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Abstract
This work examines corrupt practices among the police and the overall effects of corruption on how the outfit carries out its mandatory responsibility in the society. Particular concern was shown on the impact of corruption on maintenance of law and order; the factors responsible for corrupt practices among the Nigerian police personnel; and the extent of corruption within the Nigerian police. Theoretical tool used to guide this work is Anomie theory (borrowed from the field of sociology). As a qualitative survey, the study population was limited to 65 respondents selected through three sampling methods. These include simple random sampling; snow – ball and purposive sampling methods. However, data from the survey revealed that corruption is affecting the efficiency of the police in many ways. A commonly mentioned effect of corruption on the performance of police is the ever increasing crime rate. Conclusively, the study shows that people have developed lukeward attitude towards reporting cases to the police as at when due, as a result of lack of faith in the police. On the basis of this, suggestions were made on how to make the society habitable for the generality in view of the fact that police cannot operate without the support of the civil populace and vice – versa.

Key words; corruption, law and order

Introduction
Corruption has become a household word in the Nigerian society. It pervades all strata of society, from the highest levels of the political and business elites to the ordinary person in the village. There are divergent opinions on what constitutes corruption just as is commonly the case with other concepts in the social sciences. This according to Akindele (2005) has long been ideologically, morally, culturally, politically and intellectually elusive to the point of losing sight of its detrimental and parasitic influence on people and the society at large. Divindi Citing ALUKO (2002) argued that corruption includes nepotism, favouritism, bribery, graft and other unfair means
adopted by government employees and the public alike to extract some socially and legally prohibited favours.

However, there is the need for a legal and or formal institution to at least help to ensure meaningful socio-economic and national development in any society which is hinged on state of security, which is to be strictly monitored by the civil police.

In Nigeria like many other nations, the police have been the major organization charged with the responsibility of maintenance and preservation of public peace. Effective police is therefore necessary in every society for maintenance of peace, as effective police force will make sure that members of the community are safeguarded in their persons and properties so that their energies are not exhausted by the business of self protection (Onovo, 2009).

The above implies that, maintenance of peace does not only entail the protection of life and properly but also embraces the prevention and detection of crime; the apprehension of the offenders and the due enforcement of all laws and regulations with which they are directly charged with. The assumption here is that, effective execution of the above mentioned functions is tied to the smooth running of daily activities in every society, be it economic, social and political. However, the Nigeria police as an entity is confronted by a lot of problems which invariably affect their efficient and effective functioning.

In the words of Basaru (2003) cited in Worobleski and Hess, 2003, examples of police corruption vary greatly in kind and degree, but they all have key elements in common; the conduct is prohibited by law or rule. It involves misuse of position. Police corruption includes a wide variety of prohibited behaviours, either crime or departmental; rule violations committed under the auspices of a police officer’s position.

At the same time, one cannot ignore the hues and cries that permeate the entire country over the perceived corruption of Nigeria police. There has been widespread concern over the state of insecurity and seemingly inability of the police to deal with the problems.

This evil (corruption) is so entrenched that it is becoming virtually part of the system. Many people who have course to deal with the Nigeria Policemen have revealed that the force harbours some very bad characters (Pekulameesi 2005). The matter is becoming more alarming hence the routine misuse of firearms by the police in Nigeria and their complete disdain for the people has become the norm.

In virtually every parts of the country, people tend to look elsewhere for alternative sources of protection for their lives and properties. Many prefer to keep any information that is vital for crime prevention to themselves. Many have resorted to Jungle Justices. It is in the light of the above that the research therefore focuses on the impact assessment of corruption on maintenance of law and order by the Nigeria police.

**Statement of Problem**

Corruption has become a socio-economic malaise, which has infiltrated the whole Nigeria society and has constituted serious impediment to development. Apart from economic and material effect, corruption also has political implications and constitutes direct threat to the legitimacy of government and leaders. It does not only constitute a drain on limited societal resources, it also gives a country bad reputation and may mar her diplomatic image and scare investors.

With particular reference to the Nigeria police force, the public confidence and trust which was already low made scholars to have asserted that the perceived ineffectiveness is occasioned basically by incidence of corruption within the police force (Soyombo, 2003). The incidence of corruption according to them has gradually infiltrated and over whelmed the entire police system to
the extent that their constitutional right to prevent and maintain law and order has gradually become weak and their effectiveness questioned.

