during Pandemic. To this end, the following research questions were set:

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- (a) What modality meaning do the public make of policing in general?
 - (b) What modality meaning do the public make of their experiences of policing during Pandemic time?
 - (c) What are the implications does the study lay?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Modality

Language is such an interesting element of society that there is no end to people's curiosity about that. Scholars have been constantly doing their research on this element from centuries to centuries and are introducing people to unknown and unique facts of language aspects. However, language has a discourse value too, when it holds more than one sentence or it is a conversation of two parties in written or spoken form. There are several things that language contains in it as its ingredients and these things make language meaningful. Modality, for example, is an important and unique figure that affects the meaning and style of a language. Looking back to the history of modality, it can be said that modality was not a part of linguistics always, rather it has been discussed from ancient times as a tool of philosophy, logic, etc. (Portner, 2009). It is believed that modality came from the discussion of modal logic by the great philosopher Aristotle who later led other scholars to find out the facts of modality from the aspects of philosophy, logic, and finally linguistics. By the time modern linguistics developed, modality had become a case of interest, as a result, several linguists made opinions on this and defined modality with different ideas and information (Kratzer, 2008). The variation of definitions and views upon modality made it easy and crystal clear to the readers. However, the modality has a different meaning and understanding from separate aspects that make it easy for people to express their opinions, ideas, statements, etc. (Lyons, 1977, p. 541). "Modality refers to people's opinion and attitude towards proposition expressed with language or circumstances described by the proposition" (Shi, 2012). Therefore, modality is what is needed in any proposition to give a clear direction of meaning to the people. When a person comments on something, that can have several meanings but modality decides the actual thinking or opinion of that individual. It can also give an idea about the outlook of the person in that statement. Again, modality also helps to know the true value of any statement which means if the saying is acceptable or not. For example, when a person gives an opinion about another person, the use of modality in that sentence confirms if the person is giving full certainty or not. In the words of Hengeveld (2017), "All those linguistic means through which a speaker can express his commitment about the truth of a proposition". Two other famous linguists, Palmer (1986) and Flower (1996) described that modality is that grammatical figure which expresses the personal attitude and opinion of the speaker's in his proposition. Also, it emphasizes the authenticity of that opinion (Shi, 2012). So, modality indicates the feeling or meaning of a sentence that is delivered from one person to another, if the sentence was for request, advice, or threat. Furthermore, the truthfulness of any proposition is also conveyed by modality. Either the speaker's opinion is true or it has less authenticity.

However, Systemic Functional Linguistics maintains that there are three meta-functions of language; textual (works with the textual structure or meaning), ideational (works with the general idea of the world), and interpersonal (refers to the social relationship of the speakers), (Bakuuro, 2017). Here the interpersonal function deals with the speaker's status, behavior, and judgment in their proposition. As a result, it is connected to mood and modality, (Halliday 1985, 1994; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Thompson 2004). Modality also refers to the opinion, evaluation, and initial meaning of the text produced by speakers. Moreover, Halliday (1985, 1994) and Halliday & Matthiessen (2004) explained a network of modality that shows how modality works where there are some terms associated with modality, such as modalization and modulation. Actually, here all functions of modality are divided into two parts and put as modalization and modulation. So, 'modalization' stands for the speaker's opinion about the possibility of the proposition, the chance of being true of the statement, if the opinion is made out of surety or from general aspects. On the other hand, "modulation" refers to in what tone the speaker is presenting his opinion, either it is a matter of obligation or left it as an option", (Halliday, 1994; pp. 88-89). Halliday described those two systems that can be used to consider the proposition and proposals are polarity and modality. Polarity indicates the speaker's consideration between positive and negative while making a comment, where modality sticks up for the truth value of that comment. For example, "This boy is not bad"; here the polarity of that sentence is negative and the modality signals that it is a piece of confirmed information. Further, "This boy is good, maybe"- this case is opposite which means polarity is positive but modality shows uncertainty about that proposition.

Orientation is the signal or sign of modality that shows some aspects to denote a modality type being either egoistic or realistic. It helps to differentiate between direct and indirect too. "The basic distinction that determines how each type of modality will be realized is 'orientation', that is, the distinction between subjective and objective modality as well as between explicit and implicit variants" (Shi, 2012). There are some types of modalities that are used to give a subjective meaning and some others are used to give an objective meaning. The representation of the contents of a sentence as real or unreal is called objective modality while subjective modality expresses the attitude of the speaker towards the contents of a sentence. For instance: 'the boy is meritorious' and 'the father is angry'. The modality of these two sentences is objective as reality/ unreality is expressed. But, through the following two sentences for example: 'I doubt if the girl is clever' and 'Unfortunately the father is angry'- subjective modality becomes explicit since these sentences are neutral. The percentage of modality judgment is called value. Basically, the truth value of modality is known as value. For example, 'must' gives a kind of assurance while 'may' gives a kind of hypothesis. There are three levels of modality judgment such as: high, median and low. Every level of modality has some fixed modals individually. Another variable in modality is the value attached to the modal judgment: high, median, and low. "In English, 'must', 'ought to', 'need', 'has to', and 'is to' are high-value modal verbs; 'will', 'would', 'shall', and 'should' are median-value modal verbs; and 'may', 'might', 'can', and 'could' are low-value modal verbs" (see Halliday 1994: 362).

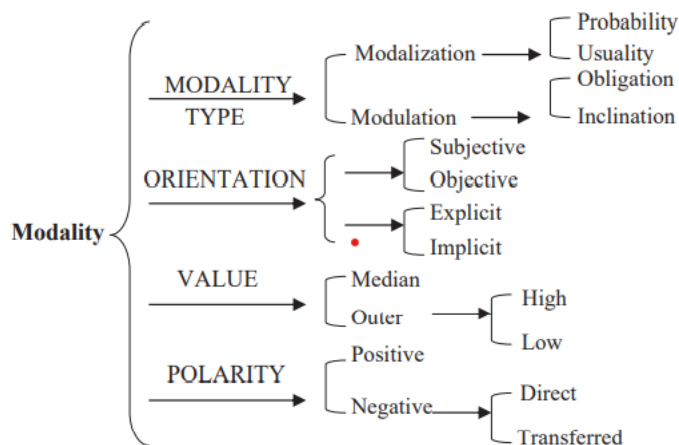


Chart 1: Mood and modality borrowed from Halliday and Matthiessen (2004).

