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## Police Corruption: A Perspective on its Nature and Control

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**Police corruption is an international problem that poses challenges to good governance and the fight against crime, violence and effective protection of property. The police force is one of the most important institutions in a society that is entrusted with upholding law and order and protecting property. When police are linked with corruption, the trust for the institution is undermined and effective fight against organized crime, human trafficking, arms smuggling, and protection of individual life and property is jeopardized. This article examines the causes and impacts of police corruption and means and ways of curbing it.**

**Keywords:** police corruption, nature, control, integrity, reform.

### INTRODUCTION

Police corruption is one of the greatest obstacles to good governance since it undermines the fight against crime, violence and effective protection of property. The police force is one of the most important institutions in a society and is entrusted with upholding law and order; and protecting property. When police are linked to corruption, the trust for public authorities is undermined, and effective fight against organized crime, human trafficking, arms and human smuggling, and protection of individual life and property is compromised. A study by Andvig and Fjeldstad (2008) establishes a direct correlation between police corruption and organized crime, increasing with the degree of corruption and office inefficiency. Police corruption impairs the agency's credibility and effectiveness in enforcing the law and leads to the loss of public trust in the police force as an institution (Williams, 2002).

As one of the important public institutions, the police force plays a very significant role in the society: that of protecting citizens from all kinds of insecurity as well as threats posed to human life and personal property. This may include, but not

limited to, robbery, petty theft, assaults, rape, burglary, etc. Police officers are also supposed to monitor and curb the so called *victimless* crime such as gambling and prostitution that are illegal but do not create immediate harm to any victim (Andvig and Fjeldstad, 2008).

One of the important roles of the police includes provision to the court or other relevant authorities of relevant and accurate information on crime committed so that the perpetrators get to be tried in a court of law.

As a public institution, the police also protects the state from internal strife and instability caused by communal strife, ethnic and racial unrest, terrorism, etc. In today's globalized economy, the threat from international and homegrown terrorists has become a major problem to both developed and developing countries. A case in point is the incident in Paris on January 7, 2015 when terrorists attacked the office of a newspaper/cartoonists – Charlie Hebdo - and later a Jewish Kosher supermarket and killed sixteen innocent people. Similarly on 16 December 2014, 145 people, including 132 schoolchildren, were killed by the Taliban in Pakistan. The

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resurgence of terrorism in both developed and developing countries has made the role of the police very critical in averting these kinds of tragedies and protecting the citizens from both external and internal terrorist attacks.

The police are also used by undemocratic and authoritarian states that rule through brute force, intimidation, imprisonment of opposition groups with the intent of clamping down on dissent so as to remain in power illegitimately. The use of police force to protect state power is also common in stable democracies, especially during labor unrest, political demonstrations and racial unrest as was the case of the 2014 violence in the United States when a white officer shot and killed a black teenager in Ferguson, Missouri. In a similar incidence, another black man died in New York from the mishandling he received from the police. These two incidents triggered nationwide demonstrations and racial unrest. The state had to deploy the police as well as national guards to protect property and avert widespread political unrest.

Police corruption is a global phenomenon that is widespread in both the developed and developing nations. For example, the Mollen Commission (1994) argues that police officers in New York City were involved not only in the usual shakedown and protection activities, but were themselves involved in trafficking cocaine and other illicit drugs. Similarly, police officers in the UK were involved in corrupt activities, including concealment of serious crimes, bribery, the fabrication of and planting of evidence (Newburn, 1999). A study made on corruption within a South African police force found out that police corruption is one of the biggest challenges the government is faced with, hitting rock bottom when in 2010 South Africa's former National Commissioner of police, Jacki Selebi, was relieved off his duties due to corruption charges (Newham and Faull, 2011).

