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Surveying Citizen Satisfaction with the Criminal Justice System in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Models of the criminal justice system have developed from focusing on the traditional role of the system to acknowledging the position of the victims. The latter recognises that victims' insights are important in determining if a system functions effectively. The objective of this study is to explore what entails satisfaction of citizens towards the criminal justice system. The current study employed a survey method to ask 166 Malaysian respondents to list down what services should be offered and demeanours shown by criminal justice personnel (i.e. police, court personnel) in order for them to be satisfied with the system. The responses were analysed according to themes that were both specific to the sample of the study and parallel to the variables discussed in the literature to check for universality. The findings compiled 12 satisfaction components that were consistent with the ones presented in the literature and 11 components that were specific to the sample used in this study. Implications of this study include highlighting that satisfaction is not one-dimensional, but based on patterns.

Keywords: Criminal justice system, victim satisfaction

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INTRODUCTION

There are numerous reasons for the long-standing establishment of criminal justice systems around the world. Various models have been designed to explain why and how criminal justice systems work. Among the earlier models that focused on the traditional role of the criminal justice system was Packer's (1964) Crime Control model,

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which asserted that the criminal justice system was there to help suppress criminal activities. In the same article, Packer proposed that another role of the criminal justice system was shown in his second model, the Due Process model that argued that the criminal justice system should deal with offenders just as the standard "orders" did. Both models had an emphasis on crime and offenders. If a criminal justice system worked properly, then crime rates could be reduced. While these models had a good foundation in describing how a criminal justice system worked, it lacked an emphasis on victim's rights.

To close the gap, Stickles (2008) proposed a new model that acknowledged victims in the processes of the criminal justice system while maintaining the latter's role in matters pertaining to crime and offenders. The model, named the Victim Satisfaction model, described a criminal justice system in which victims could have a safe platform from which to exercise their rights after being victimised. This model suggested that in order to ensure victims' satisfaction in undergoing the criminal justice process, three components needs to be fulfilled:

1. Victims of crimes needs to be sure that they did have a role in the criminal justice system, just as they would in a civil court.
2. The prosecutor needs to assume the responsibility to defend a victim's rights and ensure that the victim's needs were fulfilled.
3. The criminal justice system has to make it a priority to satisfy victims' interests.

These components, however, have a strong emphasis on the processes of court. A typical criminal justice system of the modern world has three components: 1) the police, 2) the court and 3) the corrections body (May, Minor, Ruddell, & Metthews, 2007). The moment a person is victimised and he or she decides to make a police report, he/she will be involved with, at the very least, the police. In court, however, victims usually are there mainly as eyewitnesses (Mahmud & Ruslan, 2011).

When facing a police officer, the victim will have to give his or her account of the victimisation. At this stage, the police's demeanour and services are important and become a component of victims' satisfaction. When and if the case is brought up to court, the victims will have to give their testimony as part of the evidence against the offender. In prison, however, it is mainly the offenders who are involved while the victims' role usually ends after the testimony process in court. Because of this, and also because of the fact that victims are slowly being recognised in the criminal justice system, assessing satisfaction of victims with the whole process is pertinent. Most literature on victim satisfaction focuses on the satisfaction when dealing with the police (e.g. Tewksbury & West, 2001; Myhill & Upson, 2007), and the criminal justice system in general (e.g. Hotaling & Buzawa, 2003; Stickels, 2008).

Importance of Measuring Victims' Satisfaction

The evolution from Packer's (1964) legally oriented model and the fixation on the traditional role of the criminal justice system to the call for the recognition of victims' role by various academicians and professionals was one of the reasons why victim satisfaction became an important criterion for an effective system. One of the main arguments for victims' role was that crimes were more of a transgression against an individual, rather than against the legal system or society (Zehr & Gohar, 2002; Stickels, 2008). Moreover, the impact of the criminal justice process on victims can influence their reporting behaviours (Hotaling & Buzawa, 2003). This is due to the after-arrest event where the victims quickly realise that they are losing control of the case. If victims feel dissatisfied with the criminal justice process, it could be because the system is ignoring the main component and actor in a criminal event, which is the victim him/herself. In addition, police demeanour could also have an impact on victims' reporting behaviour (Tewksbury & West, 2001), especially in the case of repeat victims (van Dijk, 2001).

Reporting behaviour can also be related to satisfaction with the police. A number of studies have done satisfaction studies with victims of crime on their working with the police (e.g. Tewksbury & West, 2001; Myhill & Upson, 2007). Police officers do not work alone. They have to rely on the community to be their "eyes" so that if a crime is about to happen, or is happening, then members of the community could take the initiative to call the local police station. However, this cooperation can be influenced by the community's sense of satisfaction with the police in the first place. If members of a particular community do not feel as if the police have done a satisfactory job, they might hesitate to take any action, allowing a crime to be perpetrated.

Rape cases are claimed to be one of the least reported crimes (Rahman, Z. A., Stapa, Z., Omar, M., Long, A., Badaruddin, F., Awang, J., *et al*., 2011). Some have argued that rape victims feel too deep a sense of violation and humiliation to report the rape to police. However, it could also be that their reluctance to make a police report might actually be due to the demeanour of officers handling the case. An example of this was recorded when one of two officers who were handling a rape case involving a small girl stated, "You listen to her story if you want, I'm bored" (Oswin, 2012). Regardless of whether the victim had heard what he said or not, making such a statement reflected directly on the quality of his integrity, and it is this that affects victim satisfaction.

One might argue that the criminal justice system actually helps to satisfy a victim's feeling of wanting to take revenge. While logically in every criminal event, the victim is likely to experience this feeling, to assume that punishing the perpetrator can mitigate the feeling is without proper foundation. In his study, Orth (2004) found that while wanting to take revenge was felt, what seemed to mitigate the feeling was financial compensation for the loss

inflicted by the crime. However, in spite of the financial compensation, emotional and psychological turmoil caused by the crime still remained.

In another study, victims' feeling of wanting to take revenge was classified into two: 1) comparative suffering i.e. when the victims wanted the same thing to happen to the perpetrator, and 2) the understanding hypothesis i.e. in wanting revenge to make the perpetrator understand how the crime had affected the victim (Gollwitzer, Meder, & Schmitt, 2011). The researchers found that victims felt more satisfied when they knew that the offender understood that the victims were negatively affected by the crime, which is what recognition of victims' rights is, rather than that the offender should suffer in the same way, which is mostly a traditional view of criminal justice.

Even with the traditional model of the criminal justice system that is offender-oriented, the criminal justice system cannot deny the fact that there is a good chance that a person has been victimised. It has been argued that the effectiveness of a criminal justice system is measured through its accountability in handling a criminal case (Doak, 2011). This accountability, then, can be reflected through the satisfaction felt by the victim of the crime. An approach to the criminal justice system, Restorative Justice (RJ), is known to bring forward victims of crime in its processes. It has been found that accountability in RJ has been rated to be higher, allowing the victim to feel more satisfied with the overall processes (Poulson, 2003).

