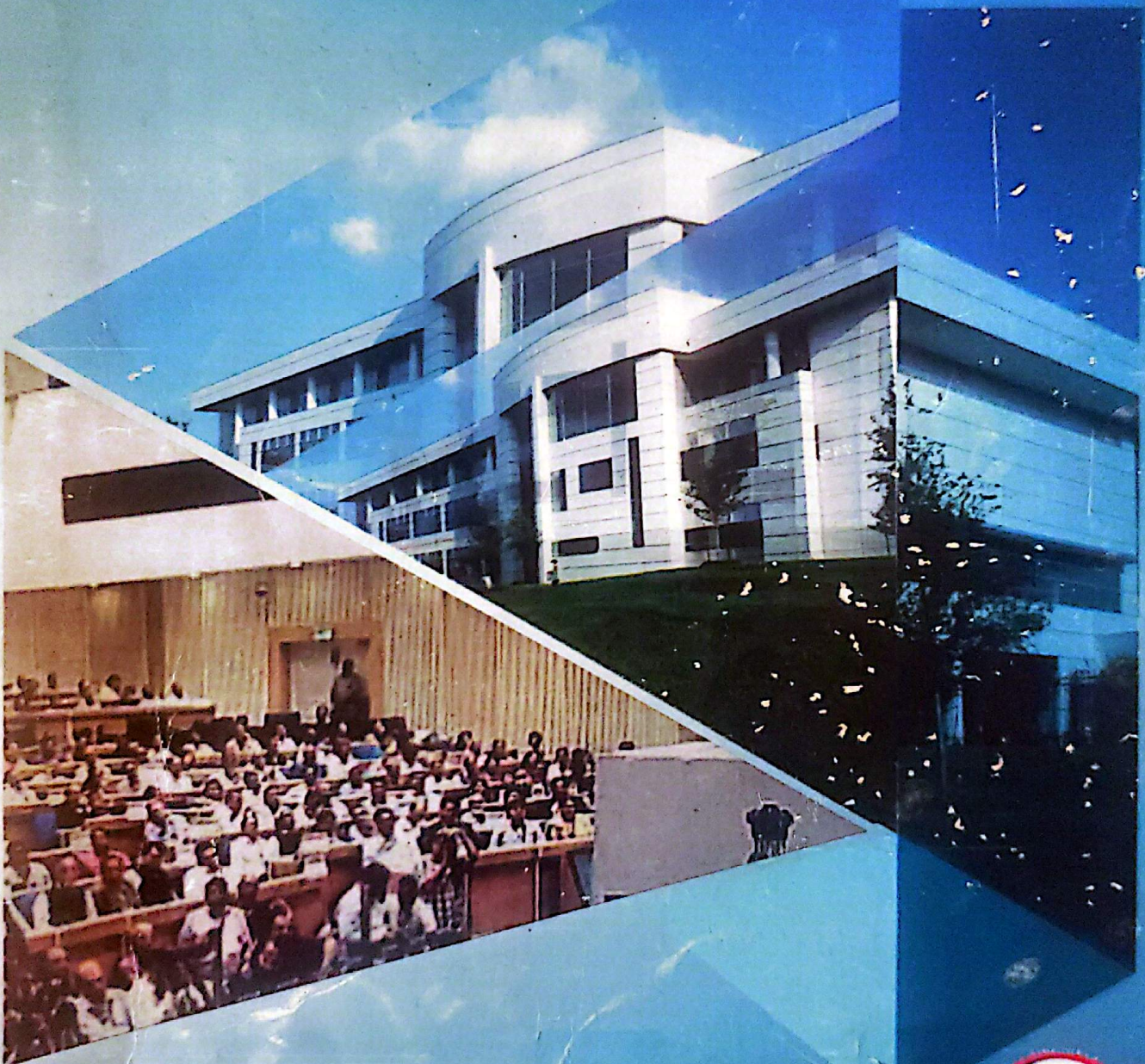


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PATTERNS OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE POLICE AND COMMERCIAL DRIVERS IN ILORIN-IBADAN HIGHWAY

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Abstract

In all societies, the role of the Police as agent of social control is very essential as they preserve law and order. The police when discharging their duties sometimes engage in unprofessional behaviours such as extorting of motorists. At times, motorists refused to 'corporate' to their demands and as a result, this disagreement sometimes leads to violence and many have met their untimely death in the hands of such policemen. The Nigeria Police Force are viewed more as predators rather than protectors as they have become a symbol of unfettered corruption, intimidation, unjustified detention, torture, brutality and abuse. In most instances police-public relationships have been hampered. Thus, this study is aimed at empirically examining the patterns of relationship as occasioned in the bribery exchange between the Police and commercial drivers along the Ilorin-Ibadan highways. The study adopted survey research design using qualitative data for analysis. The study also made use of In-depth interview (IDI) and Key informants Interview (KII) for data collection. Purposive sampling technique was also adopted to select the study population. The study found that many commercial drivers were short-changed, intimidated, delayed and extorted by police men along the Ilorin-Ibadan highway. The study recommended for an improved working condition for Nigerian police.