In view of this, what is the future of the Nigeria state if the police are corrupt? How can we build the state police that is devoid of corruption? How can the Nigeria police be reorganized in order to be free of corruption?

**Objectives of Study**

The general objective of this work is to understand the impact of corruption on police’s primary responsibility of maintenance of law and order.

**Specific Objective**

i. To examine the factors(s) that is/are responsible for the prevailing corruption within the police.

ii. To investigate the level of corruption within the Nigeria police

iii. To examine the effect of corrupt practices on how the police could carry out its primary task of maintenance of law and order.

**Research Questions**

✓ What is the extent of corruption within the Nigeria Police?
✓ What are the factors responsible for corrupt practices among the Nigerian Police Personnel?
✓ What effects is corruption having on their primary duty of maintenance of law and order?
✓ What are veritable steps to ensure total reorganization and proper reorientation of Police Force in Nigeria?

**Theoretical Framework:**

This study makes use of Anomie Theory. The concept (of anomic theory) was first used by Emile Durkheim (a sociologist) to refer to several aspects of social participation where the conditions necessary for man to fulfill himself and to attain happiness were not present. The idea is that conduct should be governed by norms, and that these norms should form an integrated and non-conflicting system. In this situation, the individual should be morally involved with other people so that clear limit was set to the pleasures attainable in life.

Durkheim was interested in the various types of social integration, social disorganization and the weakening of social bonds. He theorized that an abrupt and unforeseen growth or diminution of an individual's power and wealth tended to produce anomie.

Anomic is therefore defined as a condition of normlessness, a moral vacuum, the suspension of rules, a state sometimes referred to as “deregulation” According to Durkheim (1951:5) the problem of anomie is especially acute in industrial societies, which have failed to solve the problem of frustrated aspirations in the face of expanded economic productivity. Anomie occurs, according to Merton (1968:247) because of the breakdown in the relationship between desired goals and the avenues of legitimate fulfillment of these goals. Stable societies are able to provide a general balance between goals and norms while unstable societies reflect a wider diversity of these elements. Therefore deviant conduct may be viewed as a symptom of dissociation between culturally defined aspirations and socially constructed means. Every group has regulatory codes governing conduct but groups do vary in the degree to which these folkways, and institutional controls are effectively integrated with the culture matrix. Anomie according to Merton may ensure as a consequence of other factors than the economic or industrial crisis. Pressures towards deviant behaviour may originate with veritable intensity at different locations in the social structure. Class differences may allow middle class youth greater opportunity for fulfilling their aspiration than lower class members.
of the society. Therefore uneven or unequal to opportunities Merton believe is undoubtedly a significant factor in the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of ones aspiration. If goals and means are in near balance a relative stability of society is achieved. On the other hand, if in ordinate stress is placed upon goals, regardless of norms; stability may be challenged by disorganization. Consequently, individuals adapt their behaviour to the existing imbalance between cultural and social structures through conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism or rebellion.

Explaining this within the context of this work, the abject poverty into which our economy has led many people to start creating a way to survive the hardship. The people now become extremely vulnerable to all kinds of social vice which includes corruption.

All the above combined together makes people vulnerable and susceptible to corruption as a result of which people easily succumb to pressures and temptations. In the words of Ake (1991) cited by Aluko (2002:47), Man cannot live without bread and this natural need for bread influences man’s behaviour in virtually all spheres of his life. If man’s behaviour is to be controlled and become predictable, the socio-economic foundations of the polity must be one that ensures a fair standard of living. According to Aluko (2002:47), corruption cannot be eradicated in polity where material foundations for it do not exist. Poverty is an obstacle, perhaps the principal obstacle to the eradication of corruption.

With the persistent state of poverty in Nigeria, the police cannot in anyway maintain effective law and order as well as waging war on corruption because if the state cannot provide the basic necessity of life, the police would continue to exploit the available means like extortion from the public to meet the necessity of life as propounded by Emile Durkheim through the theory of Anomie.

Methodology and Data Collection

Sources and method of Data Collection and Analysis. This unit focuses on research instrument, sampling technique and study or target population.

Research Instrument: This method adopted for this study is basically qualitative. It involves the use of in-depth interview and secondary sources of data. This is an oral interview that was conducted among the general populace and some members of the Nigeria police in the study area. The secondary source of data collection involved the examination of relevant publications that are available on the research subject.