Corruption is also rampant in the Nigerian police force. Many human rights groups and experts have been on record accusing the Nigerian police of being riddled with corruption. The Nigerian police regularly stops drivers and demand bribes, falsely accusing the drivers of committing a crime. A portion of the bribes extorted from innocent drivers is then passed up the chain of command (The World Post, 2013).

Although corruption in general, and police corruption in particular, is an international phenomenon, it is rampant and more prevalent in developing countries (Svensson, 2005; Olken & Pande, 2012). A Survey conducted by Transparency International in 2013 indicated that police institution is perceived to be the most corrupt (31 per cent) in the world followed by the judiciary (24 per cent). The Global Corruption Barometer 2013, ranked public institutions in terms of the degree of corruption levels as follows:

- Police
- Judiciary
- Registry
- Land
- Medical
- Education
- Tax
- Utilities

The same report also indicates that bribery rates were the highest in Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone (Transparency International, 2013). A similar survey for Kenya indicated that almost 71 per cent of the respondents perceived police to be extremely corrupt. The most rampant areas of bribes extortion

include various check points and road blocks. Similarly, police have been accused of extorting bribes from refugees and illegal immigrants. This is particularly common among the Somali refugees who are oftentimes accused of harbouring or sympathizing with terrorist groups such as *Al Shabab* (See Box 1).

In some developing countries, corruption begins from the initial stage of recruiting police officers. Individual candidates are required to pay large amounts of money to get into the force. A case in point is when in July 2014 the Kenyan High Court suspended the recruitment of 8,000 new recruits noting that the process was tainted with corruption, irregularities and blatant violation of the Constitution (The Daily Nation, 2014). A study conducted on police corruption in India also showed that bribery is common in hiring and posting of police officers (Jauregui, 2007). It is also common in some developing countries for traffic police to extort bribes from taxi and truck drivers at police checkpoints. It can therefore be argued that street level corruption is rare in most developed countries, but rampant in most less developed nations. According to Bayley and Perito (2011:4) "Police checkpoints for motor vehicles, where money is required to avoid harassment and delay, are common along major roads in the developing world."

#### DEFINITION OF POLICE CORRUPTION AND ITS TYPOLOGIES

Police corruption is defined differently by various scholars and experts. Some define police corruption loosely and in vague terms as "Behavior that deviates from the formal duties of a public role (elective or appointive) because of private-regarding (personal, close family, private clique), wealth or status gains" (Nye, 1967:416). According to Roebuck and Barker (1974:118) police corruption is "any type of proscribed behavior engaged in by a law enforcement officer who receives or expects to receive, by virtue of his official position, an actual or potential unauthorized material reward or gain."

These types of definitions are rather simplistic and limit police corruption to greedy and morally decadent individuals. However, police corruption involves more than individual greed and reflects the overall institutional and societal conditions of a country. In this regard, the behavior and attitudes of police officers is more or less a product of an environment within which they work (Punch, 2000). This is the reason why in a relatively stable, largely law-abiding society with strong institutions, police officers would be less likely to be corrupt than in a disjointed and underdeveloped society characterized by high levels of poverty, crime and chronic corruption (Newham & Faull, 2011).

It is also important to note that oftentimes corruption benefits not only individual police officers but also the institution within which they work. For the same reason Syed and Bruce (1998) define police corruption as any illegal conduct or misconduct involving the use of occupational power for personal, group or organizational gain. A similar but a relatively inclusive and clearer definition of police corruption is provided by Kleinig who opines that "Police officers act corruptly when, in exercising or failing to exercise their authority, they act with the primary intention of furthering private or departmental/divisional advantage" (1966: 166).

The above definitions characterize corruption as a misconduct of the police, not only for personal gain but also for the benefit of a wider group of people or institutional gain. In this article police corruption is defined as an abuse of power and authority for personal or institutional gain and is a product of the institutional and sociopolitical and economic environment

**Box 1: Human Rights Report on police corruption and its effects on refugees in Kenya**

On November 19, 2012, Kenyan police from four different units unleashed a wave of abuses, including torture, against Somali and Ethiopian refugees and asylum seekers and Somali Kenyans in Eastleigh, a predominantly Somali suburb of Nairobi only a few kilometers from the city's business district, foreign embassies, United Nations headquarters, and tourist hotels.

