

EFFECTS OF THE NIGERIA POLICE FORCE PERSONNEL WELFARE CONDITION ON PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

The current study assessed the state of welfare condition of the Nigeria Police Force. The study utilized in-depth interview supplemented with computer based literature and found that welfare condition of men and officers of the Nigeria Police Force is not encouraging. This study found that the inability of the police in Nigeria to effectively resolved crimes and perform their law enforcement duties efficiently are related to the poor welfare condition which has sapped the morale of the personnel of the agency. This study therefore recommends that the prevailing welfare condition of the personnel of the Nigeria Police Force should be improved upon. It is also a finding of this study that the police should be adequately equipped to enable the agency to effectively carry out their duties and responsibilities to the citizens. The findings are significant as they show that in emerging democratic societies like Nigeria, improvement in the welfare condition of the police through necessary reforms is a prerequisite for stable democratic system.

INTRODUCTION

Improvement in the welfare condition of the police especially in emerging democratic societies like Nigeria have been associated as an important prerequisite that can ensure effective performance with regards to crime prevention , detection, control and law enforcement (Hills, 2008; Nyamwamu et al., 2012). An under-resourced police agency is incapable of effectively policing a country as big, populous as Nigeria not to talk of carrying out such duties in a humane fashion (Hills, 2008). The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) is required by the constitution to prevent, control and detect crime in a country that is confronted with high levels of violent crime, much of which expresses or exploits the political, religious, ethnic and societal tensions that are rooted in Nigeria's poverty, unemployment and competition for land.

The problem of poor welfare in the Nigeria police was highlighted by the recent request in 2012 of the Nigeria Federal lawmakers from the lower chamber (The House of Representatives) which directed its Committee on Police Affairs to investigate the poor quality of kits and general welfare of the men and officers of the Nigeria Police Force. This request was due to concern that the Nigeria Police personnel welfare condition is poor compared to their counterparts in West Africa (Daily Times, February 24, 2012).

It is important to note that various factors have been identified as constituting stumbling blocks to the effective administration of justice and efficient maintenance of law and order in Nigeria by the Nigeria Police Force. Often cited factors include institutional constraints such as inadequate manpower (both in strength and expertise), insufficient education and training, inadequate equipment, and poor welfare condition of service of the average policeman (Onyeozili, 2005). Among the identified factors, poor welfare condition of service remains an area that continue to warrant attention from researchers (Fiedler, 2012).

In Nigeria, it is no longer a secret that the current welfare situation of the men and officers of the Nigeria Police Force constitute an impediment to effective performance with regards to law enforcement in the current democratic dispensation and calls for urgent improvement to enable the agency to continue to contribute meaningfully to safe guarding the nascent democratic system existing in the country (Onyeozili, 2005). News of men and officers protesting poor welfare condition of service regularly features in the pages of newspapers. Police men and officers have in recent months complained of being abandoned while on special duties (Akinrefon, 2014). Researchers on policing found that the general welfare of the Nigeria Police men and officers is so appalling that they don't even have good and habitable quarter/barracks, thereby compromising their service delivery to the nation. This situation pose a great challenge to the effective discharge of their statutory duties with regards to protecting lives and properties of the citizenry.

The long hours that police men and officers put in a single shift is also a concern with the potentials of adversely interfering with their efficiency (Hills, 2008). It has been reported that police men and officers sometimes worked for more than 16 hours in a single shift due to shortage of personnel. Research has also shown that some men and officers of the Nigeria police complain of lack of sleep for many days especially when on special duties. According to Pearsall (2012), sleep deprivation due to long hours shift without rest or sleep contributes to officers' irritability with the public and inability to maintain calm in situations due to diminishing attentiveness; it also impairs physical and cognitive abilities. This is because research has found that fatigue decreases the ability to deal with stress and stress decreases ability to deal with fatigue (Peatsall, 2012).

Poor welfare condition of service in the Nigeria Police Force keep those who might be genuinely interested in making a career out of the police out while creating opportunities for the semi-literate and undedicated persons to get into the police (Omideyi, 2012). The Nigeria Police Force is therefore still seen as the dumping ground for miscreants, hardened criminals, bullies and those that are not just good enough for other careers (Hills, 2008; Omideyi, 2012). The recruitment policy into the police has reinforced this belief and it will take a more concerted effort to change it. The Nigeria police, like other developing countries police forces emphasize more on physical fitness than on educational achievements. The poor reward system has also ensured that the Nigeria police is not able to attract the right sort of recruits because of the poor pay (Hills, 2008).