Sample Technique: The procedure used in collection of data for this study involved the use of guide (where all questions needed for eliciting data are listed). The respondents for this study were selected through simple random sampling procedure. Some steps were taken to arrive at this. In the first instance, selection of three (3) local council areas, Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) being the only urban Area Council was included. The other area councils are Abuja and Gwagwalada. The second step involved selection of settlements from the three (3) selected area councils. In the third step, 30 households were selected from AMAC, while ten (10) households each came from the remaining two (2) (rural based) local governments. AMAC was given a higher number of respondents because it is an Urban – based council. In all, the population that was selected from this method amounted to 50 respondents.

In picking the eligible respondents for this survey, the head of the household was considered for the survey because most of the household heads were qualified to bail suspects from the police custody.

For the selection of respondents among the Nigeria police personnel, snowball sampling method was adopted. In snowball sampling, researchers identify a small number of individuals who have the characteristics in which they are interested. These people are then used as informants to identify, or put the researchers in touch with other who qualify for inclusion and these in turn,
identify yet others, hence the term snowball sampling. This was how it went till the number of policemen earmarked for the study was gotten. This method was adopted because the subject under study is very sensitive which makes casual approach of policemen for interview a difficult tasks. This method through the use of a third party or contact person therefore help resolved the problem and erased the fear confidentiality in order to secure the cooperation of these respondents.

Of all the senior officers that could give the needed information on police perspective of the subject matter of the study, only the crime officers are the most visible and accessible. This reason necessitated their selection hence the use of purposive method of sampling. The fact that they were visible, accessible and very central to this study justified the sampling method.

**The Study Population:-** The target population for this study were adult of both sexes (male and female) residing in the areas selected for this study. The civil populace was selected as the main respondents with the police. However, some police officers were equally selected as the key informants for the study. The idea have it that their inclusion will ensure objectivity, and ensure balance data.

**Research setting:-** The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) is at the centre of Nigeria and lies between latitude 8° 25′, and 9° 20, North of the equator and longitude 6° 45′ and 7° 39, east of the Greenwich meridian. The territory was carved out from the then three states (Niger, plateau and Kwara). In the FCT, English is the official language however, Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba are the three (3) main Nigerian languages and several other minor languages spoken within various communities. Most of the inhabitants are farmers with low literacy level but with the movement of the seat of power in Sept, 1982, the population of the territory has been growing at an alarming rate with relocation of corporate headquarters of many government parastatals and private organizations to the territory.

In 1981, the FCT was divided into seven (7) Development areas, namely: Abuja, Bwari, Karshi, Kuje, Kwali, Yaba and Rubochi. This division has been streamlined and currently there are six (6) area councils in the territory. These are Abuja, Bwari, Gwagwalada, Kuje Kwali and Abuja Municipal.

**Rationale for the Choice of Research Setting:-** With the steady increase in the population of FCT, there has been an attendant high incidence of crimes. For instance, police statistics indicate that while armed robbery cases in Abuja increased by 23% in 1999, the annual rate of increase rose to 30% in 2005. In spite of the efforts made to make the police more effective, crime still poses a major threat to peace, security and development of the Nigerian society, particularly the FCT (Obasa, 2005). Studies indicated that corrupt practice among the police account for this ineffectiveness. This explains the rationale for chosen the FCT as the study area for the research.

**Discussions**

**Police and Corruption**

On the issue of corruption among the police, the entire population that took part in this study affirmed that the police are corrupt. The respondents revealed the commonly perpetrated corrupt practices by the police. These include miscarriage of justice, extortion of money, extra-judicial killings and brutality against those they were to serve and protect. The incidence of corruption among the police is said to be very rampant based on the responses of the people. The table below shows the responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incidence</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very rampant</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rampant</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Rampant</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More than average of the respondents affirmed the high incidence of corruption among the police, taking into cognizance the responses that the incidence revealed is ‘very rampant’ and ‘rampant’. The factors that are responsible for the prevalence of corruption among the police are listed in the table below:

Table 2: Reasons for the prevalence of corruption among the police

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate/irregular salary</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate manpower</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate training</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake of adequate professionalism</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake of adequate equipment</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake of adequate welfare package</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake of functional law</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The information from the data in this study revealed that police, as an entity is not strange to the people. They demonstrated their knowledge of police and the duties of the police to the society. However, majority of the respondents do not see police as an entity and their personnel as worthy of being associated with. Some people though very minute in number still see police as indispensable entity hence the branding of police as ‘necessary evil’ in view of the fact that the hoodlums and hooligans still dread their presence. Among the respondents that took part in this study, some had encounter with the police through solidarity with their relatives/friends who had cases with the police to the station. Almost all the motor transport employees that took part in this study have had encounters with the police as a result of their occupational callings.