Police in general

Society is based upon some rules and regulations which are made to hold down the peace between different communities, cultures, and nations. Moreover, for the maintenance of those laws and systems, there are some forces appointed by the government of every country who make sure to obey the rules of the citizens. Besides, these forces work for the safety of the country and citizens, 'Police' are one of those public forces who work to keep society free from inside enemies. "Police work is closely linked to repressive strategies to control crime and public disorder" (Malone & Dammert, 2020). More precisely, it is believed that police are the important part of society who protects people from the corrupt personality living among them, as well as, preventing the impact of harmful power on a country's activity.

In Bangladesh, it is said that police are the friends of the public as they are called whenever an incident takes place in any area. It is expected by the people that police would play the role of justice keeper in society. This thought about police is cultivated because this is what they should be doing and they are employed for this work. "On issues as varied as international trade, school prayer, abortion, educational standards, and police protection, the government makes the key decision and, in some cases, the only ones" (Mack, 1997, p. 6). So, it is the government's responsibility and duty to ensure the safety of citizens, and they try to fulfill it through their forces. To prevent unwanted accidents or crimes police are there in every corner of any country though their activity is not the same in every country.

It is commonly known that what the duties of police are, for example: ensure the safety of people in a particular area such as stopping robbery; to be careful with local powerful people with bad records who create problems for ordinary people. "Of course, police must ensure public safety, but they must also garner citizen trust" (Malone & Dammert, 2020). Also, it is mandatory for the police to look after the common people, so that they can be safe from the dishonest activities of influential people. The price hike, land grabbing, taking illegal money, etc. are the common problems that

are faced by the commoners in poor and developing countries. So, protecting the rights of citizens also comes under the duty of the police. They should be responsible enough to check if any individual is getting his facilities or suffering injustice. "In a community where people feel that authorities ensure their security, want to help them and to do so through fair processes, people feel more secure. Under such conditions, people approach interactions with police with more trust. Yet building this relationship with police in communities with a long history or even recent history of negative police-citizens interactions is a challenge", (O'Brien et al., 2020). Unfortunately, the world is being cruel day by day and the list of crimes is becoming long, the worst themes are rape, murder, kidnapping, etc. (Beccaria et al., 2017). As the friends of commoners, police become in charge of those cases at first, and it should be their priority to take the victim's side and get him justice. Again, the health of citizens is in their hands as they are given the power to look after the facts of the health sector that are related to common people. For example, ensuring the medical facilities for the people in public hospitals, overpriced service in private hospitals, making people aware of rules in pandemic situations, etc. are taken care of by the police department of every area. There are many more responsibilities of the country and citizens are on the shoulder of the police, as a result, they have been provided with power by the government that they can use to take control over every undisciplined event.

Though this power is for the betterment of the citizens; sometimes it is being misused by the police. "To effectively maintain social order, the police must be widely obeyed and this obedience must occur in both personal encounters with police, as well as in people's everyday compliance with the law" (Murphy & Cherney, 2012). Earlier it was mentioned that police activity is not the same in every country; probably some policies are different from the majority. There are some good things in every bad environment, but it is an exception. However, in most countries, police have become the most toxic part of government authority because of their illogical gesture towards the public. Those who had been called people's friends once are now being hated by a large number of people. According to Marenin, "The public has good reasons to adopt this attitude, particularly because of the large number of casualties caused by aggressive police action at the demonstration, the lethal use of weapons, and the disrespect for human rights in interrogations" (Marenin, 1996, p. 139). Further, more reasons behind this attitude such as injustice done by police, targeting victims instead of culprits to make the powerful ones so that they can fill out the pockets with money and there are many more reasons like this. It is a part of the police's work to prevent people from doing illegal acts, but now they are engaged in many more crimes. Police have become the puppet of powerful and politically influential people; they take bribes and hide all their misdeeds (Solar, 2015). Victims are given punishment because of their partiality, whereas they should stand for the helpless people. Also, racist acts had been done by the police in some countries, for example, in the United States, a person named George Floyd was killed by some police officers of Minneapolis police on 25 May 2020 (The New York Times, May 31, 2020). This incident was a result of racism as the victim was a 46 years old black man and the police officers were white, though it was not a heavy case they put him to death in front of so many people which led this case towards racism. Besides, citizens are being subjected to unfair demands of police during any service, though they are paid a fixed salary by the government and still charge extra fees from people if someone comes

for any help. People who deny their orders are falsely accused by them and given punishment some people ended up losing their life, an incident in Bangladesh that happened on 11 October 2020 can be taken as an example, where a 34 years boy named Ryhan Ahmed was killed in police custody due to brutal torture of polices, (The Daily Star, October 12, 2020). Stopping corruption is their duty but currently, the police department is the most corrupted administrative sector. "Police corruption is best understood, not as the exclusive deviant behavior of individual officers, but as group behavior guided by contradictory sets of the norm", (Roebuck & Barker, 2014). Nowadays, people make fun of police as they are not acting up properly on their job and responsibility rather doing exactly opposite things. As a result, this sector has lost respect and importance in people's minds; people are more afraid of them than criminals. Where they have been handed up with the duty of people's safety, they are endangering human life for their greedy intention. Thus, people stopped trusting them and started raising voices against their unlawful activity. "Police raids, crackdowns, and minority targeting or profiling by the police can break down trust and cooperation, which could increase crime rates" (Mazerolle & Wickes, 2015). However, this oppressive gesture and misuse of the power of police should be strictly handled by the government to save ordinary and innocent citizens from being suffered.

Policing in India

"Police is the principal law enforcement agency in the state (Srivastava, 1999). Ghosh in Encyclopedia of Police in India defines the term 'Police' in the Indian context. It broadly connotes the purposeful maintenance of public order and protection of persons and property, from the hazards of the public accidents and the commission of unlawful acts" (Belur, 2011). Equality among the people and religions, dignity between aristocrats and lower class are also assured by the police. "The assurances of equality and dignity to the numerable minorities and weaker sections of the society are also dependent upon the performance of the police" (Belur, 2011).