Keywords: Police, corruption, extortion, NURTW, Highway codes.

Introduction

The Nigerian Police is one of the most important institutions in the society. They are entrusted with the constitutional power to protect the health, safety and order of citizenry (Ehindero, 1998:1). Reiner (1993) states that police are special carriers of state's bedrock power, and are the agents with authority for legitimate use of force for maintaining public and private goods and services. In this regard, the police defend the character of the state as a capable political organization, protecting and preserving the interests of the entire society (Reine, 2000; Alemika and Chukwuma, 2005; Oluwaniyi, 2011). They provide the requisite enabling environment for citizens to live and work towards social, economic and political development of the society (Groenewald & Peake, 2004). The significance of peace, safety and security to mankind cannot be over-emphasized as the socio-economic and political development of any society depends on the security system available in such society.

In consonance with their duty of ensuring peace, security, prevention and detection of crime, officers are stationed to enforce traffic rules on motorists through inspection of vehicle, particulars, driver's license amongst others on the highways in the country (Oluyede, 1988). It has been suggested that it is implied from the general duties of the police under "section 4 of the Police Act" that there exist the powers to stop and search (Amadi, 2000). In the process of discharging their legal duties during 'stop and search of vehicles and apprehension of offenders to the traffic laws, police officers usually caught in an unprofessional act of extorting motorists on a daily basis. Police take bribery openly at check points. The collection of N50.00 from motorists at roadblocks is a popular occurrence across the nation" (Ibrahim, 2015). According to Ikhariale, (2014), some checkpoints became regular scenes of bloodshed because fatal accidents occur when unsuspecting motorists are signaled or made to halt abruptly. Many motorists have been killed by policemen for either failing to stop or refusing to pay illegal levies imposed at these checkpoints. Numerous innocent passengers have also died from stray and directly aimed bullets in the process (Echono, 2014).

Olusoga (1981) stated that dishonest behavior in professional engagement depicts policing to fraud, bribery, abuse of office, robbery and other immoral practices. Thus, rather than aiding security and the apprehension of criminals, police checkpoints in Nigeria have become an avenues for irritatingly delaying motorists and commuters in the quest by the police officers to extort money from them, even as criminals make the best of such scenarios to pay the necessary toll and evade apprehension (Tribune 2014). Drivers either give money or are delayed. To avoid being unnecessarily questioned, drivers happily give money to the police provided the police will not look at the

vehicle documents to know whether the vehicle particulars are current/valid or not. The action which is open and not hidden, one will feel that bribery is legalized in the country; as it has become an 'institutional' or rather a 'constitutional' open corrupt practice. Police corruption often involves exploiting their public position, resources, and power to suppress individuals in order to bargain for bribes. (Amuwo, 2005, Obayelu, 2007, Ogundiya 2009) Many persons who refused to comply with N50.00 bribe demanded by policemen on roadblocks and tollgates have met their untimely death (Oyewale, 2005). The police force touted slogan "the police is your friend" has been found wanting. It has become a source of ridicule in the eyes of most Nigerians because of several illegal "tollgates" and roadblocks set-up for the illegal collection of money from Nigerians (Adediran 2009; Obiola, 2005). Several names such as "roja", "particulars", "appreciation", and "support" "kickback" have been used by the police to perpetuate these illegal collections.

Over the years, this unwieldy force has proved difficult to be effectively managed and controlled, and has become largely unaccountable to the citizens it is meant to serve (Emerson, 2010). In fact, it has been stressed that most Nigerians lack confidence in the Police and other law enforcement agencies and thus prefer private security outfits or vigilante groups to public security operatives (Ajayi and Aderinto, 2008). Extortion, embezzlement, and other corrupt practices by Nigeria's Police undermine the fundamental human rights of Nigerians. The most direct effect of Police corruption on ordinary citizens stems from the myriad human rights abuses committed by Police officers in the process of discharging their duties.

Many studies have been conducted on patterns of relationship between the police and commercial drivers, but little effort has been made to examine the incidences of police extortions on commercial drivers in Ilorin-Ibadan highways. The content scope focused on the negotiation and the implication of police-commuters bribery exchange. The study adopts the Social Exchange theory to discuss the relationships between the two variables and also rational choice theory to discuss the benefits of engaging in bribery.