Another importance of measuring victim satisfaction is the notion that a victim's depth of satisfaction can show the psychological state of the victim (Gromet, Okimoto, Wenzel, & Darley, 2012). While focusing on punishing the offender can be costly, to bring forward victims, which is one of the ways to enhance satisfaction, in the criminal justice processes can actually change the course of criminal justice. Moreover, victim satisfaction can influence the punitive decision making of a third-party, especially when the satisfaction is informational to the victim's psychological state and the seriousness of the offence committed by the offender.

Components of Measurement for Satisfaction

The literature presented various variables that were used to indicate if a victim was satisfied with the criminal justice system. Table 1 shows a list of variables used in several studies to measure the satisfaction of victims of crime towards the police and the criminal justice system. Only empirical papers above the year 2000 were considered. This was not a meta-analysis, rather a preliminary set of categories of variables to measure when assessing satisfaction of crime victims towards a third party.

Orth (2004) and Gollwitzer, Meder and Schmitt (2011) in their studies did not explicitly assume the target of satisfaction (i.e. police and/or the criminal justice system), but only measured the satisfaction factors based on personal feelings of the victims i.e. wanting to take revenge. On the

other hand, for other studies mentioned in Table 1, "satisfaction" is used to indicate the objectives of the research. However, the components of "satisfaction" varied across these studies. Components used by Tewksbury and West (2001) are similar to the components used by Robinson and Stroshine (2005), except that the latter also added "seriousness," "understanding" and "listening."

There were also components that were used by only one study cited in this correct study. "Asking about fears of future crime" was only used as a component by Myhill and Upson (2007), "effects of the criminal justice system," "the gap between victim preferences and criminal justice action" and "characteristics of the study incidents" were only used by Hotaling and Buzawa (2003), while "helpfulness" was only used by Tewksbury and West (2001) and "respect" by the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia (2002).

Wu, Sun and Triplett (2009) did not use characteristics of the criminal justice personnel, but used rather the demographic background of the victims to see if different crime-related history, classes and neighborhood characteristics had any effects on the satisfaction level towards the system. This brought up the importance of including demographic data in studies of victim satisfaction, which the current study employed. This current research did not list all the components, rather only the ones highlighted by the authors in the literature as being useful in measuring satisfaction.

It can be seen from the list that basically, the variables of the previous studies can be divided into three groups: 1) the demographic and personal background (e.g. age, gender, class, history of victimisation etc.), 2) the technical aspects of dealing with the police and the criminal justice system (e.g. making an arrest, assuring confidentiality etc.), and 3) the demeanour shown by the third party (e.g. courtesy, helpfulness etc.). By demographic background, the author/s of a particular study highlighted the importance of measuring the satisfaction shown by the victims of crime. Orth's (2004) study, for example, regarded demographic background in categorising the sample in the research, but it was not a significant variable in the data analysis. Therefore, demographic background was not an important variable in his study as shown in the list.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

This study, then, aimed to compile the components of satisfaction with the criminal justice system by Malaysians and sought to explore:

1. What components were consistent with the ones presented in the literature and,
2. What components were specific to the sample of this study.

TABLE 1
Components of "Satisfaction" Used By Past Studies to Measure Victim Satisfaction with the Criminal Justice System

Variables	Tewksbury & West, 2001	Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia, 2002	Hotaling & Buzawa, 2003	Orth, 2004	Robinson & Stroshine, 2005	Myhill & Upson, 2007	Wu, Sun & Triplett, 2009	Gollwitzer, Meder & Schmitt, 2011
Interest/Taking situation seriously					/	/		
Information-related		/				/		
Response time	/				/	/		
Asking about fears for further crime						/		
History of offending and victimisation		/	/				/	
Continued on next page								
Effects of criminal justice system contact (what the police and legal professionals do to help victims)			/					
The gap between victim preferences and criminal justice action			/					
Characteristics of the study incident (i.e. nature of the crime and victimisation)			/					
Courtesy	/				/			
Concern	/	/			/			

TABLE 1 (Cont.)

Understanding			/		
Listening carefully		/	/		
Helpfulness	/				
Revenge			/		/
Class		/		/	
Neighbourhood characteristics				/	
Respect		/			
Service provision in special knowledge and skills area -arresting -arranging transportation -arranging other services -speaking to victim and perpetrator separately -etc.		/			
Assuring confidentiality and privacy		/			
Perception on safety		/			
Overall satisfaction	/	/	/		

METHOD

Sample

The sample of this study consisted of any Malaysian above the age of 18. Convenience sampling method was used to collect the data. The respondents comprised of Malaysians from different professional and socio-economic background including students, professors, janitors and housewives. Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents in terms of their age group, race and hometown state. A total of 166 respondents participated in this survey. The youngest respondent was 18 years old and the oldest respondent was 64 years old. Respondents came from all states in Malaysia. The highest number of respondents were from Penang followed by Selangor and then Perak. The "hometown state" means where the respondents were originally from. For example, if a student who answered the questionnaire studied in a university in Penang but was originally from Selangor, Selangor was indicated as the hometown. No minimum size of sample was set as the research aimed to collect the data until no new data was offered by the participants. Details of the distribution of the respondents are presented below.

Consent was obtained from all participants before the surveys. However, since this survey did not involve any sensitive population and did not involve an institution or a specific place that would require permission, it did not require permission to be granted by any parties or institutions.

TABLE 2
Distribution of Respondents

Variable		n	%
Age	18 – 27	89	53.6
	28 – 37	36	21.6
	38 – 47	22	13.2
	48 – 57	12	7.2
	58 – 64	7	4.2
	Missing	0	0
Gender	Male	66	39.7
	Female	100	60.3
	Missing	0	0
Race	Malay	92	55.4
	Chinese	41	24.7
	Indians	28	16.8
	Sikh	3	1.8
	Missing	2	1.2
Hometown state	Penang	48	28.9
	Selangor	39	23.5
	Perak	24	14.4
	Kuala Lumpur	10	6.0
	Johor	10	6.0
	Kedah	10	6.0
	Kelantan	6	3.6
	Pahang	5	3.0
	Negeri Sembilan	3	1.8
	Terengganu	3	1.8
	Sarawak	2	1.2
	Perlis	2	1.2
	Sabah	1	0.6

Design and Materials

The research was conducted face-to-face and via telephone interviews. The questionnaire contained both quantitative items, which were the demographic data and the history of victimisation/dealing with the criminal justice system. The qualitative items were also included. The questionnaire was divided into three sections:

1. The demographic data section (i.e. age, gender, socio-economic status etc.)
2. History of victimisation and history of dealing with the criminal justice system (with the police or court), if relevant to the particular respondent, and
3. Expectations of what the system should do and how it should respond to victims.

The third section was the main section to be observed. The participants were asked to list down two kinds of expectations. The first list was their expectations of services that they should obtain from the system. Examples of the responses were "to investigate" and "to file a report". The second list was their expectations of the demeanour that should be shown by the personnel in the system. Examples of their responses were "to be courteous" and "to be friendly".