The sudden escalation of police abuses came one day after unknown perpetrators attacked a bus in Eastleigh killing seven people and injuring 30. The abuses ended in late January, a few days after the Kenyan High Court ordered the authorities to halt a proposed plan to relocate all urban refugees to refugee camps.

This report, based on 101 interviews, documents abuses during this period in Eastleigh that directly affected around one thousand people. Witnesses and victims of abuse told Human Rights Watch that police personnel from the General Services Unit (GSU), the Regular Police (RP), the Administration Police (AP), and the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) committed the abuses, which included rape, beatings and kicking, theft, extortion, and arbitrary detention in inhuman and degrading conditions. Many women and children were among the victims. Police officers also arrested and charged hundreds of Eastleigh residents with public order offenses without any evidence, before the courts ordered their release.

Almost every refugee and asylum seeker Human Rights Watch interviewed about police abuses they faced in Eastleigh between November 19 and late January 2013 said the police repeatedly accused them of being "terrorists," indicating one motivation for the abuses appeared to be retaliation for some 30 attacks on law enforcement officials and civilians by unknown perpetrators in Kenya since October 2011. To date only one person—a Kenyan national not of Somali ethnicity—has been convicted for one of the attacks. Furthermore, almost every one of the 101 people interviewed for this report said police demanded that victims pay them large sums of money and then let them go, indicating that personal gain—not national security concerns—was the main reason the police targeted and abused their victims.

In fifty cases involving rape and serious violence in which officers accused their victims of being terrorists or coerced them into paying money, Human Rights Watch concluded the abuses amounted to torture under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Convention against Torture) (Human Rights Watch Report, 2014:2).

of a country. It is important to link police corruption to the environment in which they work because their behavior and conduct are determined by the same environment. It is also important to note that corruption is not limited to financial gain alone, but may include gains received in the form of services, status, influence, prestige, sexual favor or future support for the officer or someone else (Goldstein, 1975).

It should also be noted that police corruption has both a "broader" and a "narrow" meaning. In its broader connotation police corruption refers to violations of rules, even when there is no bribe involved; such as racial profiling, and physical abuse of criminals as in the case of the recent police misconduct of July 2014 when Eric Garner died in Staten Island, New York, after a police officer put him in what is called a "chokehold" (a restraining tactic). The cause of his death was however, disputed by the New York Police Department. In another incidence on December 2014, a white police officer shot and killed a black teenager in Ferguson, Missouri, USA. In defense, the police officer argued that the teenager had pointed a gun at him; although this was disputed by his family members and friends. These two incidences ignited riots and demonstrations in many US cities. Similarly, between 2009 and 2013, the police were responsible for 67 per cent of gun-related deaths in urban areas of Kenya (The Nation, 2015).

On the other hand, narrowly defined police corruption entails the misconduct of the police who use their position and authority to personally benefit from this misconduct, or benefit the institutions they work for, or their relatives, a friend or an acquaintance. The discussion in this article will mainly focus on the latter.

Roebuck and Barker (1974) gave comprehensive typologies of corruption. According to them, police corruption could be categorized into eight typologies. The first type of corruption is when police officers receive gratuities, free goods, free meals, gifts, etc. by virtue of their position as law enforcement officers. In this case, the police officer may have not violated the law *per se*, but nonetheless received unauthorized or unearned material gain.

The second type of police corruption is kickbacks. This type of corruption occurs when police officers receive kickbacks in the form of money, services, etc. from business people for referring some services to them and thereby boosting their businesses. Roebuck and Barker cite services such as towing of cars, lawyers, etc. who benefit through referrals by police officers in return for material or non-material benefits.