Poor welfare condition of service has also been associated with the unstableness of policemen in Nigeria. The present and the future of police officers according to Omideyi (2012) is not secure in terms of service and post service conditions. The result is that most police officers never learnt any trade or acquire any certificate that could make them useful to their communities on leaving the agency and are reduced to working as drivers and security guards. Most police officers engage in petty corruption to feather their nest against the future.

Connected to the issue of poor welfare condition of the police men and officers are such concerns as the deplorable housing, non-existing or inferior medical services, badly maintained weapons, the ragged uniforms and the general poor conditions of service. Unless all these are improved, there is no way the police in Nigeria would be able to attract the right sort of people. A downsized police will be more efficient and the welfare will definitely improve since the resources being used to cater for the large number of officers currently in the force will now be used for a smaller number (Omideyi, 2012).

The need for improvement in welfare condition of services require that better houses need to be built with good facilities for sanitation, equipment need to be updated while medical facilities should be improved upon. Also, recreational facilities should be provided and maintained. It is also estimated that improved welfare condition will solve most of the problems being faced by the police at present (Omideyi, 2012). Until all these issues are resolved, officers will keep leaving and recruitment quotas will always be a struggle to meet.

It is important to note that the poor state of the barracks may account for one of the several factors causing the “not-too-pleasant behavior of many policemen in the country (Famutimi, 2014). Shelter is an important basic physiological needs of humans which should not be toiled with. A well sheltered man is a well-motivated man. Similarly, shelter is a symbol of safety in most societies. When a policeman goes out to work, he should come back to the safety and comfort of his house. But in a situation where the barracks is not in a good shape, the policeman’s performance is affected (Famutimi, 2014).

Better accommodation for the police has also been linked to improve performance in the sense that an average policeman is always thinking about his welfare. If they are not well sheltered in a tidy and decent environment, the level of disorganized thinking is promoted and concentration on the job is affected. It is important to note here that it is always stated that where you live improves your confidence and in view of this, taking proper care of barracks improves the ego of the policeman as they are proud of their job, thereby ultimately boosting their performance (Famutimi, 2014).

One viable method that has been devised by some organizations around the world to improve staff performance and efficiency is to provide them with good accommodation and a conducive working environment, this should not be an exception with the men and officers of the Nigeria Police Force. Until our policemen and women are well taken care of in terms of the provision of decent shelter, Nigerians are not likely to get the best from them. Therefore, their welfare should be a top priority for all departments and ministries responsible for police administration in Nigeria.

Improving the welfare of the police personnel towards improve service delivery also involve utilizing advanced technology and wearing effective safety gear which will ultimately help to enhance street safety. It is worth budgeting for technology that increases an officer’s capacity to remain safe, such as access to real-time data and multi-jurisdictional criminal records while in the field. According to Peatsall (2012) two important proactive measures an agency can take in ensuring officer safety on the streets include mandatory wearing of body armor and maintaining state-of-the art armories.

As part of efforts at improving the conditions of service in the Nigeria police personnel to reposition it for the task of effective delivery of crime prevention and law enforcement responsibilities in Nigeria young democratic system is the need to reform the police legal system. Police officers are often tried and dismissed casually from service without sufficient evidence. Most commanders cannot interpret laws and fundamental human rights of accused police officers are not respected. Almost all trials are conducted without the benefit of legal representation for accused personnel. Some of those dismissed or humiliated by these “Kangaroo Courts” nurtures feelings of resentment and always turn to criminal activities to get their own back on the society (Omideyi, 2012). A radical departure from the present arrangement is called for. It will not be out of place if civilian judges are appointed to review cases arbitrated in police “Orderly rooms” (Omideyi, 2012). Alternatively, these civilian

judges can be allowed to be members of the bench in trials involving police officers going for “Orderly room” trials. Most of the codes being used in the police today are archaic and should be reviewed in line with present realities (Omideyi, 2012).