Constitutionally, the Indian police have a kind of power to stop and search the public in case of suspicion. Besides, the Indian police have many other duties to perform. To fulfill duties based on border responsibilities, in the areas of maintenance of public peace and order, crime prevention, investigation, and detection, collection of intelligence, VIP security, counter-terrorism, border policing, railway policing, tackling smuggling, drug trafficking, economic offences, corruption in public life, disaster management, enforcement of socio-economic legislation, bio-diversity and protection of environmental laws, etc. "The primary duties of the civil police force are the protection of life and property, preservation of peace and order, traffic control and emergency services", (Sharma & Sachdeva, 1978). To ensure the security of the general people if the police personnel intend to check anyone, it is allowed by the Indian constitution. As they (the Indian Police) are responsible to save the public from being attacked by the miscreants or ensure fearless movement at any time. "The Mumbai police have long used stop and search operations in the form of nakabandi or roadblocks as a crime control measure, but these have gained an added urgency in the period following the terror attacks in November 2008" (Belur, 2011). But, they cannot abuse this power or apply it intentionally, which is a general public expectation and service guidance.

Though they are not allowed to commit any miscreant using their executive power, sometimes there is an opposite scenario. "The Indian police have been accused of abusing power and being violence-prone", (Belur, 2011). The primary duty of every police officer is to protect the citizens of the country, maintain law, public peace and order, crime prevention, investigation, and detection. But, it is saddening to bring to light the fact that at times the Indian police do not adequately undertake their responsibilities and indulge in various unscrupulous activities which tend to lower the dignity of the police officers as well as shake the foundation of trust and faith imposed on them by the society. "The observations lead us to conclude that the police role and functions to a large extent are clouded by their bad behaviors, misconduct and typical ways of working leading to a very distorted image in society", (Saxena, 1997). Being the largest democratic country in the world, India lacks to lessen the dimension of the torture upon the public. Even in most cases, it is committed by the police personnel in different police stations in India. "Reports of torture and violence perpetrated by the police are being received from different parts of the country. Recently, there was a shocking report from Hapur in Uttar Pradesh of a person being tortured to death by the police, in the presence of his son", (Sen, S.,2019). In addition, the Indian police behave in such a manner that looks undemocratic and less caring about the system. "Police administration was expected to behave in a democratic and ideal manner in the society in performing their duties but in practice, this culture is lacking and it still seems undemocratic and authoritative", Sharma, A. (2013).

The police department should be independent as well as must be free from political leaders' domination. But the Indian police are controlled politically and the political leaders use the police force to fulfill their will. "The politicization of police in independent India is very dangerous. Political leaders brazenly misuse police agencies to settle personal scores and intimidate their opponents", (Verma, 2007). In India, the political executive (i.e., ministers) has the power of superintendence and control over the police forces to ensure their accountability. "The police authorities come under the control of the political parties after the elections and are unable to act independently, (Verma, 2007). But the elected ministers are seen to use this power illegally. "The Second Administrative Reforms Commission has noted that this power of ministers has been misused, and ministers have used police forces for personal and political reasons", ("Analytical Reports", 2021). As police are called the friends of the people, the people feel free to have close contact with the police. Whenever they fall in danger, they run to the police to get justice. But the Indian people hardly prefer calling or going to the police owing to their maltreatment. "It is documented that police personnel in India are poorly educated and are notorious for extortion, misbehavior, and poor services to citizens" (Nalla & Madan, 2011). As much as possible, they try to avoid the police personnel. "The respondents were asked whether they are satisfied with the working of Indian police or not. The respondents reported something which may be very hurtful of the police department. All 107 respondents said that they are not satisfied with the working of Indian police professionals (chart 5.7.1)", (Belur, 2011). The police should respect the order of the court or the lawmakers. As well as they should be impartial in judgments. The Indian police are seen to disobey the rules of court during the lockdown as we can see a police officer tearing up the written permission letter of court in the viral video that is used as the main source of data for this

study. Additionally, the Indian police tortured many people giving punishment during the lockdown. "Several anecdotal cases (with visual back-up) are available of police beating up "transgressing" citizens with lathis, getting them to frog-march, forcing them to perform push-ups and sit-ups, and harassing street vendors", (Ray & Subramanian, 2020). Taking bribes is a common affair nowadays in the Indian police personnel. "The IPS officers make money from the transfer and postings of subordinate officers, take bribes and give favors", (Lee, 2018).

Lockdown and public roles

A country is the platform of many activities, issues, affairs done by the citizens and the authority continuously for the betterment of the states' economic and other sectors. However, the health department of a country is also equally significant as other sectors because public health plays a vital role in the progress of the country, specifically; a developing nation needs to be careful with the physical issues of the citizens. "Healthier populations are better workers and contributors to economic growth. Healthier children learn better in school and, thus, also have prospects for contributing to the economic development of their country" (Tulchinsky & Varavikova, 2014; p. 577). Sometimes, health facts become the major obstacle as well for a nation to move forward when any incurable and contagious disease occurs. This circumstance sometimes ended up imprisoning people at home to save them from the dangerous diseases, which were eventually declared as an epidemic by the world health organization (WHO), and that situation is called lockdown by the authorities and people. Currently, the world is going through a pandemic situation and the reason behind it is the covid-19 virus which was first found in China in December 2019, a fatal virus that has taken around 37, 40,000 lives till June 2021. "An outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by the 2019 novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) began in the city of Wuhan in China and has widely spread worldwide", (Zhang et al., 2020). Moreover, this disease has completely stopped the whole world for certain time and created an impact on the world economy and is still causing irregularity in international activities. "Apart from being a global health concern, COVID-19 is having major consequences on the world economy, and experts have predicted that COVID-19 will lower global gross domestic product growth by one-half a percentage point for 2020 (from 2.9% to 2.4%)" (Gupta et al., 2020). Not only the economy but also the normal life of people across the world has been harmed due to this lockdown period. This lockdown of more than one year has made middle-class people poor and poor people became poorer. Besides, the life of students from many countries has been a total mess because of not opening the institutions for a very long time. "The delay to reopen the institutes will affect the student mentality. If the common people, health workers, and elders are affected, the students and pupils would not be an exception. It will affect the mental health of pupils and students as well" (Chandasiri, 2020). This collapse in economy and education can make a country fail to fulfill the necessity of future generations.