Opportunistic corruption, the third type of corruption, occurs when a police officer withholds money, drugs, or other merchandise for his/her own benefit while conducting official duties. For instance, a police officer who has confiscated drugs from criminals may keep them for his/her own use, or resell them by colluding with criminal groups. This could also happen during raids in residential houses and business premises where a police officer during official duty "steals" jewelry, money, and other type of valuable goods. A case in point is when the terrorist group *Al Shabab* stormed the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya on September 2013 and killed about 67 people. The police who were called in to neutralize the terrorists, save lives and protect property in the shopping mall, were accused of helping themselves with jewelry, expensive watches and even money from ATM machines.

The fourth type of corruption occurs when a police officer witnesses a criminal activity, or is aware of violations of the law but still looks to the other side, or lets the violators to go free in return for bribes and other benefits. This is common in both developed and developing countries where police officers often

times, let drug dealers, criminal gangs, traffic violators, human traffickers, etc. go scot-free in return for money or material bribes for "services" rendered.

In the fifth type of corruption, police officers provide protection to organized criminal groups, drug dealers and other violators of the law in return for bribes. This allows the criminals to operate their businesses without repercussions from the law enforcers.

The sixth type of police corruption is known as the "fix". In this case, police officer actually assists violators of the law to avoid persecution at the court of law by providing false information or tampering with evidence.

In the seventh type of corruption, police officers are involved directly in criminal activities using their political influence in the society. The police officer could be involved in crimes such as burglary, robbery, drug smuggling, etc.

The final type of corruption takes place within the police institution itself. For example, police officers might demand and receive bribes for assigning their fellow officers to different divisions or assigning certain types of work to them.

Although these typologies are based on the US experience and were highlighted quite a while ago, it might be difficult to apply all the typologies in explaining today's police corruption. Like most studies conducted on corruption in the 70s or earlier, this does not , cover and examine the problem of drugs and the corruption associated with drug smuggling, although this is today's major driver of corruption, ahead of gambling, prostitution, and alcohol (Bayley & Perito, 2011). Nevertheless, most of these typologies are still relevant and important in explaining the types of corruption that exist in the police institution.

Goldstein (1975) identifies the following as the most common corrupt practices in which police are involved:

- Failing to arrest and prosecute people the officer knows have violated the law.
- Agreeing to drop an investigation prematurely by not pursuing leads that would produce evidence supporting a criminal charge.
- Agreeing not to inspect locations or premises where violations are known to occur and where an officer's presence might curtail illegal activity.
- Refraining from making arrests on licensed premises where such an action would result in a license review that could lead to revocations.
- Reducing the seriousness of a charge against an offender.
- Agreeing to alter a testimony at trial or to provide less than the full amount of evidence available.
- Providing more police protection or presence than is required by standard operating procedures.
- Influencing departmental recommendations regarding the granting of licenses.
- Arranging access to confidential departmental records or agreeing to alter such records.
- Referring individuals caught in a new and stressful situation to persons who can assist them and who stand to profit from the referral.
- Appropriating for personal use or disposal items of value acquired on the job.

Although the classification given above by Goldstein is very important and well-thought out, it is too generic in nature and therefore may not capture the specific contextual factors of

**Box 2: How the code of silence fuels corruption**

Police officials rarely see the “code of silence” as negative, but rather as a sign of group solidarity, empathy and support for colleagues in difficult circumstances (e.g. battling to deal with the stress of the job, or being subject of an investigation). Nevertheless, it plays a major part in fuelling corrupt practices in a police agency. For example:

- It may lead honest and inexperienced police officials to accept corruption as part of the job.
- It may engender a sense of futility among managers who no longer believe that corruption can be challenged and the police organization reformed.
- It can allow corrupt officials to manipulate and control fellow officials.
- It can undermine internal investigations into police corruption (Wood quoted in Newham & Faull, 2011).

each country when it comes to police corruption. Oftentimes, the type of police corruption in each country is explained by the political culture of a particular country, the strengths and weaknesses of the public institution, the strength and transparency of the judiciary and the media.