The lists of expectations by the respondents were then categorised according to the similarities. To do this, two academics worked together and discussed what nouns or adjectives should be separated or kept together. For example, it was agreed that the phrases "to be honest" and "to be transparent" were to be accumulated under the theme "integrity" since both phrases were the indication of a member of staff's integrity in doing his/her job. The categories that emerged from the analysis are presented below.

TABLE 3
History of Victimisation and/or Dealing with Criminal Justice System

Variable	Responses	n	%
Have you been victimised for any crime?	Yes	105	63.2
	No	61	36.8
If yes, how many times?	1	(Out of 105) 79	75.2
	2	(Out of 105) 18	17.1
	3	(Out of 105) 6	5.7
	4	(Out of 105) 2	1.9
Have you had any experiences dealing with personnel in the criminal justice system?	Yes	113	68.0
	No	53	32.0
Overall, are you satisfied with the services given?	Yes	(Out of 113) 55	48.6
	No	(Out of 113) 58	51.4

RESULTS

Table 3 below shows the history of victimisation and/or dealing with the criminal justice system. By history, it is meant that that even if the respondents had not been victimised for any crime, he or she might have experienced dealing with criminal justice system such as reporting a crime for a family member. The crimes listed by 105 victim respondents in this survey included theft (n=54), burglary (n=19), snatch theft (n=18), sexual harassment (n=4), physical harassment (n=3), hit-and-run (n=2) and defamation (n=2). The rest (n=3) did not disclose the information.

Figure 1 and Figure 2 show the frequency of responses related to the respondents' expectations of services that should be delivered by personnel in the criminal justice system and the demeanour that should be shown by them sorted by race. Figure 3 and 4 show the frequency sorted by gender. Figure 5 and 6, on the other hand, show the frequency in general.

In general, "speedy services" (n=110) was the service most mentioned by the respondents as being what they expected from the criminal justice system. It is followed by "investigation" (n=62) and "general expectations" (n=56). On the other hand, the least mentioned service was "technology" (n=3), followed by "religious aspect of services" (n=4) and "communication skills" (n=9). A sizeable number of respondents also mentioned "victim-related services" (n=40), "patrol and field-related services" (n=32) and "arrest" (n=26).

Meanwhile, for expected demeanour, "friendliness" (n=91), "fairness" (n=78) and "integrity" (n=74) were the top three most mentioned. "Physical aspect" (n=1), "exemplariness" (n=2) and "readiness" (n=4) were the least expected demeanour shown by personnel of the criminal justice system.

Malay and female respondents were the highest demographics in this survey. Therefore, it was not surprising that Malay respondents had the highest frequency for each variable in the expected services to be offered by the criminal justice system personnel. However, even though there were more female than male respondents, it is interesting to note that male respondents had the higher frequency for "filing a report" (n=17), "technology" (n= 2) and "therapeutic services" (n=9).

However, for demeanour expected to be shown by the personnel, the Malay demographic had a lower frequency for "responsibility" (n=14), with the Chinese demographic having the highest (n=19). On the other hand, male respondents had a higher frequency of reporting "humility" (n=2), "readiness" (n=3) and "firmness" (n=12) than their female counterparts.