There is widespread corruption among the personnel of the Nigeria Police Force (Karimu & Osunyanmi, 2012). However, studies found that many of the corrupt practices of the police men and officers which the society detest are some of the effects of the political economy in the Nigeria police where according to Hills (2008), men and officers are largely expected and responsible for their extended and often impoverished families with little income. Corruption is endemic at every level of Nigeria society (Karimu, 2014), with the police regularly heading Transparency International’s list of the most corrupt institutions in the country (Hills, 2008). It ranges from the constable who extorts money from motorists at checkpoints to the senior officers who share from the proceeds of the checkpoints extortion and who also take their subordinates’ allowances. The extent of the problems associated with what might be called the political economy of policing was evident in January 2007, when the head of CID was killed in Abuja, it was rumored by his own men, because he pocketed most of their allowances (Hills, 2008). The effect of such demands is corrosive in a society where officers are responsible for their extended and often impoverished families (Hills, 2008).

It was reported recently that the Nigeria Police Force personnel are complaining of illegal deductions in their monthly salaries without authorization. Some members of the Nigeria Police Force have continued to express displeasure over alleged indiscriminate deductions from their salaries. This should be of great concern since job satisfaction of members of the force is required for better performance and improved security. With regards to deductions, the Punch Newspaper in Nigeria recently reported that the Nigeria Police Force is said to be the highest contributor to the Federal Mortgage Bank (FMBN). However, to date, contributions by police officers to the National Housing Fund (NHF) and remittances to the FMBN are said to total approximately N8billion. Unfortunately, the Nigeria Police Force has not benefited from the facilities available at the FMBN under the NHF Act while other agencies and corporate groups benefit from huge contributions of policemen (Punch Newspaper, September 9, 2013). This is simply because the Nigeria Police Force could not float a Mortgage Bank to easily access the required loans for its officers and men (Punch Newspaper, September 9, 2013). It is important to note here that despite the fact that the program is a commendable one, it should not be made to affect the basic welfare of the personnel of the Nigeria Police Force.

Muniru (1988) assessment of the police and the problem of crime prevention and control indicate that the lapses in the operational strategies for prevention and detection of crimes, stem from the fact that the police are not adequately remunerated and equipped for the responsibilities of crime prevention and control. The police administrators appeared not to realize that in this modern period, crimes especially felonious or heinous ones are intelligently planned and executed with great sophistication. Therefore, to prevent or detect such crimes require a highly motivated personnel and an equally (if not better) intelligently planned operational strategies that are executed with sophisticated diligence.

The inability of the police to effectively detect crime and arrest criminal have been identified as a reason for the recent increase in the crime level in the country. But the problem with this analysis is that it does not take cognizance of the low morale among members of the Nigeria police and their numerous problems in terms of their performance in crime prevention and

control. There is also the security allocation that goes to the police every year. A critical analysis of the police budgetary allocation in relation to other defense and security agencies exposes the police as the weakest institution in the analysis of configuration of power (Rufai, 2012).

Elaborating further on the problem of neglect in the Nigeria police, Tamuno (1985) reiterates that in Nigeria, succession of governments, British and indigenous, civilian and military, did not give the police the necessary means of shouldering their heavy responsibilities. From colonial times to independence and as well as post-independence, the Nigeria Police Force has been a neglected agency (Rufai, 2012). This problem has been made exacerbated due to the fact that Nigerian police makers have never provided adequately for the needs of the police members, and other relevant resources officers, while other ranks are kept so busy those basic and in-service training programs suffer for so long periods, thus exacerbating the wastage –level in the Nigeria Police Force. Morale also suffers and, with it, efficiency. Correspondingly, as the public withdraw support the mainstream of police success saps.

Internally, problems were aggravated by issues like unrealistic establishments, undermining, limited finance and all these in the face of risen crime rate. A closer look at the profile of the contemporary Nigeria Police Force reveals that it is not significantly different from the police of the colonial or military era. Recruitments standards have risen but have generally remained low. Training programs have remained narrow, with emphasis on riot drill and para-military work. The present training program, both in quantity and quality, only prepares a recruit to perform police work militarily, it does not prepare him or her to understand his community, the police role, or the imperfections of the criminal justice that require its daily functionaries to exercise sound judgment (Odekunle, 1979; Karimu, 1999; Karimu & Osunyikanmi, 2012).