A distinction need also to be made between grand and petty corruption. The former involves a large amount of money while the latter is involves a relatively small amount of money received as a bribe on ad hoc basis as when opportunities arise (Newham and Faull, 2011). According to Bayley & Perito (2011), among all the typologies of police corruption, the most common (constituting about 40 per cent of police corruption) are “making false reports and committing perjury, protecting illegal gambling activities, theft of drugs on the street, theft of seized property, receiving discounts on purchases, and selling information about police activity (2011:4).

But what makes a police officer to be corrupt? Why do they break the law they have sworn to uphold? These issues have been discussed by many scholars, and the common explanation is the “few apples” theory that argues that it is just the few corrupt police officers who spoil the name of the whole institution. This type approach to police corruption is very simplistic and fails to approach the problem from the perspective of an institutional, societal norms, and values. Nonetheless, the following three major factors could be fronted as the main causes of corruption within the police service.

The first factor is the problem encountered during the recruitment process. Oftentimes, police officers, especially in developing countries, are recruited through a dubious process that is riddled with corruption. By bribing the recruiting officer(s), individuals with relatively low level of education and morale are recruited. Background checks on the candidates and their criminal history is rarely done. As a result, the police service may end up with people that have no relevant knowledge, integrity and the requisite values of a competent police officer.

The second factor is poor remuneration of the police officers, especially in developing countries, a factor that not only encourages police officers to solicit bribes but also discourages skilled and competent officers from joining the police service. It also leads to low motivation among the police service and renders them susceptible to all kinds of corrupt practices. Effective delivery of police services require highly motivated and honest personnel that are trained in relevant areas such as social psychology and human behavior. Skills in information technology, including geographic information technology, are also essential in policing. Unfortunately, these facilities and skills are lacking among the police service in most developing countries, hence the resultant insecurity. With low

remuneration, depressed motivation and lack of the necessary skills, police officers are susceptible to all kinds of misconduct, including taking bribes and getting involved in criminal activities to improve their economic conditions.

The third factor is the secrecy within the police organization, which is oftentimes referred to as a “code of silence”. Police departments are organized according to a number of informal and unwritten rules to protect fellow officers (Punch, 2000). This code of silence encourages police officers to be corrupt as they are sure their colleagues will protect them against both internal and external investigations. This informal and unwritten agreement among police officers creates and strengthens loyalty among the police officers and makes it very difficult to investigate police corruption and bring to justice violators of the law, thereby encouraging police misconduct in general, and corruption in particular, within the police service.

The fourth factor that contributes to corruption within the police force is the way they discharge their responsibilities with very little or no supervision. Oftentimes, the police move around in pairs or in groups with low managerial control. This leaves everything at the discretion of the police officer(s) and without any supervision.

**EFFECTS OF POLICE CORRUPTION**

Police corruption is one of the major challenges to governance and economic growth. It undermines the trust citizens have on the police institution and the criminal justice system while at the same time promoting crimes such as drug and human trafficking, counterfeiting, gangs, and underworld criminal activities. It also increases the costs of doing businesses in a country and discourages foreign investment and thereby adversely affecting economic growth and employment opportunities. Police corruption also weakens citizens’ safety and security. According to Goldstein, police corruption has two important effects: first, public confidence in the police is undermined; second, the police administrator’s ability to direct and control his personnel is substantially reduced (1975:1).

Police corruption is a reflection of the weakness in a country’s legal and political institutions. As such, it is a “manifestation of organizational weaknesses than a challenge of bad employees. As such, punitive action against individuals who commit acts of corruption, while necessary, will on its own do little to change the factors that allow for police deviance and corruption to occur in the first place” (Newham and Faull, 2011).