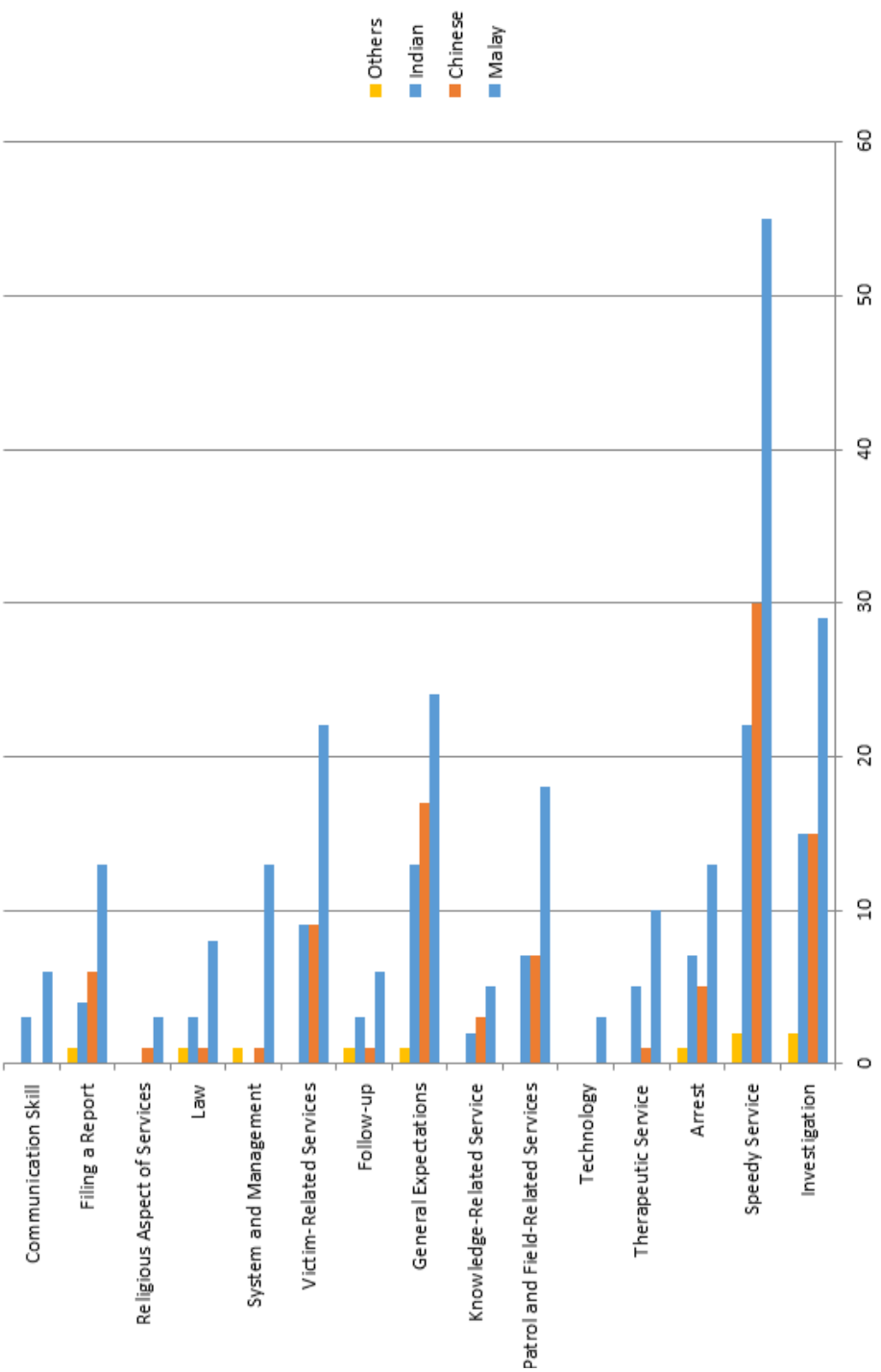

Fig.1 – Frequency of responses for expected services by race

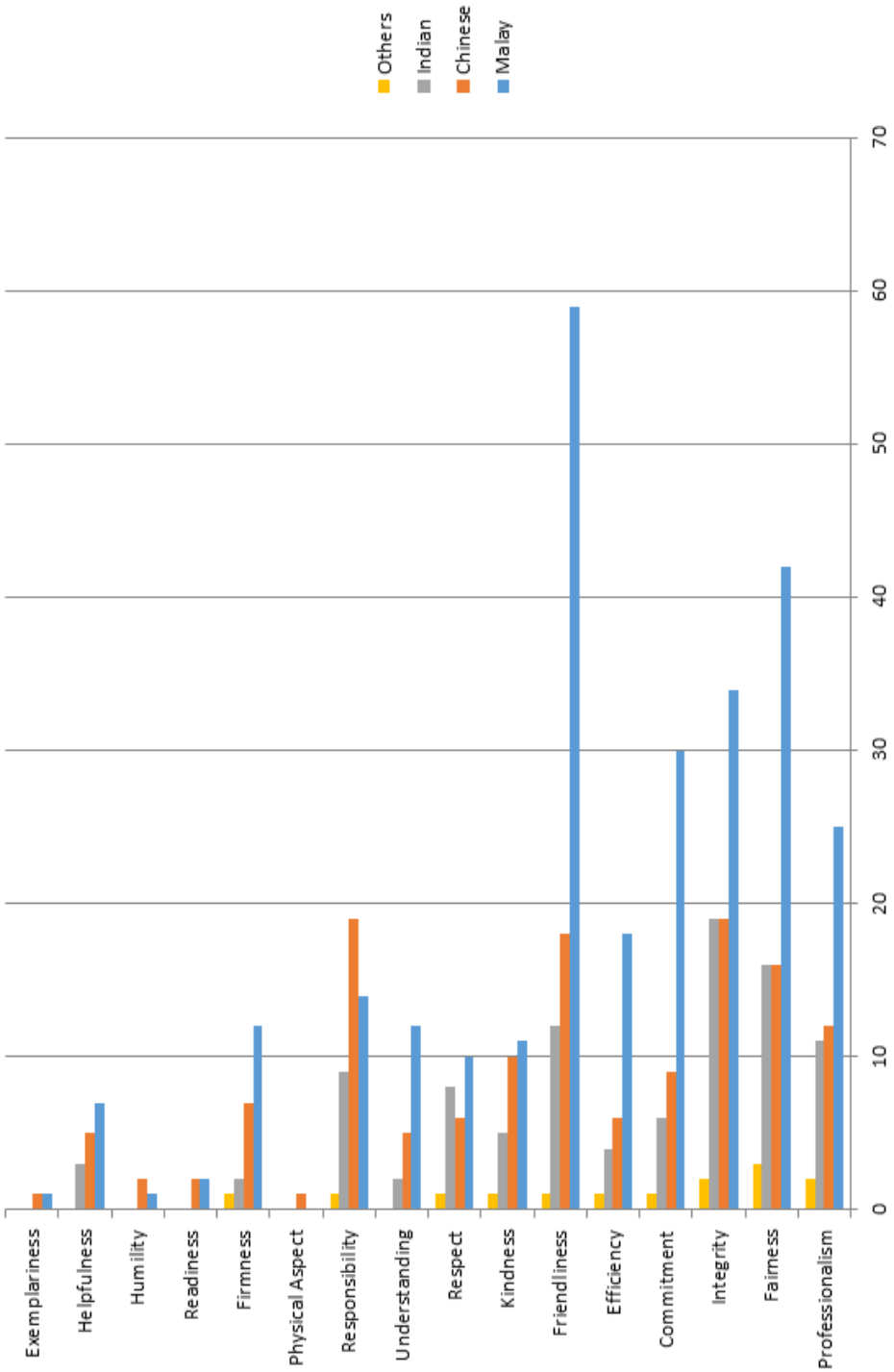

Fig.2: Frequency of responses for expected demeanour by race

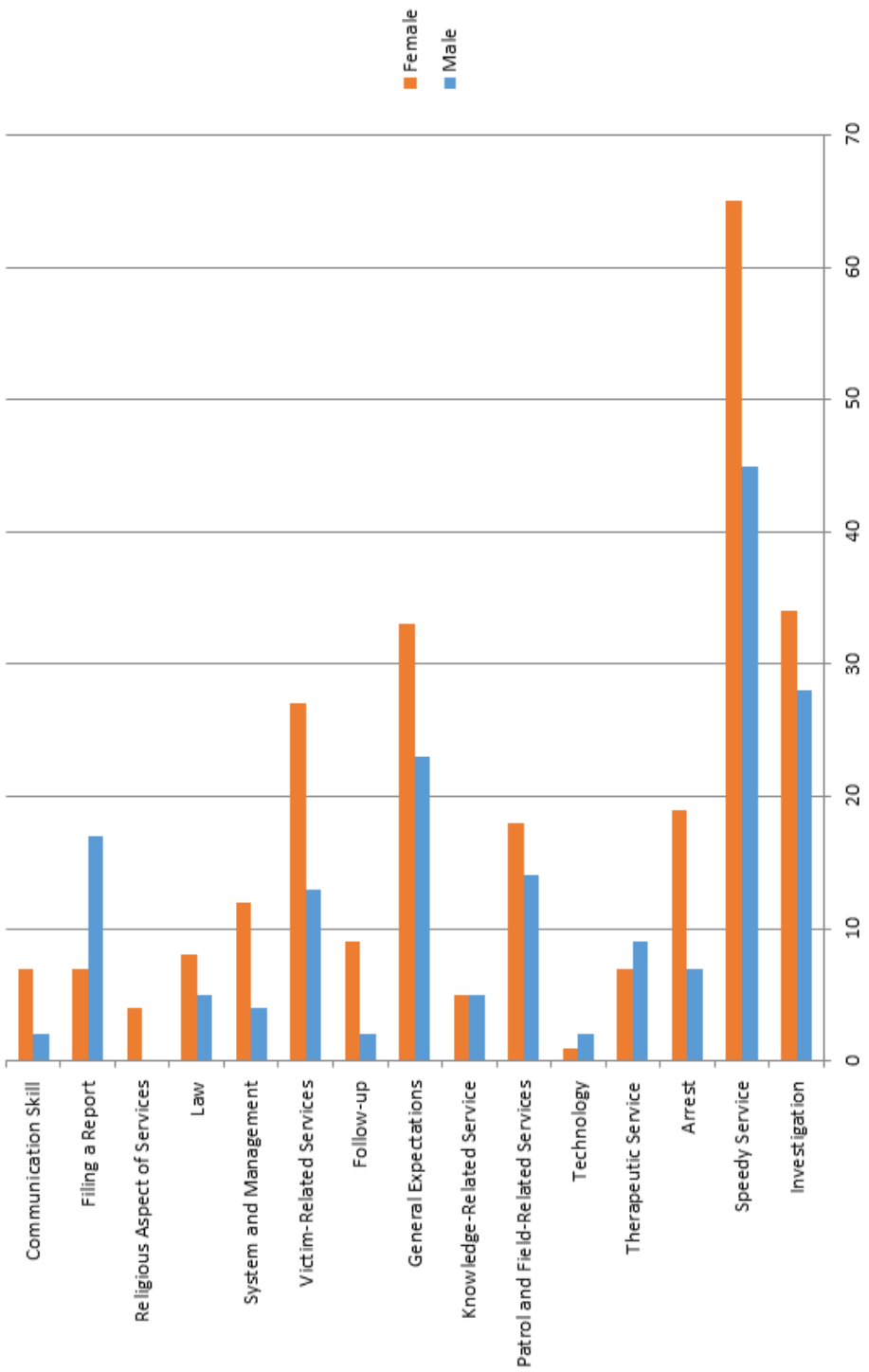

Fig.3: Frequency of responses for expected services by gender

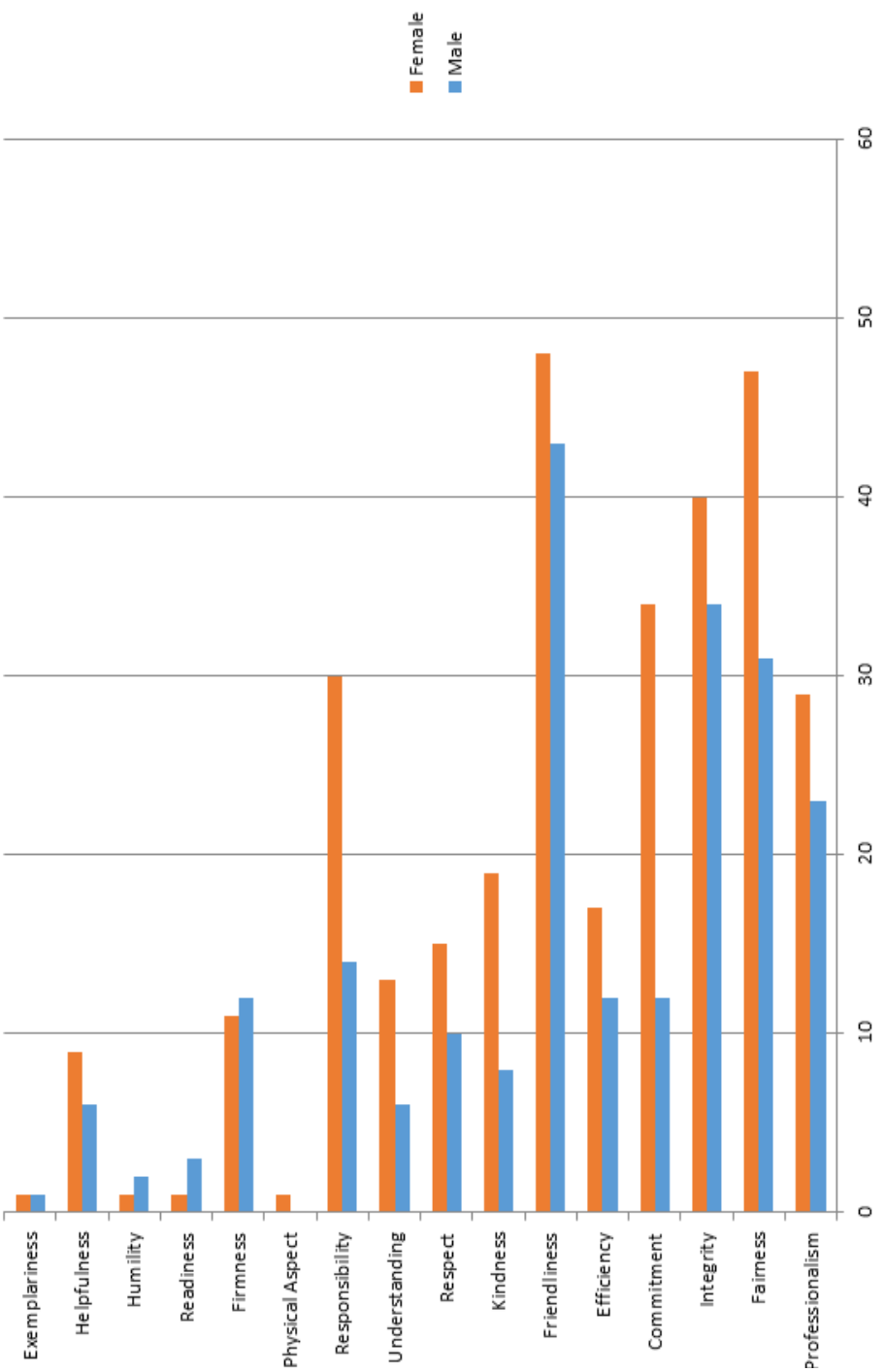

Fig.4 : Frequency of responses for expected demeanour by gender

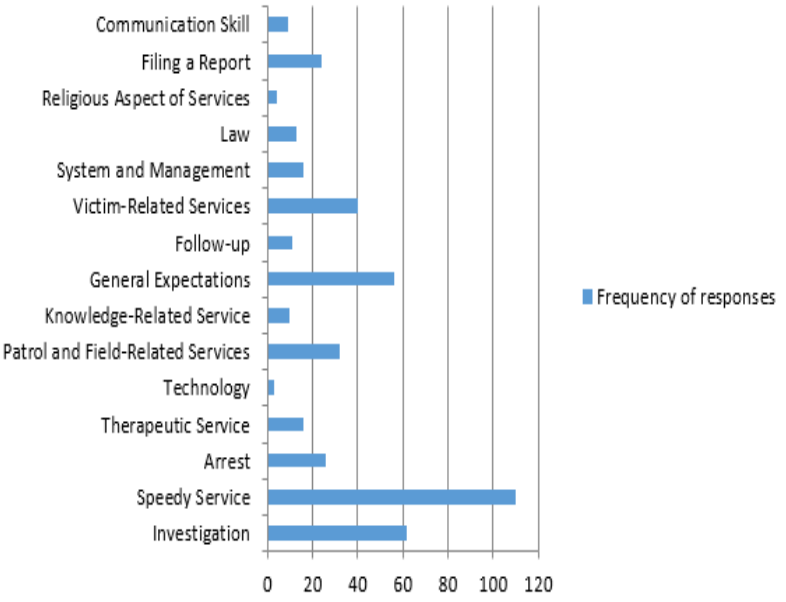

Fig. 5 : Frequency of responses for services that are expected to be delivered

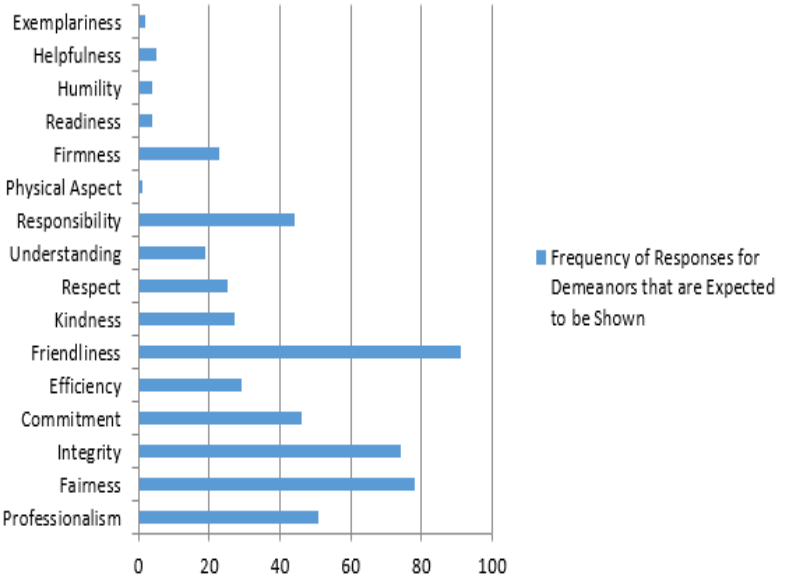

Fig.6 : Frequency of responses for demeanour that are expected to be shown

Although the responses were categorized, it was imperative to know the choices of words and terms that the respondents used to describe their expectations. The majority of these words were in the Malay language. However, this classification did not deal with accurate translation, but only synonyms. For the responses for services that were expected to be delivered, the responses were classified into 15 themes (for summary of the responses, refer to Chart 1):

1. Speedy services: All responses that belonged to this theme used either the words "fast" or "don't delay".
2. Investigation: All responses that belonged to this theme used the word "to investigate".
3. Arrest: All responses that belonged to this theme used the word "to arrest" or "to make an arrest".
4. Therapeutic services: The responses that belonged to this theme were:
   i. To give counselling (5 responses)
