

PREPARATION OF LITHUANIAN POLICE OFFICERS

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Abstract

The article strives to disclose the higher police education at the Faculty of Public Security Mykolas Romeris University in Lithuania. The trends and developments in higher police education in Lithuania have generally confirmed the principal challenges identified in the Bologna Declaration – standardizes and integrates the Lithuanian education in the European Higher Education Area. Higher education can best assist police, in their great social work, by working with them to design, develop, deliver and evaluate full-fledged philosophies of police education. On this basis, all university programs have a strong focus on basic skills education. In management education in particular, this relies on the development, or at least the articulation, of normative and interrelated models of society and its police, and on the identification of empirically justifiable dispositions for practice and methods for teaching. This paper is part of a larger study into university education for police managers and presents the preliminary findings of the study.

Keywords: Student, police officer, university education

Introduction

The police, their actions, behavior, attitudes and a host of other factors are under constant public scrutiny. Society and the media are quick to notice the faults of police officers and advance them as a lack of professionalism, integrity, and morality (Nefas & Smalskys, 2008). In line with recommendations of the Bologna Declaration – standardizes and integrates the Lithuanian education in the European Higher Education Area (Janušauskas, 2012). In an effort to modernize and professionalize policing, it is becoming increasingly common for police today to obtain formal university qualifications. Both police managers and academics had generally favorable views towards university education for police and working

together in the delivery of policing courses. Equally important as training for would-be executive staff is the enhancement of management skills of those who already take police executive posts (Bankauskienė et al, 2009). Analyses of training needs clearly indicate that there is a great unfulfilled demand for this kind of educational service. Essentially, the question is what can higher education do for police and what can it do for police management? Believe that the answer should be: Higher education represents expanded knowledge and understanding, determination, and endurance. It displays the culmination of numerous classes related to a specific field of study. University education looks as a mark of professional and personal accomplishment (Faull, 2009).

Topics covered include problem and relevance. What manner of man is a future police officer? It is important to know the social environment where he has developed and the forming of personal characteristics as it makes influence not only on the advancement of ethno cultural, social, economic and scientific level, but also on the individual contemplation of a possible profile of a future police officer (Pagon et al, 2007). Consequently, police officer has to be trained as self-independent and competent personality, who can take decisions in the conditions of enlarged risk expeditiously. Following the above-mentioned principles, seeking the aims of the police and implementing other tasks of public defense and property protection and also caring to implement the specific activity well, police officers must have enough professional knowledge and social experience as well as the completeness of personal qualities and attitudes (Roberg & Bonn, 2004).

The research into the impact of university education focuses more on police attitudes, as individual performance is often difficult to measure. Overall, more highly educated officers rated themselves higher in their ability to deal with criticism, change, workload, and stress. In addition, higher educated officers rated themselves higher on knowledge of the law, use of mediation and conflict resolution, investigation and report-writing skills, leadership, responsibility, and problem-solving skills.

The aim of work: to define formation of police officers professionalism in study process in Faculty of Public security Mykolas Romeris university. The main purpose of this survey is to provide information about the current content of police officer's professional education and training that is relevant in the sense of the Bologna Process.

The following methods were applied in the research: analysis of scientific literature and documents, content analysis.

Main Text

Lithuania, after becoming the member state of the Europe Union, is induced to follow recommendations of the EU institutions when choosing