The adverse effects of police corruption in a society could be summarized as follows:

### **Socioeconomic effects**

Corruption in general and police corruption in particular increases the cost of doing business and scares away private investment. Where police corruption is rampant, both foreign and local companies are reluctant to invest as the costs of doing business become significantly prohibitive. This adversely affects employment opportunities and increases poverty. Corrupt practices in recruiting law enforcement personnel will also lead to the hiring of incompetent men and women who lack discipline and professional commitment in the delivery of effective services and thereby jeopardize the safety of citizens.

A study conducted in New Delhi about driving skills and methods of acquiring a driving license found out that some applicants acquired their licenses through corrupt practices and therefore had no immediate incentive for learning how to drive (Bertrand *et al.*, 2007). This practice, of course, puts the lives of the citizens and the drivers themselves at risk, and also adds to the society the cost of meeting medical expenses for those who survive accidents. Any form of corruption is detrimental to the economy of a country “as it may raise the marginal tax rate of firms, decrease business activity, raise marginal costs of public funds, make certain government projects economically unviable, and undo the government’s ability to correct externalities, leading to inefficient outcomes” (Olken & Pande, 2012:4).

### **Effects on governance**

Police corruption will undermine good governance and adversely affect the fight against crime, violence and effective protection of property. In this kind of environment, the citizens live in fear, and are compelled to hire private security guards, install alarms, grills, etc., increasing their personal costs and reducing their disposable incomes. The people who suffer most from these type of corrupt practices are the poor, refugees, and those who live in slum areas as they do not have the economic or political power to protect themselves against crime or corrupt police officers who extort money from them through all manner of threats. Azfar and Gurgur (2005) have argued that in corrupt societies with low government effectiveness, females and poor households are more likely to suffer from crime and police corruption.

In this kind of environment, people lose confidence in the police force and stop reporting criminal activities. That is why most studies show that in most corrupt countries, people are reluctant to report crime, police violence and extortion (Azfar and Gurgur, 2005). This, of course, will have ramifications for the citizens as well as the state security because police corruption will create an environment where “citizens lose confidence in them, then this undermines the legitimacy of the state” (Punch, 2000:322).

### **Effects on service delivery**

Police corruption will reduce effective service delivery as corrupt officers demand money for investigating robbery, rape, traffic accidents, etc. Often, for the poor, the refugees, minorities, and migrant workers, police corruption means less provision of legal protection and services, which are available to the rich and privileged groups of the society. Even the rich have to sometimes pay bribes to access these services as corrupt police officers are oftentimes reluctant to carry out their duties without “incentives.”

### **Effect on crime**

As explained at the beginning of this article, police corruption will undermine the fight against crime and result in increased incidences of robbery, rape, human trafficking, arm and drug smuggling; and trade in body parts of endangered species. This is especially a major challenge in most developing countries that rely heavily on tourism as a source of foreign exchange earnings. Police corruption also weakens safety and threatens a country’s human security. When criminals are able to bribe their way out of crime, the whole criminal system is undermined and people lose confidence in the entire government. It also not only impairs the agency’s credibility, but also hampers its ability to effectively enforce the law of the country.

### **POLICE CORRUPTION CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

As explained above, oftentimes, police corruption is seen as a transient individual officer’s problem; and therefore, it is assumed, by removing a few corrupt officers, the problem of corruption will disappear. However, conventional wisdom and the experiences from many countries have shown that police corruption is an institutional and societal problem that requires systematic, multi-dimensional, transparent and participatory; and multifaceted approach. Police corruption is not a problem of a few “bad apples” in the force but rather an institutional problem that has to do with the environment the officers work in. In this regard, the most effective strategy for sustainably addressing police corruption should focus on the system and the institutional set up. For the strategies to be successful and effective, they have to be embedded in the broader framework of democratic institution-building that promotes a human rights-based approach, integrity and transparency in the police force and its service delivery (Chene, 2010). To that effect the combination of the following strategies should be considered.