Researchers on the workings of the Nigeria police have at various times tried to comment on the constraints on police performance particularly with regard to lack of equipment and training in the ever changing scenario of crime in the country (Adeyemi, 1989, Coker, 1990, Karimu, 1999; Karimu & Osunyikanmi; Oloruntimehin, 1992). These studies have found out that in most recent cases police men and officers work under considerably worsening situation in forms of lack of sufficient transportation facilities, obsolete physical structures among others. Such a situation is clearly not good for the morale of the personnel. Therefore, the inefficiency and attitude of many of them which we complain about may stem from the level of morale in quite a number of cases.

For many years the Nigeria Police Force has been severely handicapped in its law enforcement role because of the non-availability of modern and sufficient equipment and material. The fact that low percentage of the entire police personnel are adequately accommodated in quarters and barracks places a lot of constraints on the ability of the police authorities to mobilize their men at short notice for emergency duties. The few available police barracks are in state of disrepair as they are not being maintained and this has explained the reason for the barracks to be in a state of total eyesore. The barracks can at best be described as a refugee camp as they are simply an eyesore and yet rent is being deducted in members' salaries monthly.

At a time when the Nigeria Police Force's most important resource is its personnel, officers are expected to continue providing quality and efficient services under the umbrella of declining opportunities for training, health, and wellness programs—all important factors that contribute to maintaining officer safety, welfare and efficiency. Focusing on officer health,

safety, and welfare is critical to effective performance especially in emerging democratic nations like Nigeria (Peatsall, 2012). As such, this research is a call to action for the government to preserve and support the welfare and well-being of the men and officers of the Nigeria Police Force. This is not an exhaustive list of current research, best practices, or services, this study is a starting point from which to raise national attention to consider and discuss the gaps in research, to recognize best practices, and to identify existing resources available to police in Nigeria so that they can preserve their most valuable resource—their personnel towards the goal of efficiency and performance improvement with regards to their primary responsibilities of crime prevention, detection, control and law enforcement.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

This research on welfare condition of the Nigeria Police Force is part of data collected over several years. The current qualitative study was carried out among policemen in a Southwestern State of Nigeria. The study's technique of data collection was in-depth interview. Face-to-face interviews were conducted among policemen who agreed to participate in this research. Respondents were asked questions relating to issues at hand- poor welfare condition and the problems associated with conditions of services that have affected policing in Nigeria. The respondents were encouraged to provide information based on their experience as policemen and officers.

The main questions were be open-ended and the same for all interviewees, but follow-up questions were differ depending on responses from each respondent. Therefore, the duration of interviews vary from one participant to the other. To ensure the privacy and anonymity of the participants, interviews were not audio recorded. Therefore, this researcher relied on field notes to documents responses from the participants (Lofland & Lofland, 1999). Interviews were dated and coded (Meyer, 2001).

Multiple respondents were interviewed due to the fact that it has the advantage of ensuring that the validity of information provided by one respondent can be checked against that provided by other respondent (Meyer, 2001). Participants were informed that they can opt out of the study at any time with no penalty. Also, the participants were informed that their anonymity and confidentiality will be protected by ensuring that any information provided will be used only for the study. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, the interviews were conducted in secret location chosen by each participant.

Interview was chosen for the current study because it is useful when participants cannot be directly observed (Creswell, 2009). Also, the use of in-depth interview as the technique of data collection was necessitated among others, because it provides the advantages of enabling the participants to provide historical information necessary for a better grasp of the welfare conditions of the Nigeria Police Force. It also allows this researcher control over the line of questioning (Creswell, 2009). With the use of this technique, considerable freedom exists to discover information the respondent are willing to share. It allows for probing, and it allows for the respondents to also dictate the direction of the dialogue (Lanier & Briggs, 2014). Data collection also includes analysis of Nigerian newspapers and magazines, academic journal articles, books, archival materials, and internet-based documented source materials.

FINDINGS

The discussion that follows analyzes some of the relevant information obtained from the respondents. The present study has examined the welfare condition of police personnel in Nigeria by conducting in-depth interviews among the men and officers of the Nigeria Police Force in a Southwestern State of Nigeria to best capture firsthand information on some of the issues affecting policing in Nigeria. Face-to-face, in person interviews were conducted with the police men and officers who agreed to participate in the study. This method was chosen because the participants cannot be directly observed due to the nature of their job and as a result, this method enabled the participants to provide historical information needed for this research, while also allowing this researcher to control the line of questioning (Creswell, 2009). The findings of the current study have shed light on the state of policing in Nigeria and as well as the conditions that men and officers of the agency operate. The fact that police performance with regards to its primary functions of crime prevention, detection, control and law enforcement has been deteriorating was clearly highlighted by the study.