optimal directions of police officers preparation and qualification rise and participating in education of European police officers. The main goal of police in the Republic of Lithuania is serving the people and ensuring the safe living of residents, seeking to be the active guarantors of people's safety and not only the registrars of criminal facts. Police is one of the biggest public institutions constantly maintaining the contact with residents and working for the sake of whole society. This confers an exceptional position on it in the state. Police takes the most important role in the state governance due to versatile activities related to all areas of social life. In any country of the world, police together with state's armed forces and security agencies is the support of government authority, which cannot be separated from state mechanism. Police maintains public order, fights and prevents the crime. Its activities are related to law observance but at the same time police, as a public institution, is under the influence of various political forces, on which depends the leverages of state governance. While the changing police environment has been superimposed with calls for police to professionalize there is still no clear definition of police professionalism among key stakeholders in the field. Do police really need university degrees to lock up crooks on the street? Another stated - if police were going to achieve professional status it should have happened by now. Although university education is not the only component required for police to obtain professional status, it is an essential part of the professionalization process, without which police will never obtain professional status. The discussions pertaining to police professionalization and the application of professional status to police remain ongoing in Lithuania. The only police training facility which provides higher police education in Lithuania is the Mykolas Romeris University Faculty of Public Security in Kaunas. The new legal and organizational situation of the Faculty of Public Security created new operational possibilities. When defining priority directions for the Faculty of Public Security development, it was necessary to take into account both interests of the Police, whose organizational unit the Faculty of Public Security is, and broadly understood public interest, manifesting itself in implementation of tasks related to public order and safety. The key areas first of all involve Lithuanian police executive staff training and introducing new forms of training relevant to general higher education. While using complex knowledge we aim to develop logical and analytical capabilities of a future police officer. The education of a police officer is like a sort of art, which consists of obtained knowledge and skills as well as the method of cognition and analysis. Consequently, a police officer has to be trained as self-independent and competent personality, who can take decisions in the conditions of enlarged risk expeditiously (Jaschke & Neidhardt, 2007).

Theoretical knowledge must be closely related to practice (Janušauskas, 2012).

In the spirit of the Bologna Declaration, the Lithuanian Higher Education Act sets that higher education shall be carried out through the accredited study programmes only. The study programme may be carried out only in the field of study which is a part of the defined list of the higher education fields of study. According to recommendations of the Bologna Declaration, the Bachelor study programmes are oriented at acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge based on the current state of science and art and at mastering their use at performing a profession or in the follow-up Master study. The Bachelor's degree has become an obligatory requirement for proceeding to the Master's level. For the study programme of the second level (Master study programme) the standard length of study is not less than one year nor more than three years, however, with the total standard length of the study according the Bachelor study programme and the follow-up study programme of the second level in the same or relative field of study, it is not less than five years. In addition to that, all bachelor and master programmes offered by the Faculty of Security are subject to accreditation procedures as a result of the Declaration of Bologna. We defined police education as a process of imparting or acquiring general or particular police-related knowledge that leads to obtaining a certain degree - bachelor's degree, master's degree. We defined police training as a process of imparting or acquiring particular knowledge or skills necessary for police work. University education enables critical evaluation of material. It provides a theoretical framework by which practical application is derived. It grants a broad understanding of subject matter. Mandating university for police officers will instill these benefits and serve to raise the standard among law enforcement officers, facilitating professionalism. Professionalism strives to develop officers who understand the boundaries of their authority, act with high moral resolve, and apply these traits in police duties. The arguments in favor of university education are essentially three: Higher education would make police officers more effective at their jobs. Proponents of this argument believe that police science can be taught, that police bureaucracies require trained specialists, and that a liberal arts education fosters the very qualities police officers need. Educated officers would succeed in changing the very nature of policing, reforming it from the inside. Higher education would improve the image of the police and therefore increase the field's respectability, dignity, and status.

The study programme is divided into subjects. For clear arrangement of the content of study and evaluation of the study results a regulation was issued to set for higher education institutions the duty to elaborate an information sheet of the subject in which the basic information about the

subject is indicated. Previously, study attainments were measured in study weeks, which corresponded to 40 hours of study time whereas current ECTS credit corresponds to 26 hours of study time. Instead of focusing on the courses required for completing a degree, the emphasis was to be on the skills and competences students should gain during their studies. Internal aspects of the process were the analysis of core content and student workload. This tool gives heuristic help for classifying curriculum contents in relation to three categories: essential knowledge, supplementary knowledge and specialized knowledge. Essential knowledge is knowledge that all students must possess and which is a necessity for further studies. Supplementary knowledge, in turn, is something that students should know, but it is not compulsory. Specialized knowledge includes specific details which are good to know but not necessary for proceeding with studies. The division into the three types of knowledge was taken into account when determining student workload and the number of hours needed for completing each course. Knowledge, skills and abilities gained in a higher school have to form a comprehensively sophisticated personality having abilities to plan, analyze actions and suitably and responsibly direct activities of other people. Appropriate competence and qualification must be achieved in order to help a future specialist to proceed from cognizance to practical application of knowledge and abilities to analyse and integrate available information and to demonstrate high common cultural competence. They have to know their – a member of the police organization – status, and can carry out the functions that are provided in the police as well as fulfill all the tasks committed.

