

Violence against Police Officers in Germany

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Abstract : Employees of organizations with security tasks, such as emergency services, public order services, or police forces, work every day to ensure people's safety. Violence against police is, therefore, a relevant topic both socially and politically. An increase in violence is often discussed without there being any verifiable and generally valid data. So far, scientific research has mainly focused on offender characteristics and crime statistics. These surveys are mostly subjective, retrospective, and neglect the dynamics and interactions in concrete violent situations. Therefore, more recent research methods attempt to capture the issue of violence against emergency forces more comprehensively. However, the operationalization of the constructs and the methodological approach pose particular challenges. This contribution provides an overview of new perspectives on the understanding of violent assaults and identifies current research gaps. In addition, a new research project of the Hessian University of Police and Administration in Germany is presented. In the 'AMBOSafe' study, different theoretical backgrounds for understanding violence against police and emergency services personnel will be combined in order to capture as many different perspectives of violent assaults as possible in a multimodal research approach. In a retrospective as well as in a longitudinal survey, the conditions of escalation dynamics in the assaults are recorded and supplemented by the current and valid prevalence of physical and verbal assaults in a period of four months. In addition, qualitative interviews with those affected will be used to record more detailed descriptions of and the feelings during the assaults, as well as possible causes and connections between the different groups of people. In addition to the reports of the police forces, the motives of the attackers will be collected and supplemented by analyzing the criminal case files. This knowledge can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of violent assaults against police forces in order to be able to derive scientifically based preventive measures.

Keywords : assaults, crime statistics, escalation dynamics, police

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