However, citizens are the main driving force of a country as they always perform an important role in every situation of their country. It is a duty of a person to stand with every good and bad condition of his country because the government alone cannot handle all the matters. "The point of view from the government is not easily perceived as much complexity prevails in every action

they take. The decision making, managing the public, satisfying the requirements of the healthcare system, and having a plan are the prime functions of the government during the pandemic period" (Elavarasan & Pugazhendhi, 2020). However, both the government and public have their responsibility towards the country in all issues, as well as during this pandemic people of every country have proven this by working hand in hand with the government. Though it is an interesting matter to observe how the public helped authority in this Covid-19 situation, some people broke the rules and increased the problem. Nevertheless, some contributions of ordinary people are still remembered, such as helping people from the poverty line by supplying food and medicine. Unfortunately, many people in several countries were in miserable situations because of not getting food and other services, and the governing bodies couldn't be able to reach all the needy people, which made generous and well-off people feel for the helpless. "Many rich people have come forward to stand by their fellow citizens and support each other, irrespective of caste, creed and religion", (Times of India, December 8.2021). There were groups of people who helped to spread awareness among people to save themselves from this killer virus. Many public figures became real-life heroes by coming forward for the ordinary people and lessening the government's burden. For example, the Bollywood actor Sonu Sood helped many migrants to reach home in India. (Hindustan Times, June 3.2020).

On the other hand, some people created problems for both the authority and commoners, such as not obeying the rules, taking advantage of the situation, etc. Since the virus broke out every country's government authority has tried to put rules and restrictions to stop the spreading of the virus, but people tend to break the rule and make the situation worse for the nation. The major safety rules for coming outside were wearing masks, keeping distance from strangers, and using sanitizer about which people were very careless in many countries. "To achieve the successful implementation of such measures recommended by public health authorities, the willingness of the public plays an important and decisive role. However, it is still a health problem to encourage the public to unconditionally follow these recommended preventive actions. People's risk perception of a pandemic is one of the factors contributing to an increase in public participation in adopting preventive measures" (Khosravi, 2020). For the safety of citizens, the government had forbidden the public gathering for some days but the instructions were rarely accepted and obeyed by the people. Moreover, this situation was a jackpot for some people of many sectors; they misused the helplessness of ordinary people. "It was taken into account that the fact that COVID-19 pandemic increases corruption risks in the healthcare sector. In a state of emergency and concentration of power, injection of a large amount of money into the economy to alleviate the crisis, corruption risks should not be underestimated" (Terziev & Georgiev, 2020). For example, some dishonest people from the medical sector have put people's lives in danger for their greedy purpose, such as, a huge blunder that happened in Bangladesh where the chairman of a healthcare center was arrested for issuing a fake corona certificate. (The Daily Star, July 12, 2020) People connected to businesses used the situation to imply their strategies of making more money by increasing the price of daily goods and medical equipment rather than helping the commons and people engaged in emergency services.

Ultimately, two scenarios were going on throughout this lockdown and still, it is there, these are the two sides of one story good and bad. On one hand, humanity was shown by the kind and social people; on the other hand, some ungrateful people with dirty motives were making the situation worse. Additionally, in this materialistic world, there are some people still alive who feel for the strangers and try to take care of the ill-fated ones.

Lockdown during covid-19 and police rules

Covid-19, a fatal disease, has made us pass through an unexpected situation globally. As it is a contagious disease and is breaking out rapidly. 'WHO' (World Health Organization) has declared this disease as a pandemic. Moreover, it was both a national and international crisis. To control its speedy infection, the governments of almost all covid-19 detected countries have imposed a lockdown. To make the lockdown fruitful, the police force has played a crucial role. "The police department has played a vital and front-line role in the maintenance of societal measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19." (Dey, Majumdar, Saha & Sahu, 2020). In this national crisis, the police as well as the law enforcement department have done many praise-worthy activities. They did lots of actions such as: making awareness, supplying food, controlling the usual movement. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, law enforcement has played a remarkable role in supporting efforts to control the disease and promote safer communities, as well as combating threats from criminals taking advantage of the outbreak to increase or diversify their activities. It is seen that the police personnel have taken the steps to bury the dead bodies of the covid-19 patients while the close relatives avoided it. "Few neighbors and men from the police department buried Fatema, a covid-19 defected dead body", (Hamid & Jahangir, 2020). During the lockdown, many people have lost their jobs. As a result, they required financial support from the government. The police have played a role impartially in the distribution of all these necessary commodities. "The police personnel are the main driving force and have been helping the nation in achieving success in maintaining strict lockdown measures across the country", (Grover, et.al, 2020). Finally, the police have done many activities. The main activities of the police personnel can be identified as Enforcing the lockdown through movement restriction; Assistance to the vulnerable during the crisis; Contact tracing and use of investigation and intelligence skills; First responder interface and personal risks.

METHODS

Research type:

This study is by nature qualitative. The ontological assumption behind this research decision was that the reality of policing is diverse (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). Besides, an epistemological understanding was that knowledge about policing is constructed based on people's subjective experiences and contexts (ibid). So, discourse analysis, which is a linguistic approach to understand peoples' meaning of their lived experiences of the world or phenomenon (Brown et al., 1983), was decided to carry out.

Data

The public comments posted below a video (got viral on 28th of April, 2021) post concerning the Indian police behavior and treatment in Indian Express (<https://indianexpress.com/>), an online newspaper page served the data purpose of this study.

Data collection and processing

60 comments were purposely first copied from the online site because it was found that after 60 there came the repetitions of the same comments and opinions. Afterwards, not all the posted comments were finalized. Only the comments that contained obvious Hallidian modality elements were coded. The comments were then pursued into clauses. The pursued clauses were put in different columns in tables under some titles.

Data analysis

A summative content analysis was carried out to find out the frequencies and other patterns of the data. The data were analyzed using Halliday's systemic functional grammar in general and mood and modality in particular. The data were inductively analyzed to find different themes about Indian policing during Pandemic time added with previous public experiences. The modality meaning was then found out and a qualitative product in the form of a descriptive text was presented.

Instruments:

As this is qualitative research, the main research instrument was the principal researcher and his associate. In addition, mobile calculators, computers with internet connection, modality tables adapted from Halliday also served as the assisting non-human instruments.