Theoretical Approach

The theoretical anchorages of this study are both Social Exchange and rational choice theory. Social exchange theory was developed by Emerson (1976) and the theory involves a series of interactions that generate obligations. These interactions are usually seen as interdependent and contingent on the actions of another person (Blau, 1964). The relationship between the police and the highway commercial drivers is anchored on the basis of interdependent transactions that have the potential to generate high-quality relationships, although this will occur under certain circumstances. Social exchange theory posits that human relationships are formed by the use of a subjective cost-benefit analysis and the comparison of alternatives. The cost-benefit and comparison of alternatives will occur in this instance when the highway drivers failed to comply with the highway codes, thereby encouraging the Officer's to take kick back or tips in exchange for inability of highway drivers to conform to highway codes and road related regulations.

Rational choice theory then assumes that an individual has preferences among the available choice alternatives that allow them to state which option they prefer. These preferences are assumed to be complete (the person can always say which of two alternatives they consider preferable or that neither is preferred to the other) and transitive. These represent an attempt on the part of the commuters who deviate or disobey the traffic rules by evading arrest and punishment in rationalizing their actions. This might involve the form of under-performance or neglect of a recognized duty or the unwarranted exercise of power, with the motive of gaining some advantages more or less directly personal (Brook, 1970). It emphasizes the need on the part of the drivers to evaluate and assess the pains and gains of being delayed and punished. They make attempt to negotiate with the police and avoid higher consequences. They prefer to bribe the police than to be punished. The choice made by most drivers seems the best in terms of weighing the pains and gains of the consequences of their actions. Officers by virtue of their mandate or their function often works on the weakness of most drivers to collect bribe (Méry 1996 cited in Amundsen, 1999:7)

Methodology

The research designs were both exploratory and descriptive using qualitative data. The study was carried out in two local governments. These local governments are Ilorin west Local Government Area of Kwara State and Akinyele Local Government Area (LGA), Ibadan Oyo State. Saw mill motor parks in Ilorin and Akinyele Motor Park in Ibadan were purposively selected for the study because they are the major parks that link to several regions within the country. They are the major exit points to reach western, northern, and other eastern parts of the country. Many taxi, mini-buses and buses used for commercial transport, originate and terminate at these points

and it consists of large numbers of transport workers. Saw mill motor parks in Ilorin caters for the transport linking to the western region which includes Oyo, Osun, Ondo, Ogun and other major cities. Akinyele Motor Park in Ibadan caters for the transport needs of the passengers travelling towards the cities in the eastern region of the country comprising of Benin, Warri, Port Harcourt, Uyo, Calabar and others. New Garage links other major cities in the south west which includes Lagos, Abeokuta, Epe, Ijebu- Ode, and other coastal towns.

Study participants:

The study populations comprises of members and officials of National Union of Road Transport Workers, who ply the Ilorin-Ibadan, the police officers(rank and files) who were at the time stationed at Ilorin-Ibadan highways and some Top police officers from each Police station from two selected local governments. Passengers were equally selected because of their depth of experience. Respondents for IDIs were selected from the drivers plying the Ilorin and Ibadan highways and the readily available drivers were purposively selected and where there was none the next driver is considered as a replacement. Respondents, three each for KIIs were purposively selected, this included Six Top officials of the Nigerian police officers, three each from the two states. They are in the ranks of DSP, ASP, and Inspector of police. The officials of NURTW were also selected and this includes the Chairman, Secretary and P.R.O of the union.

Data Collection:

Two qualitative methods of data collection were utilized in this study, namely in-depth interviews (IDIs) and key informant interviews (KIIs). These methods were triangulated to obtain adequate and valid data. Eighteen (18) IDIs, Nine (9) per each of the two selected local Government Area, were carried out. Members of NURTW (4), rank and files police officers (3) found on the highway and the passengers (2). Twelve (12) KIIs were carried out, six for each of the selected local governments. Three each for top police officers and three each for the officials of NURTW. All interview for illiterate participants were conducted in Yoruba language, while those for literate participants were conducted in English language.

The IDIs and KIIs were moderated by the lead researcher and shared with the assistance of a note taker and observer. Consent of the participants was obtained before conducting the interviews. The KIIs each had an average duration of 70 minutes while each of IDIs lasted between 40 and 60 minutes.

The interviews were audio recorded with the aid of a tape recorder with the consent of the participants. The recordings were transcribed and compared with the notes taken by the note takers and the interviewers to enhance the reliability of the data collected. The interviews were focused on eliciting information about the nature of interaction between commuters and the police. It also focused on the perceptions on the relationship that exist between police and commercial drivers.