Within the Lithuanian system of police education, there is a coherent system of training at all levels of education. Each level is supported by an occupational profile and a related curriculum for each police officer. All profiles and all modules have been developed by academic professionals and police partners. The outcome of this process has been sanctioned by the Ministry of Education of Lithuania and Police Department of the Ministry of the Interior of Lithuania.

Lithuanian research into police education has been located within the discussions and research into police professionalization. Most research to date has focused on entry level police and the notion of promoting the professional status of police through the completion of university education as an entry requirement. The attitudes of university educators in police studies have, however, been researched and were found to be in agreement about the provision of university education for police. It was thought this may be because police were undertaking university education too early. While the notion of police undertaking university education is no longer new, Lithuanian police jurisdictions still face many uncertainties about

police education and professionalism. The current study addresses gaps in the existing Lithuanian literature by exploring key stakeholders' perceptions about police university education and professionalism. Now in Lithuania service in police is based on the following principles of professional ethics: Respect to the country and people; Justice; Fairness; Unselfishness; Propriety; Impartiality; Responsibility; Publicity; Exemplary behavior.

According to conduct requirements and commitments set for police officers it might be stated that there is a huge possibility for police officer to mistake or misuse and wrongly discharge official duties. It also might be concluded that procedures of official liability application are properly regulated and conform to international law. Assessing police officers' activity sophistication and possibilities to be brought to criminal or civil responsibility it was observed that measures of providing legal aid for police officers are not clearly determined and police officers do not have civil liability insurance.

Currently role of police is changing all over the world. Police authority has huge importance when ensuring conditions in society that people could live and work quietly. High requirements are established for police; its activity is often criticized and therefore it seems almost all the time that police works poorly. Police will be able to gain and retain public sympathy and confidence if police is accessible and comprehensible to every citizen. Profession of police officer is not an object of ethical evaluation. Hence issue of police ethics is not raised in police professional ethics and professional activity itself is not analyzed. Issues of professional ethics are: how institution executes its functions and what is conduct of police officers? Moral assessment of police officers is the concern of society but not policemen. Nobody has doubts about necessity of police in the state but there question about police officers' conduct and how police accomplishes its functions is constantly raised. Society involves in investigation of various practical situations and modeling of solutions but has very few concerns about police professional status. Thus society firstly evaluates the quality of police officers' activity. General skills gained in a Faculty of Security have to form a comprehensively sophisticated personality having abilities to plan, analyze actions and suitably and responsibly direct activities of other people. Appropriate competence and qualification must be achieved in order to help a future specialist to proceed from cognizance to practical application of knowledge and abilities to analyze and integrate available information and to demonstrate high common cultural competence. Lots of various modules adjusting theory and practice as well as forming attitudes and conviction have to be involved into the process of upbringing. Appropriate educational environment has to be formed for this purpose. The arrangers of programmes to plan realistically about the objective knowing that a particular programme