FINDINGS

The modality findings from the pursued clauses are presented in the chart below:

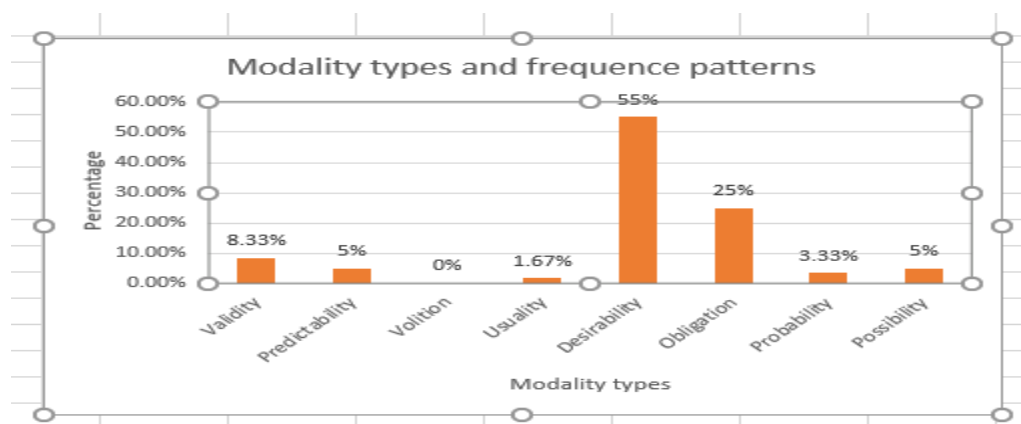


Chart-2: Modality types and frequency patterns

Respondents' gender of the top three modality categories is shown in the following chart below.

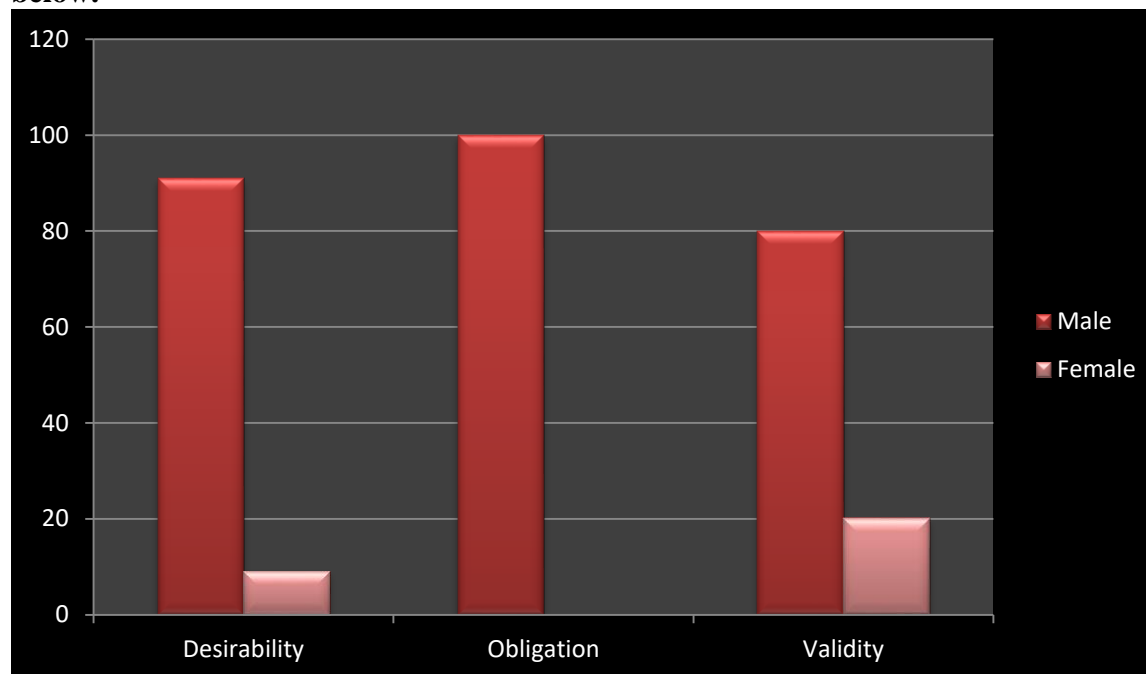


Chart 3: Gender representation of the top three modality types

DISCUSSION


In the findings it is shown that the highest modality category that as employed in the comments is desirability which is 55%. In contrast, the lowest modality that got explicit in the comments of the people is usuality that is only 1.67 in terms of percentage. The other modality types after the highest one in accordance with consecutive manner such as: second highest and the third highest, are obligation and validity. Furthermore, this study includes another comparative chart specifically in the finding segment where the sex of commentators is exhibited particularly of those three successive modality types namely desirability, obligation and validity. Almost 91% male participants express desirability in their respective comments. Interestingly, there was not even a single female commentator who leaves a comment that expresses obligation. However, in validity, we find few comments of female gender which is only 20 in percentage.

Police personnel are such types of actors or law enforcing agents who are often called out to watch out, and interfere with each sector of the society and the state visibly or invisibly. Basically, the police are formed and employed for the public service. As such, people have some desires around the police service that are of late seen to be expressed through people's comments and posts in the social media platform namely Facebook, Twitter and so on. This study set out to carry a linguistic investigation into the public opinions, feelings, and expectations regarding the Indian police with a temporal specification of Covid-19 pandemic and the emergencies arisen from it.

In terms of modality, the study comes up with the following meanings of the public comments:

Desirability is an emotional and practical expectation that emerges from the experience of the past and wishes to happen in the future. According to Golant & Sillince (2007) modality of desire is also associated with the actions of an organization which may be exemplified by the police. When an event doesn't happen according to the rules and regulations and goes on and on, the expectations of the public are reiterated and reminded in the forms of reactions-verbal or non-verbal. The data in this study reveal that 'modality of desire' represents the highest frequency in all kinds of modality categories. In this study, we employed modality as a research tool to investigate the public perception towards the Indian Police. We took the comments that were put forth below a video that got viral on 23-04-2021 concerning the police behavior in an event that took place in Tripura, India. However, we found those desires in the form of comments of the people where languages are used to denote their opinions and views; especially, a particular element that indicates desires in those comments is called Modality. Moreover, modality also represents other expressions of people. The data in this study reveal that 'modality of desire' represents the highest frequency in all kinds of modality categories. The main desires about police that were expressed through their comments are: Demand for professional behavior, Ensuring Punishment, Equal Treatment, Expression of hatred.

Table-2: Modality meaning of desires expressed through the public comments

Modality of Desires	
Themes	Expressed Modality Meaning
Public Desire of the Indian Police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Demand of Professional Behavior ➤ Ensuring Punishment ➤ Equal Treatment ➤ Expression of Hatred

In a total of 33 out of 60 people's comments, the above public desires are expressed regarding the Indian police behavior during an international emergency such as the Covid-19 pandemic. This highest modality meaning of public desires of police behavioral aspects towards human and service got reflected through the highest occurrence of the 55% modality of desirability. This desirability of the modality expressions of the public comments is rather experience-based and perception dominated as evidenced by the study of Belur (2011) and some others.