#### ***The screening and recruitment process***

It is important that the police recruitment process follows proper standards and selection procedures (Quah, 2006; Punch, 2000). It is crucial to do a thorough background check of the candidates, including their criminal history, educational background, work experience, etc. If this is not properly followed, people with criminal backgrounds or mental problems might end up in the police force. For example, Williams (2002) mentions a case in New Orleans, US where a flawed and lenient recruitment policy allowed a woman with murderous instincts into the police force. To address this challenge, the government and the police force should put in place appropriate checks and balance methods to eradicate flawed and corrupt practices in the recruitment process.

#### ***Training and monitoring***

Once the police officers are onboard, it is important to provide them with training to improve their skills, knowledge and values required in police work. In addition to the physical training, the police officers should be trained on how to handle a weapon, deal with criminals and drug pushers, unarmed combat and basic foot drill as well as police procedures and regulations, the criminal law of the country and basics of investigations (Quah, 2006). Moreover, the training should include topics on corruption and integrity; as well as ethical codes of conduct and departmental procedures for dealing with corruption.

The objective of the training should focus on changing the mindsets of the officers regarding corruption, integrity and upholding the law. In this regard, considerable effort should be put into selecting relevant and knowledgeable resource persons and mentors. The training should be a continuous process to allow the officers to be trained not only on the techniques of fighting corruption, but also on new skills and technologies that would enhance their fight against crime, and efficient service delivery. Referring to the role of training in Singapore's police force, Quah highlighted the following procedures from the Singapore's police force case study:

*Recruits are then put through integrity-based lessons during their basic training to build resilience to corruption. Such training continues throughout their career to ensure that our core values, including loyalty and integrity, are inculcated in each of our officers. Officers with a strong sense of loyalty take pride in being officers of the Police Force. With the interest of the Force at heart, officers with the right values not only have the will to resist corruption, but they are also able to keep fellow officers in check against misdemeanors. Regular in-service training at front line units, which are more susceptible to corruption, is conducted. Case studies of actual cases of police officers charged in court for criminal offences and corruption form part of our continuous integrity training programme (2006:70).*

At the same time, a monitoring mechanism should be put in place to review the impact of the training and whether the objectives of the training programmes have been achieved. This could be done through interviews, various evaluation and survey methods. At the same, it is also essential to rotate police officers who work on sensitive cases such as drug smuggling, gambling, organized crime, field intelligence gathering, etc. to reduce the opportunities for corruption (Quah, 2006).

### **Using the stick-and-carrot approach**

One of the causes of police corruption is the relative low remuneration of police officers, especially in developing countries, compared to other public institutions. Low salaries in the police force encourages police officers to solicit bribe to meet their personal household expenses, including school fees for their children. To supplement their low salaries, some police officers resort to soliciting for bribes and even engage in criminal activities. As noted above, low remuneration not only breeds corruption, but it is also a major obstacle in attracting skilled and competent manpower to the force/service. Perhaps one way of checking this problem should include the introduction of proper and competitive salary scales while at the same time getting the police force to follow strict and tough policy measures against those who are involved in corruption and firmly enforcing the appropriate laws.

Often, in most developing countries, excellent polices are designed and put in place, but are rarely implemented due to institutional inefficiency and corruption. It is therefore important to take a holistic and institutional approach when it comes to addressing the problem of corruption in the police force. It is also important to establish an independent, transparent and accountable *internal affairs* and an *anti-corruption* unit with authority to monitor the conduct of police officers and investigate cases of corruption and inappropriate behavior among the police officers. In the same breath, high-performing officers should be recognized for their exemplary work and promoted accordingly.