will develop certain cognitive abilities, will help students to perfect practical abilities and what general skills will be developed. Academic programme can develop the following general skills: learning to learn, systemic and critical cogitation, self-motivation, creativeness and problem solving; communicative and information control (computer literacy and work with database system); reflective and changes control; presentation and career planning; work in an organization and leadership, cooperation (with a person and in a command), learning in the net of partnership. The professional type positions held by police largely focus on police problem solving and decision making. Professional police as those with the ability to diagnose problems in confusing and variable situations, using their own diagnosis to make timely discretionary decisions in circumstances of great stress. The reformers during the progressive era sought to remove politics from law enforcement by implementing a series of reforms designed to professionalize the police. These reforms produced changes in hiring practices, discretion and the structure of police. Hiring practices became merit-based rather than politically controlled. Line-level discretion was reduced or restricted as much as possible through hierarchy, specified rules, policies, and procedures, and the division of labor. Police, during this era, became the paramilitary structure that is still evident in modern day. While the reform or progressive era did well to standardize and professionalize police, several problems with professionalization surfaced. First, in the efforts to separate politics from policing reformers discounted the need and usefulness of line-level discretion. In addition, the highly centralized structure of law enforcement widened the gap between administration and line officers and further isolated the police from the public whom they served. Furthermore, as the police role became broader and more complex, traditional legal-based solutions were no longer effective or appropriate in many situations with which line officers were faced with. Problems such as these created the need for more community involvement and better police-citizen relationships. Higher education has been treated, even by police reformers, more as advanced training, or as remedial development than as a means of critically revisiting policing generally and police management particularly. Higher education can and does deliver technical and propositional knowledge, but police management practice is not just the liberal application of learnt theory. Higher education cannot create the certainty that many police students look for, in a field that rests in the grip of plural values, the balance of an essential dilemma, and the fog of paradox. The promise of police management education is best made out in its contribution to the ends of policing. Change short of this, say a change in internal process or procedure is more easily identified but can only be considered an advance when it frees up staff or

resources for application elsewhere or allows for the better, more targeted, allocation of staff to public problems in the community.

Education, aimed at assisting the staff of the institutions of state, needs to focus on how they can rebalance the benefits and the burdens of social life, keep abreast of developments in policy, and systematically and critically develop their own knowledge base. A great deal of work has been done on identifying the training needs of the Lithuania Police. The training need covers the following topics: crime prevention, community policing, investigations management, forensic sciences and crime analysis, prosecutions, public order policing, traffic management, management and supervision, contemporary issues, public and media relations, professional standards, strategic planning and policy research. The protection of internal security requires constant monitoring, analysis and development of mechanisms supporting work efficiency of relevant public subjects. The Faculty of Public Security in Kaunas is the only police research center which meets such requirements. University education ought to have a new relationship with police, and particularly police managers, based on voice as a method and a disposition. This is a teachable point of view, a storyline that can inhabit our imaginations, and it allows that police managers as managers can learn, and that as students they can be taught. Another area of vital importance to the Faculty of Public Security is international cooperation. It aims at providing support for the basic school's activities (running higher education studies, training and professional development courses and carrying out scientific research). Among the Faculty of Public Security partners there are foreign public institutions in charge of the implementation of internal security tasks, in particular foreign police colleges, where commissioned officers and police executives are trained, as well as international police training organizations. The academic mobility is organized first of all through international programmes as well as on the basis of direct cooperation between the Lithuanian and foreign higher education institutions (Socrates/Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci and other programmes). The European Commission Erasmus Program was created precisely to improve the quality and increase the volume of student and teaching staff mobility throughout Europe, the amount of multilateral cooperation between higher education institutions in Europe, the cooperation between higher education institutions and enterprises, and the spread of innovation and new pedagogic practices and support between universities in Europe.

Police educators don't need to be reactionary or revolutionary, nor do they need to support the status quo. They also don't need to wait for an ideal police institution to emerge before they can feel comfortable contributing to policing. Instead, what is required is that educators have an open idea of the

ideal, celebrate and communicate their idea, and make contributions to its realization. The ongoing relationship between higher education and police can be based on the ongoing improvement of policing for its constituents, and arguably it should be.

Conclusion

Police education and training in Lithuania is changing. Within the Lithuanian system of police education, there is a coherent system of training at all levels of education. Each level is supported by an occupational profile and a related curriculum for each police officer. The above information shows that basic processes involved in the Faculty of Public Security in Kaunas activities are dynamic in nature. These include educational activities, research and international cooperation. Similar dynamics is observed for changes which take place in the area of human resources, teaching facilities and organizational structure. A particularly strong stimulus in this respect was the integration of higher police education into the system of general education and the incorporation of the latter in implementation of the Bologna Process. The role of university education in police organizations was also viewed from a variety of perspectives in the areas of police culture, competencies and promotions.

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