The data on commitment of the police to crime control shows diverse opinion. Some people see police as not being committed to duties, some were of the view that the police are very committed; other see the police as having potential for excellent performance provided the enabling environment is put in place for the police. Out of these submissions, those that see the police as not committed to their duties are in majority. The reasons provided for poor commitment on the part of the police were seven (7) in number. Out of this number, inadequate finance and irregular payment of salary rank highest followed by poor welfare package etc.

The officers that took part in the study, in their own submissions were of the same view as expressed by the civil populace on the reasons for the prevalence of corruption among the police. They equally pointed out that some divisional police officer (DPOS) were virtually running the day to day activities of the police through their pockets. The revelation from the study on the incidence of corruption shows that corruption is very rampant among the police.

The findings by Aluko (2002) in his work were justified with the revelation by the data of this study that there are ‘godfathers’ within Nigerian force who condone corruption. Using structural functionalist theory Aluko (2002) sees existence of corruption as causing behavioural deviation which cause re-socialization of people and conformity with the current norms. This implies that the society that is corrupt will not find it difficult to get new touch bearers for continuous gospel of corrupt practices. Form this one can conclude that the new recruits (particularly those that are into Nigerian police as a means of making end meets) are the ready tools for regular induction into corrupt practices within the police. As a result of this, it will be difficult to rid the Nigerian police of
corruption. Where the godfathers are not discovered and uprooted as the case of former inspector General of police Tafa Balogun that was charged with 79 count charges on corrupt practices. The case is typical example of the rots that are endemic within the system called the Nigerian police force quoting the press release from Suleiman Ajibade (the deputy spokesman of the EFCC), Eso (2005) revealed that the commission identified eleven different accounts (worth over one billion naira) in then Fountain Trust Bank that have been traced to him. The amount involved is over one billion naira. The release confirmed that the ex-IGP has been under Investigation for money laundering, Treasury bill and commercial papers scam (for quite a which) the result of which led to the government ordering his arrest and prosecution.

The case of ex-IGP Tafa Balogun thus points to the ever-growing demands for reformation as well as proper re-orientation of the police force and its entire personnel from the rank and file to the topmost officers.

**Conclusion.**

Society and the police need each other in order to bring about a stable internal security system for protection of lives and property of the citizens including economic development. This is possible where there exists cooperation based on trust among the stakeholders in this respect.

However, the reverse has been the case in Nigeria due to escalation of corrupt practices among the police personnel. The corruption has been in form of wide variety of prohibited behaviours: As a means of survival, corruption is gradually becoming accepted norms to some people. The gradually entrenchment of this among the police calls for concerted efforts in order not to mortgage our future. This study as an effort towards addressing the hues and crimes over the issue of corruption among police, has brought to the open certain information for better understanding of this phenomenon.

It was established that the police are not living up to the expectation when talking of discharging their duties to the society. The generally acclaimed cause of this is corruption, which was said to be gaining ground gradually among them: As a result of this, the livil populace is feeling indifferent towards the police and their activities, hence the refusal to carry out parts of their own civil responsibility to the police and the society as a whole. For instance police need effort of the civil populace for effective functioning and in a situation where these efforts are not coming from the expected quarters always motivate the police into initiating an action by themselves, the result of which are those actions revealed in this study as constituting corruption. These include miscarriage of judial, extortion, judies killings and brutality of innocent citizens.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the research work, the following recommendations are suggested as a way of combating corruption in Nigeria police:

a. Psychological, ethical, structural and administration transformation of the police force has become imperative to stem the rot in our security agencies. A sense of pride and nationalism should be inculcated in Nigerians in addition to redefining national values in terms of honesty and hard work rather than crass materialism.

b. The existing structure of the police force whereby the inspector general is appointed from within the force gives room for corruption because serving police top brass do not have the freedoms, audacity and management skills to check the existing decline. A viable alternative is to appoint security experts from the private sector to head the police force.
because it is believed that such personnel will have the requisite skills to tackle the existing problems, in addition, such person will not be afraid of upsetting the status quo.

c. Recruitment into the Nigerian police force should be based strictly on merit rather than nebulous considerations such as quota system and nepotism. Prospective officers and men should be thoroughly screened before appointment and periodical screening should be done with a view of demoting officers/men that are found wanting.

References