### **Strong leadership**

As pointed out by many experts, successful prevention of police corruption begins with a top strong leadership with vision and integrity (Punch, 2000; Quah, 2006). A strong leadership and the quality of the police force plays a significant role in fighting corruption. The government and the leadership in the police force must lead by example; and then the police officers can emulate them. If the leadership is corrupt and without integrity, so will the police force be. Quality leadership that upholds integrity plays a crucial role in curbing police corruption. A study on police corruption in Singapore and South Africa demonstrates that strong leadership has a positive impact on the levels of corruption in these countries (Quah, 2006; Newham & Faull, 2011).

### **Engaging the community**

The community should be made aware that the police exist to protect them, and they are under no obligation to bribe them in order to get the services they are entitled to as a law abiding and tax-paying citizens. They should also be encouraged to report to the relevant authorities any police misconduct through regular letters, emails, telephone calls, SMS and other means of communication. The police force should also establish 24-hour telephone hotlines that concerned citizens can place calls to report police corruption or misconduct.

The system of reporting police corruption should be simple and easily accessible so as to encourage the public to report corruption and any criminal behavior by the police. It is also important to hold regular face-to-face meetings between the police representatives and the local community leaders aimed at exchanging ideas and information on how to address security issues in general, and police misconduct in particular. The media should also be encouraged to undertake a sustained media campaign to highlight the rights and obligations of the citizen while at the same time exposing corrupt practices within the police force. Educating school children on the role of the police in protecting the community with dignity and respect should also be inculcated into the minds of the young people at early states so as to help them understand the roles and responsibilities of the police. The community should also be sensitized on the fact that they do not have to bribe the police to get services they are entitled to.

At the same time, they should be informed that it is a criminal offence to bribe a police officer and such a misdemeanor could result in prosecution in a court of law. This type of information could be disseminated through radio, TV, the internet, flyers, etc. Use of ICT can also greatly reduce corruption since this technology can improve efficiency in service delivery, and reduce person-to-person contacts; thereby reducing the probability of corruption (Oye, 2012).

### **CONCLUSION**

Police corruption is a vice that must be addressed for peace and tranquility to prevail in a society, and to maintain public order and the rule of law. This will restore public trust in the democratic processes and public institutions. Although police corruption is a universal problem, it is chronic and rampant in developing countries due to weak institutions, poverty and poor enforcement of laws. The problem is more of an institutional and societal problem than an individual and group problem. In this regard, the "bad apple theory" of police corruption is long discredited.

The problem of police corruption should be looked at from a societal and institutional perspective. Police officers do not operate in a vacuum, isolated from the sociopolitical and cultural landscape of the society within which they work, and the communities they serve. In this regard, their behavior and conduct is a reflection of the society and the environment within which they work and live; and their perceptions of overall corruption is shaped by that society (Punch, 2000). As such, an institutional and multi-dimensional approach to the problem of corruption is more effective than tackling the problem from an individual perspective. Consequently, to address police corruption, a comprehensive and multi-dimensional strategy that is embedded in the broader framework of democratic institution-building, and which promotes human rights, integrity, transparency in the police force, and effective service delivery, should be designed and effectively implemented.

The foundation of police corruption is laid from the day a police officer is recruited, a process that is often tainted with corruption. Proper checks and balance mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that the recruitment process is transparent, accountable and based on merit. Once the police officers are recruited, they should be given proper training on the police code of conduct and the grave consequences of corruption. The training should also emphasize on the need to serve the public with pride and integrity. Besides, the salary scale of the police force should be reviewed against that of the rest of the civil service and appropriate adjustments made. The community should also be sensitized on the role and responsibilities of the police and desist from bribing them.

The media should also play a leading role in exposing corrupt practices in the police force and disseminate relevant information to help in curbing police corruption. Relevant laws should be enacted and enforced with emphasis on zero tolerance to police corruption. At the same time, strong and visionary leadership should be in place to ensure that rules are followed and implemented according to the laid down rules, regulations and principles of the police service. Hopefully, this will encourage the police officers to take pride in their work, earning them respect and legitimacy from the citizens they serve.

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