Demand of Professional Behavior

It is a common thing for any professional worker to have a right and rule-based behaviour related to their work or profession. As such, the police force has some rules that are determined by the constitutions of every country. They are bound to be friendly and flexible to the public. Moreover, they need to be careful about every step they take because they are entrusted to one of the most important roles to play for the restoration and retention of peace and order in the state. However, what we see in these comments are rather frustration over the lack of proper police behavior and

it results in angry and disappointing emphasis and reminder of what the public expect from the police. In this sense, the Facebook comments serve as the vehicle of public reminder for the police personnel in question in specific and the whole force in general. Almost half of the commenters desire that police should come up with their professional behaviour. For example, some comments say, “*police should not behave with the public like this*”, because they are the main reason why police are being deployed and enjoy all the state facilities. As detailed in literature review, police should be protecting the rights of the public as well as giving them safety. So, it is mandatory for them to act according to the rules. But, oblivious of their do’s and don’ts, they are even violating public rights and putting them into an untoward, unexpected situation by their rude behaviour. As a result, people desire for their behaviour to be corrected, which means that they are not going through the rules and regulations which the public in general expect from the police. This finding about police behaviour matches with the study of Sanghaik (2013), in which it is found that the distrust against police in some parts of India is so high that citizens have started living with crime or taking the shelter of parallel protection rackets. So, it is clear that the lack of honesty and certain behavioural deviations of the police have created the fear in people’s minds out of which they let out honestly what treatment they deserve from the police in terms of morality, honesty, professionalism, and above the constitution.

Punishment is generally given or required to apply against those who have done something wrong intentionally or something unexpected according to moral, constitution, profession and ethics. It is further found that 11 people among 33 strongly demand that the police personnel in question be punished. Such types of expectations and demands are expressed through the use of modality in their respective comments. Few comments are:

“He has abused his power as public servant and can be booked under IPC as well. Such idiot officers are forgetting that they are servants of public. The public should immediately give harsh punishment. He should be suspended. He should be immediately suspended for this act”.

All these comments and the commenters' desirability prove that the Indian police are not on the right track. As they desire for ensuring punishment on the police, it denotes that the Indian police don’t care about following the rules and their deviation has gone up at the height of crime or serious violation. As detailed in the literature review, the Indian police are seen to disobey the rules of court during lockdown. Moreover, the general people are not satisfied with the behavior of the Indian police. This finding matches with the study of Belur, (2011) that finds that all 107 respondents in the study said that they are not satisfied with the working of Indian police professionals.

Equality or the equal treatment is to behave with all the people in the same manner, tune and mood impartially; so that no one is given priority to anyone regarding race, social status, religion, color and gender. The police force must be impartial as they are the men who are bound to ensure equality professionally, ethically and democratically. This is also detailed in the literature review, equality among the people irrespective of religions, dignity, caste and class etc. is highly expected

to be ensured and prioritized by the police when dealing with the public at all times. Equal treatment is one of the themes of desirability that got expressed in the comments of two commenters:

“This kind of behaviour should be treated in politician really. Anyone who justifies such acts on whatever grounds should ask himself that can he do the same in a political rally”.

In these comments they demand that police must behave with the public in the same way as they do with the political leaders. Thus implies that the police are influenced by politics and they have a discriminatory treatment towards public and political men. The modality reveals that the Indian police are not impartial at all. From the past experience the common people say that as citizens the public and political leaders should be treated equally in future. This is what they desire. It also means that the Indian police are politically biased. This finding matches with the study of Analytical Reports", 2021: the Second Administrative Reforms Commission has noted that this power has been misused, and ministers have used police forces for personal and political reasons.

Furthermore, hatred (if this is not the right word) at least a high level of feeling of disgust is one of the expressed meanings of desirability that also is found from the modality, it actually expresses the bitter experience of people with the police. The comments where severe kind of hatred got exposed are:

“such personalities should not sit in some dignified chair, they should be dismissed; in fact, they should be insulted publicly.”

So, the language used in these comments is disclosing the extent of disgust and disrespect towards police. As a result, they are expecting discipline accountability from this force. This desire came based on the commenters' continuous experience of bad activity of police which affected the public firsthand experience and observation and awareness in all ways. In literature review we mentioned that police have become more aggressive and active in crime that they are not sparing the commoners, (Marenin, 1996, p. 139). This finding matches with the study of Ajayi & Longe (2015). So, police need to change their gesture and start acting according to rules. Otherwise, this feeling of disgust and disappointment of the public could turn into some big mess that can ruin the social peace totally.

Although there is a huge and strong direction to the police behavioral problems, two comments that express volition and obligation for the police to be rigid and hard on the public as the other comment justifies it by pointing to the time of Covid-19 as an emergency time of need for a stern policing. They mentioned;

“DM is right. People should support him. 2. These are dangerous times and people need to be aware.”

This modality analysis finds that in this situation the police are on the right track. There is another exceptional comment which strongly supports my literature. In this comment the person wants the PM's interruption.

“Our honorable PM should set up to control them and punish them.”

Desires even run toward the interface of the state head i.e., the prime minister who is expected to be obliged to take into account the regular police behavior towards the public as a serious issue as others. It expresses that the Indian police are too reckless to be controlled or punished by anyone. There is only one left who is the Prime Minister to give punishment. That's why; the commenter draws the attention of the highest authority. It further suggests that the public have no trust on the lower level of authority who arguably could resolve this police-public gap and disappointment.

Apart from this, our finding includes another kind of modality which expresses obligation in people's opinion for police and other associated facts, which is the highest reaction after desirability. The thing obligation here means the force that a person puts in their proposition to express the significance of a certain matter. In general, the modality expresses actions that have a need. Actually, obligation applied where doing something is more than wish or sympathy rather, it is moral, social or constitutional commitment. However, modality is the main weapon to disclose such views of the speaker's mind as, it is alluded in theory of modality that this element is used to give a clear meaning of a message by which the receiver could get what it actually meant- either it is advice, order or moral/social need. In fact, this kind of modality which expresses *obligation* is called modulation by the linguist. Basically, this type of modality carries the tone of people's opinion where they say something which is an obligation or an option. However, we found this kind of modality in the comments of that video where people say what acts are obliged to take by the government, police or public.