Most of the police men and officers interviewed indicated that the conditions of service in the police were better in the earlier days of their career. It was noted that they worked for eight hours in a day, had sufficient time to rest and relate with their families at home. Anytime they went for special duties, allowances were paid. Most of the respondents who have spent longer years in the police argued that the police as an agency has since changed for worse compared to when they first started working. Majority of the respondents agreed that the general conditions of service in the police are poor and this situation inhibits effective performance. The respondents noted that the conditions of service in the Nigeria Police Force is not encouraging compared to other sectors.

The respondents stated that policemen now work for longer hours while promotion is no longer encouraging. They spend as much as nine years on a rank before they are considered for promotion. Previously, a commissioner of police was given power to promote up to the rank of sergeant but now it is no longer possible as all promotions have been concentrated with the Inspector General of Police.

It was the agreement of the majority of the participants that in the area of remunerations, police salary is still considered as meagre despite the recent salary increment. According to the respondents this has been responsible for the police extortion of the public particularly commercial drivers because they have to feed their families. This situation which should be condemned in all ramifications has now become a daily occurrence as policemen can be seen collecting money on the road unashamedly.

The respondents believed that police duties include protection of life and property, prevention and detection of crime. However, they argued that the police have not been able to perform the duties effectively because they lack the necessary equipment, they do not have modern weaponry, poor remuneration and insufficient manpower. Most respondents further noted that the police men and officers themselves fuel the police vehicle from their own income- a situation which has encouraged corruption among police personnel. The respondents unanimously agreed that most police commands lack sufficient walkie-talkie to contact the nearest police man or police station in case of emergency and further noted that police training and methods are adequate and that they can effectively fight the war against crime if they are sufficiently equipped.

With regards to the problem of lack of adequate equipment for the police to perform efficiently their duties, the respondents noted that there are no adequate remuneration, appropriate telecommunication, gadgets in term of logistics, sending signals from one place to another with better equipment. When message is being brought in for transmission into the communication office it is always difficult to get such message through. As a result of this problem some important messages are delayed. All the participants agreed that the police would have performed better if equipment like better communication gadgets and vehicles are adequately provided to track down criminals.

Also, information obtained from the participants indicated that Nigeria Police Force have a manpower problem which has hindered its effectiveness in crime prevention and control. The respondents pointed out that a practice which continues to sap the strength of manpower available to the Nigeria Police Force is that of the police spending too much of their time or using too much of its personnel acting as guards for important foreign and domestic dignitaries and in travelling to various part of the country with far greater number of public officials, thereby rendering the number of men available to protect the citizens and as well as reducing the concentration of police man power in the urban areas where many of the crimes in the country take place. The participants also called for improvement in the manpower level in the agency. According to this group of participants who believed that the training is adequate, where the problem arises from is in the area of inadequate personnel to cope with the population of the community that they are serving.

During the interview some respondents identified poor police training as hindrance to effective policing in Nigeria. They pointed out that police training is grossly inadequate. They noted that something needs to be done because the training syllabus is not adequate as greater emphasis is placed on discipline and very little attention is paid to weapon and tactical training. The respondents further noted that they are subjected to rigorous training that is calculated to dehumanize them all in the name discipline. The respondents suggested that courses such as psychology, sociology, political science, criminal law, criminal procedure and human rights should introduced into the syllabus and emphasized. It was the submission of the respondents that with incentives and adequate training, the police should be able to perform up to standard according. However, some respondents also noted that the current training curriculum is adequate for it to perform its functions effectively, but the authorities have not allowed them to utilize the training to the maximum because of the politicization of the agency.

In the area of promotion, most of the respondents interviewed noted that year after year, the agency has made promotion purely a question of “ethnic patronage and a man-know- man affair” at the expense of standards by way of seniority, records, and high performance. The result through the years has been the full enthrone and consolidation of mediocrity which has adversely affected the morale of personnel and as well as the agency performance with regards to its numerous responsibilities. Most of the respondents argued that in the agency, the way promotion are conducted ultimately does not encourage its officers to so aspire. They added that men and officers suffer often from errors of compilation of names and other administrative lapses of state commands and lack of thoroughness at police Headquarters. Also, the respondents noted that promotion exercise does not take into account sectorial or departmental requirements. It was further noted from the interviews that certain crucial sections of the force like communication, works, and band are usually ignored in promotion exercise even when it is clear to all and sundry that these departments are suffering from the dearth of officers to take charge of their nation-wide operations. This

situation which has resulted in high level of frustration according to the respondents has discouraged potential hands from enlisting in these sections.