   ii. To calm down clients (4 responses)
   iii. To give advice (3 responses)
   iv. To be encouraging (2 responses)
   v. To give moral support (1 response)
   vi. To instil confidence (1 response)
5. Technology: The responses that belonged to this theme were:
   i. To implement online reporting facility (2 responses)
   ii. To implement special reporting facility for women and children (1 response)
6. Patrol and field-related services: The responses that belonged to this theme were:
   i. To do regular patrol (21 responses)
   ii. To go to the place of emergency upon making of report by client (11 responses)
7. Knowledge-related services: The responses that belonged to this theme were:
   i. Fluency in English and/or Malay (4 responses)
   ii. Knowledge in law (3 responses)
   iii. Academically qualified (2 responses)
   iv. Fluency in local dialects (1 response)
8. General expectations: All responses that belonged to this theme used either the word "to take action" or "to solve problem".
9. Follow-up: All responses that belonged to this theme described that the police must follow up with the client either "to get new information" or to "inform the status of the case".
10. Victim-related services: The responses that belonged to this theme were:
    i. To help the victims find their stolen items (9 responses)
    ii. Educating the victims/community on their rights, awareness etc. (7 responses)
    iii. To give protection and security for the victims (7 responses)
    iv. To help/assist the victims (7 responses)
    v. Advocacy and justice (6 responses)

vi. Referrals to other services such as those of a lawyer and insurance programme (3 responses)

11. System and management: The responses that belonged to this theme were:
    i. Less bureaucracy (4 responses)
    ii. Systematic management and procedures (4 procedures)
    iii. Location of investigator should be systematic (2 responses)
    iv. Improvement of services at the counter (2 response)
    v. To not deny or refuse case and move it to another branch (1 response)
12. Law: The responses that belonged to this theme were:
    i. To convict the offenders and to punish them (11 responses)
    ii. To tighten laws (1 response)
    iii. The court's role in listening to the victim (1 response)
13. Religious aspect of services including to also put non-Muslim officers at the service counter as there are non-Muslim victims (1 response); to be generally religious (one response); and to implement Islamic law (2 responses)
14. Filing a report; All responses that belonged to this theme used the words "to file a report" or "to take a report".
15. Communication skills. All responses that belonged to this theme emphasised on the listening skills of the police officers.

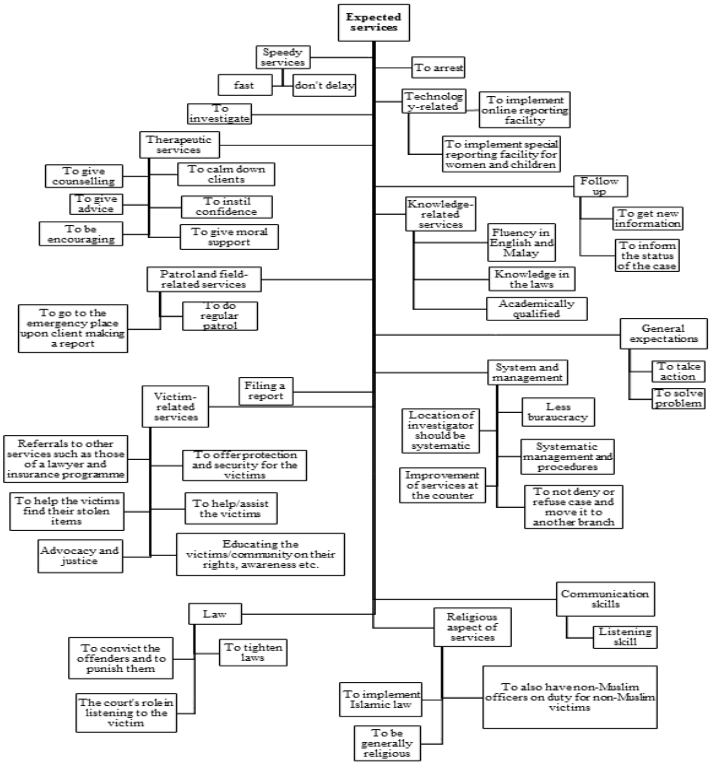

Chart 1: Breakdown of responses for expected services

Regarding the responses for demeanour that was expected to be shown by the personnel, 16 themes were identified (the summary is presented in Chart 2). The stated expectations were:

1. Professionalism: Other than the use of the general word "professional" (10 responses). Some responses that belonged to this theme were more specific:
   i. To not be angry/provocative/ aggressive (20 responses)
   ii. To have patience (8 responses)
   iii. To not make assumption (5 responses)
   iv. To not burden the clients (2 responses)
   v. To not belittle the clients (2 responses)
   vi. To not take advantage on the clients (2 responses)
2. Fairness: All responses that belonged in this theme used either the word "to be fair" and "to not be biased". One response specified it to "not be racist".
3. Integrity: Other than the general word "to have integrity" (5 responses), other responses that were more specific that belonged to this theme were:
   i. To be honest (25 responses)
   ii. To not be involved in bribery (23 responses)
   iii. To be sincere (18 responses)
   iv. To be transparent (6 responses)
   v. To not abuse power (4 responses)
   vi. To be reliable (2 responses)
   vii. To be ethical (1 response)
4. Commitment: Other than the word "committed" (5 responses), responses that belonged to this theme were:
   i) Serious (20 responses)
   ii) Hardworking (8 responses)
   iii) Dedicated (7 responses)
   iv) Disciplined (6 responses)
   v) Punctuality (1 response)
5. Efficiency: Other than the word "efficiency" (24 responses), other responses included:
   i) Proactivity (3 responses)
   ii) Effectiveness (1 response)
   iii) Productivity (1 response)
6. Friendliness: All responses used either the general word "friendly" or "to smile".
7. Kindness: Other than the word "kind" (13 responses), responses that belonged to this theme were:
   i) Tolerant (5 responses)
   ii) Courteous (3 responses)
   iii) Considerate (2 responses)
8. Respect: All responses used the word "to respect" or "to be respectful".
9. Understanding: Other than the use of the word "understanding" (5 responses), the responses that belonged to this theme were:
   i) Concern (14 responses)
   ii) Acceptance (1 response)
10. Responsibility: All responses used the word "responsible", except for 1 response that specified it as "not move the case to another branch" and "not easily close the case without resolving".

11. Physical Aspect. Only 1 response stated that police officers needed to have a well-built physique.
12. Firmness: Twenty responses for this theme mentioned the word "firm"; one mentioned "strong", and another, "strict".
13. Readiness: Readiness was described as being ready to:
    i) Help (2 responses)
    ii) To do job (2 responses)
    iii) Sacrifice (1 response)
    iv) Face offenders (1 response)
14. Humility: All responses that belonged to this theme used either the word "humble" or "to not brag and show off".
15. Helpfulness: All responses that belonged to this theme used the words "to help" or "to be cooperative".
16. Exemplariness: All responses used the word "to be exemplary".

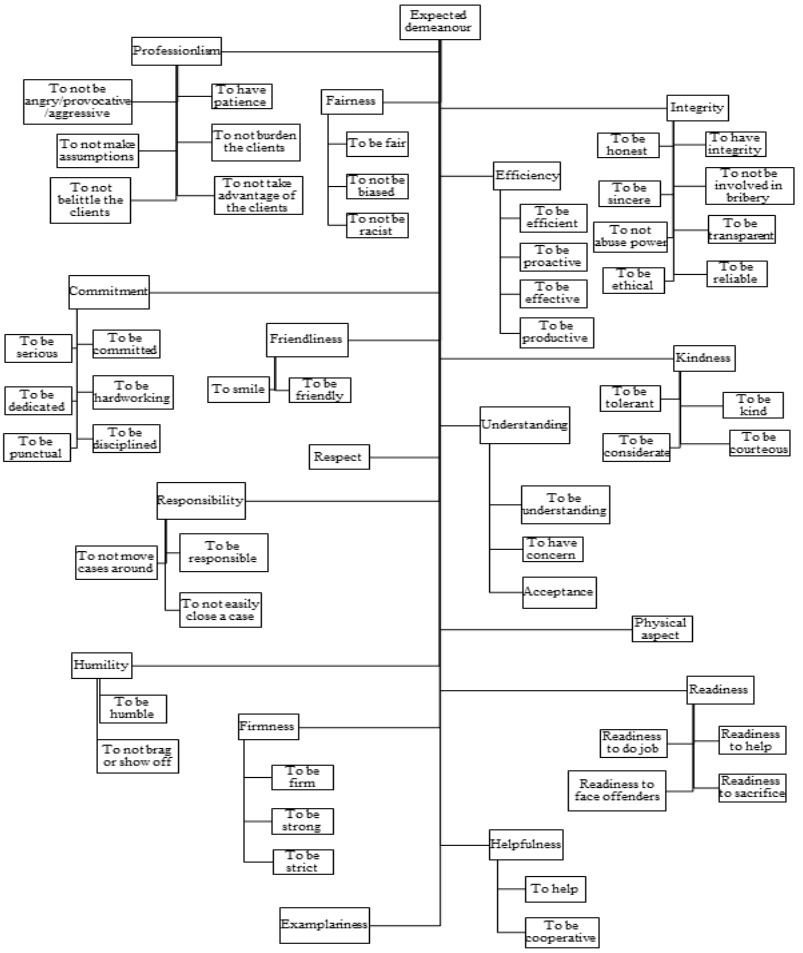

Chart 2: Breakdown of responses for expected demeanour

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The past literature (refer to Table 1) that studied public/victim satisfaction with the criminal justice system presented variables that determined what would make services by a criminal justice system satisfying for the respondents. In the current study, the demographic background and history of victimisation were presented to the respondents as fixed questions, added to having experienced dealing with the criminal justice system and their overall satisfaction with it.

For other variables of satisfaction with the services offered and demeanour shown by the personnel, the current study's findings were consistent with some of the variables compiled by past studies. It can be hypothesised that because these variables were also taken from other studies that were conducted in other countries, the consistency with which these variables were also mentioned by respondents in this study, there should be a degree of universality regarding the accuracy of these variables in predicting the effectiveness of the criminal justice system in different places that practise different cultures. This includes:

1. Seriousness (Myhill & Upson, 2007; Robinson & Stroshine, 2005),
2. Information-related services (Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia, 2002; Myhill & Upson, 2007),
3. Response time/speedy services (Myhill & Upson, 2007; Robinson & Stroshine, 2005; Tewksbury & West, 2001),
4. Effects of criminal justice system contact (what the police and legal professionals do to help victims)/victim-centred assistance (Hotaling & Buzawa, 2003),
5. Courtesy (Robinson & Stroshine, 2005; Tewksbury & West, 2001),
6. Concern (Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia, 2002; Robinson & Stroshine, 2005; Tewksbury & West, 2001),
7. Understanding (Robinson & Stroshine, 2005),
8. Listening carefully (Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia, 2002; Robinson & Stroshine, 2005),
9. Helpfulness (Tewksbury & West, 2001),
10. Respect (Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia, 2002),
11. Service provision in special knowledge and skills area such as making arrests (Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia, 2002), and
12. Perception of safety (Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia, 2002).

This study also compiled some variables that previous studies did not present. Most of these were in forms of services expected from the personnel. It should be noted that there was a variable of "what the police and legal professionals do to help victims" taken from the literature which may include "to investigate". However, "to investigate" is

a specific service provided, and, therefore, treated differently in this analysis. The variables included 1) to investigate, 2) to have therapeutic effect, 3) technology-related expectations, 4) field-related services such as making patrol, 5) knowledge-related expectations, 6) general expectations, 7) to make follow ups, 8) system-related expectations, 9) law-related expectations mostly from the court, 10) religion-related expectations, and 11) to make a report.