Though this video is connected to the public and police, most of the comments express negative perceptions towards police where the public are being marked as victims. In total, thirteen comments consist of modulation in our finding, where most of them are talking about police behaviour. Constitutionally, police are obliged to behave gently with the public but here people are reminding them how they should behave, which means police behaviour is not happening as it should be. Some comments are:

“A civil must know how to behave publicly.”; “He should be suspended for his behaviour.”; “If you really follow the rule, you must have manners to deal with it.”; “This DM should be sacked first for the way he is misbehaving with people”...

It is actually the reaction that came from the public after observing the police behaviour. This behaviour made people raise their voice to say that the gesture of police needs to be changed according to rules; they cannot behave like this because they are meant for being gentle and friendly, it is also included in literature review that they are said to be the friend of commoners. Moreover, it is also mentioned that police are actually appointed to look after the public and protect

them from every uneven situation, but here the scene seems to be the opposite where the public are victims of police's misdeed. Interestingly, the study of Ouss & Rappaport,(2020) says the opposite and maintains that police behaviour is not getting worse and they show the reason behind it is people's response to their mistakes. But, here in our finding we found that police behaviour should be bound by rules because they are crossing their limits. As a result, some people are also demanding punishment because it is the consequence the police should suffer if they misbehave like this.

"He must punished."; "Action must be taken against him"; "A civil must know how to behave publicly."

These are the comments that show people's urges to see the police are being punished departmentally or brought to accountability. Literally, these police should be given punishment according to rules. The study of Stephens (2016) goes with this paper's findings as he says that "the focus of discipline is predominately punishment, not behavior change". This paper also discusses the negligence of authority regarding the police's mistakes, as the police are not pressurized to be accountable. So, ultimately, it is very necessary to bring change in the behaviour of police and also treat them with an equal law of punishment so that the society doesn't become poisonous with their unfair activity. In fact, police should be handled more strictly by the government because many facts of social activities depend on their behaviour, honesty and loyalty.

In fact, validity expresses the authenticity of the speakers' judgment about the proposition. Through validity it is expressed that if a person is certain or uncertain in his saying. According to the modality theory the truthfulness of any proposition is also covered by modality- either the speaker's opinion is absolutely true or it has less authenticity. Similarly, this idea is also mentioned in the theory part of the modality as "truth value of modality is known as value" (see Halliday 1994: 362). In fact, in a comment validity is expressed from the experience of the past. It is seen that most of the people in their comments give the surety or certainty about the Indian police personnel experiencing from the past.

"They don't have guts to stop politicians and they can only show their power to innocent people".

In this comment the habitual practice of the Indian police is expressed. The speaker makes this comment based on the previous experience and knowledge of the Indian police. He strongly says that the Indian police are just showing their power to the general public. It is also mentioned in the literature review, though they are not allowed to commit any miscreant using their executive power, there is an opposite scenario, (Belur, 2011). In another comment the commentator added the highest truth value in his sentence that was put under a viral video about Indian police as comment. As exactly what he has written as

"You can't slap a pujari or bride or groom's parents".

That means he wanted to say that he has never seen such type of behavior from the police or the Indian police are not constitutionally allowed to show such arrogant behavior to the general public.

Obviously, the person's certainty proves that many Indian police figures are not following the constitutional rules and regulations. In this paper it is also mentioned above particularly in the literature review section that the Indian police don't care about the system and behave undemocratically; Sharma, A. (2013). A famous researcher also supports our finding that "it is a truism that police in India generally lack legitimate authority and public trust" (Jauregui, 2013). One of the commentators gives *assurance* in his text about the behavior of the Indian police. She writes:

"His behaviour was not like DM it was like road type Gunda".

Through this comment this commentator expresses the highest amount of truth. As she didn't notice such behavior from any police person in the past, she could make this comment. As well as, it is also clearly said that this type of behavior is seen in the people who look like terrorists.

Analyzing all those modalities in their comments it is found that the attitudes and behavior of the Indian police must be changed. However, two of the people gave an opposite reaction about the Indian Police that got explicit in their comments. Moreover, they blame the general public rather than the police panel. Their comments are:

"In a country like India, where people don't care about the rule of law, such exemplary outburst is the need of the hour. I would say he did a good job".

In these comments they wanted to say that the police did the right job. This opinion, however, does not dominate the findings.

Recommendations:

As this is qualitative research, the results are not in essence generalizable. The comments were aimed at a particular negative act of the Indian police during the pandemic lockdown. In fact, Indian police may have a great deal of achievements, services, and accomplishments. Nevertheless, based on the modality meanings of the random commenters about the Indian police as found in this study may have some level of transferability to some state contexts. So, the study leaves the following recommendations for the authority concerned to take into account for better policing:

1. Police personnel should treat all the people equally without taking consideration race, sex, religion and caste.
2. All individuals of the police force should be aware of their power and its exercise according to their status and ranks by the department.
3. They must be more polite and well-behaved so that the public can feel free to rush to them in any crises.
4. The authority concerned needs to set down a list of strict policies and rules for every staff lest they should get involved in any offence.
5. After all, police must be given exemplary punishment in case they are proven rules violators.

6. All police staff and the whole department itself as well must be free from the practice of control of politics and its all manifestations.
7. The govt. or the department should give a handsome salary to them so as to not run after illegal or black money.
8. Every single police person's activity must be monitored secretly as long as they are on duties.
9. The police department must announce a system or a specific hotline number for the public so that they can draw the attention of higher authorities against the police's misconduct at any time.
10. The police personnel should be more impartial in behavior and morally, ethically and logically stronger.