The respondents agreed that the major functions of the police in Nigeria are to preserve public peace, prevent and control crime, prosecute offenders, traffic duties and other similar duties as may be assigned to them by the constitution or executive branch of government. However, the respondents argued that the police personnel have tried their best in crime prevention and control within the limit of their capability. It is also part of the argument of the respondents that the police would have performed creditably if successive Inspector Generals of Police have been truly committed to raising the standards of policing through efforts at improving the conditions of service and provision of necessary equipment.

The respondents said things actually begin to get worse in the police some years ago when the agency started running short of diaries, police registers, statement forms, file jackets; when policemen have to spend their own incomes to buy these things. Every policeman according to majority of the respondents, is expected to carry a note book because when he goes out, he is expected to take note of everything that happened. These materials, respondents noted are no longer available to the police.

It is the view of most participants that the Nigeria Police Force as an institution will continue to attract low patronage by applicants if it continues to treat its personnel unfairly, by dismissal, premature retirement and arbitrary suspension. They added that the way things are in the Nigeria Police Force, officers who have served long period of time in the agency are usually suspended, dismissed and even retired from the agency without due regard for rule of law. This situation, they noted, has weakened the morale of personnel of the agency.

The respondents continue by highlighting other handicap to effective policing in Nigeria by stating that police personnel have to purchase stationeries from their personal money. Office accommodation is grossly inadequate and that they also have no barracks accommodation. In most cases where available, police barracks are dilapidated, in different state of disrepair due to neglect and lack of maintenance culture. They added that men of the agency have to make do with rented houses devoid of facilities like toilets, electricity and water, among the rural community. Some police offices do not have vehicles while others do not have motorable vehicles to aid their mobility.

CONCLUSION

The current study has clearly shown that in Nigeria, the level of police performance with regards to its primary responsibilities of crime prevention, detection and control is closely tied to the welfare condition available in the agency and as well as the level of equipment and facilities at their disposal. Most of the respondents noted that the welfare conditions existing in the agency is not encouraging and it has combined with host of other issues to dampen the morale of staff of the agency. This research has also brought to the fore the problems associated with accommodation (housing and office) in the police. Accommodation was identified as a big problem in the agency as respondents pointed out that they lack habitable barracks accommodation.

The study has further brought to the fore the concern that the Nigeria police is not adequately equipped while little facilities available are not judiciously utilized by the police. The information obtained on the state of facilities and equipment show that such operational

equipment like walking-talkie, office stationeries and others were in short supply in many of the police offices. It is important to note that majority of the respondents interviewed for this study identified the low level of facilities available at their disposal as a major reason while the police has not been able to perform as expected.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having discussed the findings of the present study, it is necessary to make some recommendations generated from these findings for the purpose of policy making. Police all over the world have similar problems, but the nature of these problems and the manner in which they appear may depend on the socio-political and economic setting within a given society. We shall take the recommendations under the following sub-headings.

Improving manpower and conditions of services: There is a need to recruit more men into the police in order to cope with the increasing crime rate and to ensure better protection for the citizens. Regular street patrols, which featured prominently in the colonial days and shortly after independence have stopped, apparently due to insufficient manpower. It is important to note that regular street patrols continue to remain a big part of the crime prevention and control strategies of elite police departments in developed societies such as City of New York Police Department (NYPD). Improving the strength of the agency should make it possible for the police to respond promptly and effectively to the needs of the citizens. It is therefore, strongly suggested that the quota system should be stopped so as to allow the agency to recruit up to its established strength. If a state cannot fill its quota, no harm is done if men and officers are recruited from other states.