From the gap between the variables that are consistent with the past studies and the new variables shown by current studies, it can be seen there are patterns relating to this issue that are specific to the Malaysian context. First, the expectations that the personnel of the criminal justice system, specifically the police officers who filed the report, to have a therapeutic effect on the victims of crime shows that Malaysians would like the personnel to be more encouraging and assuring in the criminal justice process. This may be related to the high number of responses where the respondents expected the personnel to be friendlier and to smile more when communicating with the victims, besides having effective listening skills. The roles of police usually revolve around preserving the law, other than duties involving intelligence and response to national threats (Kun, 1996). Of all the roles defined, none involves their having to play the role of counsellor. However, this does not undermine the importance of counselling skills in this line of work. Hetherington (2001) emphasised that now, the role of the police had evolved to resolving/mediating conflicts as well as negotiating with the public. This role requires police officers to be able to function in the role of and be proficient in the skills of a counsellor in their line of work particularly if the public are to cooperate with the preservation of the law.

Second, quite a high number of respondents stated that they expected police officers to "take action" and to "solve the problems" faced by the victims. General expectations provided a few hypotheses regarding the degree of knowledge that Malaysians possess regarding what the police or other personnel in the system could offer them. It can be hypothesised that to expect police officers to take action after the victim of crime makes a report shows that the victim does not have accurate knowledge about what the police should do for him or her. This is related to the importance of transparency between legal personnel and the public (Park & Blenkinsopp, 2011). By being transparent about what the system and the personnel can do for the public, including their roles and responsibilities, satisfaction can be increased because of the increased awareness.

Ambiguity about what the system can offer can also be related to a very small number of respondents whose responses belonged to the victim-related expectations such as assuring victims' safety and providing external services such as insurance and a lawyer for the victim. Another hypothesis that can be gathered from this is general expectations could be related to the slow progress of movement of

victims' rights in this country where victims of crime virtually have nowhere to go after victimisation.

Third, Malaysian culture should also be considered and this could be seen from a few respondents whose responses belonged to the religion-related expectations. Malaysian culture can be said to revolve around religion. Malay culture, the main culture in Malaysia, is influenced by Islamic tradition. A few respondents mentioned that police officers needed to consider religious aspects of the services such as knowing Islamic laws while a non-Muslim respondent stated that there should be non-Muslim police officers in every station because not all victims of crime are Muslims.

This highlights an important point when it comes to the cultural aspects of the services provided by the criminal justice system as Malaysia is a multi-cultural country. The effectiveness of services provided might be dependent on how the services respond to the diversity of the clients. Cultural diversity awareness is consistently advocated as a factor to service effectiveness because of several reasons. First, cultural awareness is related to awareness of own judgments, feelings and thoughts that may cause prejudice and discrimination (Coderoni, 2002). Second, cultural awareness is especially necessary in modern societies as the world gradually moves towards pluralism (Shusta, Levine, Harris, Wong, & Olson, 2010). Third, in a more extreme case, diversity within the police force could mediate in violence towards members of the public of different ethnicities (Smith, 2003).

Also related to Malaysian culture is the fact of the existence of different races, which means that language is also an important aspect of the services. Some respondents pointed out that police officers needed to master both the Malay and English languages as some Malaysians might not speak Malay. Related to this, one respondent said that police officers also needed to master local dialects of different states in Malaysia as it could help in communication between the police officer and the client. The importance of language is reflected in a study by Skogan (2005) in which a cluster of data analysis found that if the client was of a speaker of a different language, satisfaction dropped. This study, coupled with the few responses from the current study showed that language might be a factor in satisfaction with services provided by the legal system.

Fourth, it is also important to acknowledge that although the questionnaire posed questions about the general personnel of the criminal justice system, the respondents always gave their answers according to their experiences with the police. Only a few respondents gave an insight into what the court, for example, could do for the public while none of the respondents said anything about the prison system, which is one of the components of the criminal justice system (May *et al*., 2007). This further shows the limited knowledge of the respondents of the criminal justice system and services offered by the personnel in the system, including the police and the court. Although it is reasonable to assume that victims would rarely have to deal with the prison system,

they are still supposed to have an important position in the court and there are various ways the court can help the victims in the aftermath of a crime. The extent to which Malaysians know what to expect from the court as shown in this study implies that perhaps Malaysians are not aware of the role of the court and how it can benefit them. This should be further looked at in future research endeavours.

Providing services while also acknowledging the insights of the service beneficiaries would be wise in seeing if the services provided might be lacking in certain aspects that could determine their overall effectiveness. This current research aimed at identifying the overall satisfaction of Malaysians and their open-ended insights into what variables made good services provided by the criminal justice system. This included the police, the court and the correctional facilities. This current study suggests that more systematic studies might be conducted that employ close-ended methods once variables are identified. The findings can be the guiding keys to determining the effectiveness of a component of a criminal justice system.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY

One significant distinction of this study from other satisfaction studies was that the variables of factors of satisfaction were not predetermined. Rather, this study asked the respondents what made them feel satisfied towards the services given by the criminal justice system. It is recommended that policy makers, practitioners, personnel of the system and researchers appreciate that satisfaction patterns can be unique to the locality of the people.

Although the sample of this study was only Malaysians, the study contributes to the literature by highlighting that satisfaction with the criminal justice system can be determined by both factors that are universal and specific to the local context. Universal factors such as speedy services, understanding and giving the clients the perception of safety exist in the literature and were also mentioned by the participants in this research. This, to a certain extent, showed that the factors could be the values that are shared across cultures and boundaries.

While the more locally specific factors of expectations in this study focused on the context of Malaysia, this study also highlighted that researchers who envision to understand what makes citizens feel satisfied towards the services of the criminal justice system should acknowledge the fact that there would be some factors that do not seem to be important in other cultures and countries. However, these factors nonetheless are still deemed as being important by the clients of the particular culture. Therefore, future research, policies and programmes involving the criminal justice system should be more comprehensive i.e. universally and locally relevant in their design and implementation.

This study would also like to reaffirm the objective shared with the literature that understanding what makes citizens

feel satisfied towards the services offered by the criminal justice system leads to the system being more responsive towards the needs of the clients. It is recommended that the government of every country consider conducting a nation-wide satisfaction study in order to understand the criminal justice system from the lens of the people, and not just of the government. This is especially important because the people are one of the main stakeholders and the key role players in the system, and to ignore their perspectives would be to take a step backwards.

To begin acknowledging the voices of the people or the clients of the criminal justice system is to answer the call by academics around the world that the criminal justice system should start becoming more victim-orientated. Victims should be treated as one of the key actors rather than the tools for evidence. The governments should consider the victims' perception towards the system as a determining factor of its effectiveness. This is not to say that the offenders or even the government should be put aside, but victims should be brought to the forefront as they are equally important as the former two stakeholders. This is why citizen satisfaction studies are important studies: the government can utilise the empirical findings to investigate the effectiveness of the system in addressing the needs of the people.

By understanding that satisfaction is not one-dimensional, but that there are patterns of satisfaction with the system that need to be understood and explored, researchers and practitioners of various fields, particularly of social sciences, are able to devise a measure to ensure that services offered by the system are comprehensive and considerate towards the needs of the victims as one of the key actors. In addition, this will allow advocacy work done by social workers and other professions who advocate for the welfare of the victims, especially after undergoing an unfortunate event of victimisation, to be meaningful.

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