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Appendices:

A: Clauses pursued according to domal and modality types (data sets)

S. No	Respondent	Gender	Sentence or Clause	Modal	Type Of Modality
1	Shaswat Saurav	Male	DM here could have arrested all even if he wanted to stop marriage.	Could have	Possibility
2	PT Muan	Female	This is India any officer can do anything.	Can	Possibility
3	Rubi Sodani	Female	This paid media and corrupt ministers can never digest this.	Can	Surety
4	Pawan Kr	Male	He has abused his power as a public servant and can be booked under IPC as well.	Has / Can	Desirability
5	Aqeel Qureshi	Male	Indian police can show their muscles only on common people	Can	Predictability

			but they stand with folded hands in front of politicians.		
6	Orkho	Male	The Administrative Staff College must have a catch up course on how to behave in Indian weddings.	Must	Obligation
7	Bhim Negi	Male	You must be right but look at PM of country and their andhbhakts who don't follow covid protocols arrest them as was done to Norway PM	Must	Surety
8	Daljit Singh Matharoo	Male	Just wondering if it was a political party how / what he would have done?	Would	Probability
9	Anil Kulkarni	Male	They should act within rules.	Should	Desirability
10	Anmol Gautam	Male	The DM behaved disgracefully and he should be held accountable as well.	Should	Disirability
11	CA Vishal	Male	Maybe he has lost someone important and closed to his heart due to covid-19.	Maybe	Probability
12	Priya Gangadharan	Female	These are dangerous times and people need to be aware.	Need	Desirability
13	Phil Rogers	Male	He is a DM. He ought to maintain decorum.	Ought to	Obligation
14	Sayantana Halder	Male	He's used to calling uneducated politicians sir sir.	Used to	Usuality
15	Archi Goyal	Female	He could have fined all of them or issued an arrest warrant, but by demeaning all of them, it seems he is drunk in power.	Could	Desirability
16	Rakesh Kumar	Male	India is going to suffer coz of illiterate and irresponsible politicians.	Is going to	Suerity
17	Akshit Awasthi	Male	He can take action without abusing his power.	Can	Possibility
18	Syed Hanzala Shamim	Male	If you really following the rule hence must have manner to deal with it.	Must	Obligation
19	Arashdeep Shergill	Male	DM is right... people should support him.	Should	Desirability

20	Satish Kumar	Male	This DM should be sacked first for the way he is misbehaving with people.	Should	Obligation
21	Harshit Jain	Male	They don't have guts to stop politicians and they can only show their power to innocent people.	Can	Validity
22	Mukul Gupta	Male	Anyone who justifies such acts on whatever grounds should ask himself that can he do the same in a political rally??	Should / can	Desirability
23	Rajat Sethi	Male	I would say he did a good job.	Would / Did	Validity
24	Anurag Chourasia	Female	This kind of behaviour should be treated in politician really.	Should	Desirability
25	Mehta Arvind Vaid	Male	Civil Services Selection System needs to be reviewed so that people with barbaric mentality don't enter in backbone of Indian Civil Services.	Need	Obligation
26	Sushma Suman	Male	Before taking action on those people, this DM should be restugated immediately.	Should	Desirability
27	A S Khumancha	Male	In a country like India, where people don't care about the rule of law, such exemplary outburst is the need of the hour.	Don't care	Validity
28	Rajkumar Yadav	Male	Behavior of DM should be criticized.	Should	Desirability
29	Arjun Kalai	Male	He could've issued them the notice letter stating that the marriage function needs to be stop and needs to be shutdown the hall by 22hrs at any cost.	Could/ Need	Desirability
30	Sriti Mondal	Female	His behaviour was not like DM it was like road type Gunda.	Like	Validity
31	Sanjay Bisht	Male	He must bear the loss due to his misbehave.	Must	Obligation
32	Santosh Kumar Pandey	Male	Govt. Servant can't behave with public like this. He must punished.	Can't, must	Desirability, obligation
33	Pradeep Keyal	Male	This guy should be sacked	Should be	Desirability

34	Abhinav Kumar	Male	Must be suspend at all	must	Obligation
35	Ansuman Senapati	Male	Such idiot officers are forgetting that they are servants of public. The public should immediately give harsh punishment.	should	Desirability
36	Vivek jain	Male	He is DM he should not behave like this	Should not	Desirability / Obligation
37	Satish Kumar	Male	This DM should be sacked first for the way he is misbehaving with people	Should be	Desirability
38	Syed Hanzala Shamim	Male	You can't slap a pujari or bride or groom's parent.	,can't	Validity
39	Raghvendra Sarita Shringirishi	Male	He did no wrong. But could have been done in a certain manner as well.	Could have	Predictability
40	Himanshu Shekar Yadav	Male	Action must be taken against him	Must be	Obligation
41	Anil Choudhary	Male	Equal and same amount of treatment should be given to these officers	Should be	Desirability
42	Phil Rogers	Male	He cannot heckle a police officer like that . You can't level random allegations.	Can't	Desirability
43	Anjan Kumar Nayak	Male	A civil must know how to behave publicly.	must	Obligation
44	Bakul Chakraborty	Male	Our honorable PM should set up to control them and punish them.	should	Desirability
45	Abhilash Krishnan	Male	He could have assumed a professional demeanour.	Could have	Predictability
46	Nitish Sharma	Male	Such people have no right to sit on this dignified chair. It should be dismissed with immediate effect.	Should be	Desirability
47	Aqeel Qureshi	Male	If I become minister I will make sure that police should call sir or madam to common citizen	should	Desirability

48	Harshit Jain	Male	He should be immediately suspended for this act.	Should be	Desirability
49	Abhinav Saxena	Male	He should have arrest as per the law not to hit and abuse them.	Should have	Desirability
50	Julius Joseph	Male	He shouldn't be treating people like this. He must be dismissed or terminated from his role.	Shouldn't be , must be	Desirability , obligation
51	Anmol Gautam	Male	The DM behaved disgracefully and he should be held accountable as well.	Should be	Desirability
52	Akshit Awasthi	Male	An FIR should be filed against him for beating people and abusing his power.	Should be	Desirability
53	Debasish Sarkar	Male	He should have taken measures but this is not right way.	Should have	Desirability
54	Ujjwal Kumar	Male	The DM should not have tore up the permission paper and should not behaved in a arrogant manner.	Should not	Desirability
55	PT Muan	Male	He should be suspended.	Should be	Desirability
56	Ram Pal Sharma	Male	Civil must know their limits too	must	Obligation
57	Anil Kulkarni	Male	They should act within rules,fine,arrest if necessary but cannot go to inflicting blows.	Should, cannot	Desirability , obligation
58	Mohd shoeb	Male	This officer needs to be humiliated publicly and should be suspended for his behaviour.	Needs to be, should be	Desirability, obligation
59	Mohammad Iqbal	Male	Bengal needs such an officer, should be posted there immediately	Needs, should be	Desirability, Desirability
60	Jithin Abraham	Male	But the officer should have acted without arrogance.	Should have	Desirability

Appendices B:

<https://fb.watch/9bJOpkvSpz/>, this is the link to the viral video that got published on 28th of April, 2021. Furthermore, this video is the only source of data collection for this study. All those 60 sentences/clauses were picked from the comments that have modality features put below this video.