The conditions of service in the police are unsatisfactory. In the first place, the present salary structure is undesirable particularly when it is related to the rate of inflation in the country. This is the more reason why relevant authorities including the Police Service Commission (PSC) should ensure that police men and officers continue to enjoy regular increment in remuneration and salaries commensurate with inflation rate in the country. Some policemen live in poorly equipped and dilapidated barracks, while majority lives among the civilians in low level rented apartment without basic amenities. In most cases the barracks have been converted to offices as a result of inadequate office space. This situation tends to affect the general morale of the police and also the performance level.

Efforts should be made to build more barracks and provide accommodation for policemen. In addition, the conditions of service should be improved upon. This is necessary if we are working towards a new regime in the police. It is a common knowledge that corruption exist in the agency. There is no doubt that until the welfare condition of police in Nigeria is substantially improved, efforts at reducing corruption among the men and officers of the agency will not be successful while it would also be difficult to get the best out of the agency.

Other measure to improve the conditions of services of the policemen according to the respondents include the payment of overtime (as obtained in other police agencies such as the City of New York Police Department in the United States) and other allowance like special duties immediately as they are incurred, as well and payment of reasonable compensation on account of injured and dead corpse. Respondents also suggested that government should intensify efforts to see to the achievement of the insurance scheme for the police because of the nature of their job. These measure which are aimed at improving the welfare and

conditions of services of policemen should motivate them to give their best to achieving the goals of the agency.

Provision of Modern Equipment: Inadequate facilities have contributed to compounding the problems facing the police in Nigeria and have had adverse effects on the morale of the Nigeria Police personnel. As the current study has shown, basic facilities like communication are lacking. The police also lack sophisticated weapons to combat the incidence of crime while the number of vehicles available to track down criminals is inadequate. As indicated from the respondents, they sometimes have had to provide from their own resources, stationery for their work while others argued that lack of transportation hindered bringing arrested person before the courts at the appropriate time. It is therefore suggested that police should be adequately equipped with necessary facilities and equipment. Wireless radios should be more equipped so as to meet the existing demands. Also, walkie-talkies and telephone should be made available to all police officers to ease the problem of delaying sending and receiving messages.

Making police more efficient: Corruption seems to have become institutionalized by policemen at check points where they collect money unashamedly in the full glare of passengers and other road users. Every checkpoint becomes by itself a toll gate, especially for commercial vehicles, but with the difference that the proceeds went into the private pockets of the policemen. It was found out through the current study that corruption in the Nigeria police is not confined to dealings with members of the public. Some policemen during the course of the interviews complained that they had to bribe to get their uniforms to be issued with working riffles, to be posted to lucrative check points or to obtain barrack accommodation.

Police authorities have at different times introduced measures to check corruption in the agency. For example, there are the X squad that is a monitoring unit together with the provost department to make surprise checks on police officers; a regulation that no police officers have more than certain amount of money on him while on duty post, and the abolition of most routine check points. None of these have apparently made much impact on the level of corruption in agency. As far back four decades ago, Igbino (1985) noted that a significant reductions in police corruption in Nigeria can be achieved by eliminating as many situations as possible which currently expose policemen to corruption, and by controlling exposure where corruption hazards are unavoidable. Other measures should include elimination of certain fiscal functions, good leadership and that recruitments personnel investigation must be instituted.

There is a strong feeling in some quarters that the police is its own enemy because of the way promotion exercise has been made a question of ethnic patronage and man-know-man affair at the expense of standard as indicated by most of the policemen and officers who agreed to participate in this current study. This situation has adversely affected the morale and effectiveness of the agency with regards to crime prevention, detection, and control and law enforcement in Nigeria. The way and manner at which promotion exercise in the police is carried out therefore calls for urgent review to boost the morale of personnel of the agency. All cases of outright neglect must be looked into if the police is determine to improve performance of its men and officer in crime prevention and control.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was carried in one Southwestern State of Nigeria, therefore information obtained only relies on interviews conducted with police personnel in this state supplemented with information for journals, Nigeria newspapers and magazines, internet-based documented source materials. The participant's selection was based on convenience samples. The work may therefore be guilty of inherent prejudices that may exist in the sources of information utilized.

This author is therefore suggesting that conducting further in-depth questionnaire study to control for validity and reliability of information. Perhaps, such study in the future may involve police personnel from other states in different regions of the country. The police agency representative(s) also need to be interviewed in order to verify some of the documented information utilized in this work. This effort will not only buttress many of the ideas and questions posed by this study, but may also contribute to improvement in the state of policing in Nigeria towards goal of effectiveness.

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