Data Analysis:

The recorded interviews and discussions were transcribed. The recordings done in Yoruba were translated into English language, and transcribed for subsequent analysis. The transcriptions were compared with the notes taken during data collection. Content and thematic analytical method of identifying and grouping of similar thoughts, or distinct opinions, expressed across the two methods was adopted. This was done according to the objectives of the study. Information obtained was reported as phrases in quotes from the recorded expressions of participants. Internal validity was achieved by using data from the two sources, and by presenting responses from different participants to support the research objectives.

Instruments:

The instruments used for data collection were interview guides designed for each group of participants. These however did not exclude interviewers' discretion within the scope of the study to facilitate obtaining information on the objectives of the study.

Ethical consideration: Participants were selected based on principle of confidentiality of data, beneficence to participant, Non-Maleficence to participants and Voluntariness.

Results

Nature of interaction between the police and commercial drivers:

The study attempted to obtain the pattern of relationship between police and commercial drivers. On the nature of interaction, majority of the respondents' (NURTW) members interviewed expressed that once they have been

spotted by Police Officers, all what the Police officers do is to examine vehicles particulars and the driver's license and as well extort and intimidate them. Responses from the IDIs expatiate on most of the drivers perceptions about the police as presented in the responses transcribed below:

They used to stop us and ask for vehicle papers and driver's license. They often check the passengers and luggage too. Some of these officers usually release us once there is no incriminating evidence in the car, but majority of them are otherwise. Even if you have everything available and valid, they will still demand for bribe from the driver. Sometimes if our papers have expired we beg them and we promise to renew the papers so that they can release us immediately and we do bribe them so as not to be delayed.

(IDI/M/driver/Ibadan/2017)

Similarly another participant opined that

They stop us most times for overloading and request for bribe but if we fail to give them, they may ask us to park and check the vehicle particulars and other unnecessary things purposely to exploit us.

(IDI/M/driver/Ilorin/2017)

Furthermore, with regards to the legitimate duties of the Nigeria Police Force in the enforcement of law and order, majority of the opinions held that effective performance of the Police depends on the possibilities of arresting any offenders on the highway. Most of the highway drivers were of the opinion that common practice of vehicle inspections are no longer enforce in the country today. This in respect of the fact that general inspection is very common some years back and at the same time most of the drivers are hired and are not ready to waste their precious time on the highway. This could be as a result of displacement of duties or unwillingness of the police in carrying out their daily responsibilities. For instance a motorist stated thus,

In those days, they used to observe general checking at the end of every month. But now that everything has changed, there is no general checking again. They don't collect money in those days; they checked only the vehicle documents, driver's license and the general condition of the vehicle. Even if you move to the next check point, they will not collect any money but now it is not like that again. Most officers don't even bother to ask for document again, they demand for money immediately a driver is stopped.

(IDI/M/driver/Ibadan/2017)

Similarly, an official of National Union of Road Transport Workers was of the opinion that police duty of checking in the past was actually different from what is obtainable today and he opined that:

If the stop and search is usually the way it should be, there will not be any problem. They don't do it well any longer. The police are supposed to check the particulars, license and luggage in our car. After checking if there is no error the driver should be released and let go but sometimes some of these police officers will still look for something to complain about just to collect money from us. This is exactly what is wrong with stop and search. Even if you buy new car today with all the papers valid, some officers will still look for an avenue to collect money from you.

(KII/M/NURTW/Ibadan/2017)

Response from KII with a police officer further supported the above position and made reference to the poor nature of relationship between the police and the public. This evil is so entrenched that it is becoming virtually part of the system. Scholars like Pekuliameesi (2005), have noted that many people who have course to deal with the Nigeria Policemen have revealed that the force harbours some very bad characters

The relationship between the public and the police is poor. At times the public make police to be corrupt because human beings are not the same; people have different perception of the police. The public also

make police to be corrupt as a result of the fact that police are not well paid, they go to their work with hungry stomach and the driver is coming and give something willingly to the police while others give police a kickback because of the contraband they are carrying. Some of these drivers take police as their enemy, some of them refuse to stop for police to check them and this is the reason why many police are dying on the highway because of the recklessness of some drivers. In fact I don't pray to work on the highway again because of the danger involved. (KII/M/police/Ilorin/2017)

The pattern of relationship between police and highway drivers are almost the same. However, factors such as invalid or expired vehicle documents, outdated drivers license, overloading and the poor general condition of the commercial vehicles have prompted conflict and contention between the Police and the NURTW members. This opinion was expressed by an educated participant at KII session conducted for literate drivers:

Their complaints is always about the state and condition of the vehicle, (do you have vehicle papers and license)? It is all about these and fire extinguisher and they check if the vehicle is carrying overloading. (KII/M/NURTW/Ilorin/2017)

Another respondent has this to say,

If our vehicle papers are not up to date and license has expired, we begged the officers and we always promise to renew it as soon as possible. We begged them so as not to be delayed. But majority of them often demands for bribe before a vehicle can be released. Sometimes if we are faulty and by virtue of not wanting to be dragged to police station or lose passengers because of our daily earning, we will not resist to give them a token. (IDI/M/driver/Ibadan/2017)

Some respondents are of the opinion that crave for money has penetrated the system of each Nigeria police officer. It is a situation Ibrahim (2015) argues that "Police inaction is a gangrene which has eaten deep into the fabrics of law enforcement..." and "allegations of police corruption erupt on daily basis" (p.26). This was corroborated by some participants at an IDI session for illiterate driver who stated as follow:

They don't have any complain. They stop commercial vehicle because of the little stipend they want to collect. Sometimes, when they stop our vehicles, they would not even bother to check chassis engine number. This is why most drivers will put like N200 in between vehicle document for the police. Once this is done, the driver will be released immediately. Most of our people used to give them money because they don't want to be delayed. If it's a private car owner, one can still argue with any officer. I will not give them anything especially when I have a valid particulars and license. During the night, most police officers don't ask for particulars or license, what they do is just to collect bribe and give vehicles a tag number in case of when returning back. Even if we carry contraband goods or kidnapped human being, they will not check anything, they will only demand for cash. (IDI/M/driver/Ibadan/2017)

However another set of respondents concluded that most drivers often comply with highway codes and a (passenger) gave a similar position. Thus:

Most of these commercial drivers usually have the requirement as per documents. I mean 80% of them used to have the requirement. Those that did not have may be as a result of the cost and their nonchalant attitude towards validating their document. Those that did not have valid document usually bribe their way out of trouble along the way (IDI/M/passenger/Ibadan/2017)

Response from IDI with a police officer further supported the above submission that:

Police will not go with the intention of extorting the motorist; officers will always want to perform their duty according to the law. Police usually demands for particulars of the vehicle, license and look at the content of the vehicle and the state of the vehicle itself. Sometimes some of these commercial vehicles uses expired, outdated or worn out tyre and with our position and duty to protect lives and properties, we need to stop the vehicle and take them to station so that they can get a better tyre and the lives and properties of citizens will be better (IDI/M/police/Ibadan/2017)

On the nature of negotiation between the police and commuters, responses during IDI session revealed that the Police officers are the main cause of the conflict because of their *ijekuje* (*ijekuje* in this context is simply referred to as the act of using unlawful means to collect bribe from them by accusing them with things that are not relevant or do not warrant probing into). This is the position represented by the view of a driver during an IDI Session:

They have right to stop and search any vehicle plying the road especially when there is a search for a stolen vehicle. Police also search some vehicles purposely to uncover stolen goods. The police are not entitled to search license or vehicle documents. Searching and checking the validity of any vehicle documents is the work of the VIO and road safety. It's these two organizations that generate revenue to the government but police only generate money to their pocket (IDI/M/driver/Ibadan/2017)

In a related development, some respondents who are passengers made some revelation in support of the nature of negotiation between police and highway drivers. They are of the view that police do collect illegal dues as a result of invalid documents and license. The police negotiate with intention of extorting the motorists especially when carrying overloading. . Police take bribe openly at any place they mount check point and this had made the police an object of ridicule (News watch Magazine, 2003).

A passenger opined that:

Yes, both the commercial drivers and the police do interact and negotiate especially when the driver's document and license are not valid. The drivers used to negotiate with the police so as to pay tokens and evade arrest (IDI/F/passenger/Ibadan/2017)

On the contrary, Most of the NURTW officials are of the opinion that police are actually doing their job especially in their attempt to ensure for safety and security of the commuters. Some (NURTW) members submitted that, they usually appreciate the work done by most police officers by giving them token and this they have done is voluntarily. They often give freely and occasionally between the range of N50, N100 and N200.

Response from KII with an NURTW official further supported the above submission that:

I personally used to give them something especially during night travelling, because we prefer to give them than to be robbed by thieves, the police job is a delicate job, we always pray for God protection. The police are human; they are our protector because when the robbers attacked us it could be deadlier. The police do not force us to pay. We give them voluntarily (KII/M/NURTW/Ilorin/2017)

Response from KII with a police officer also supported the above submission that:

If police collect money at all, it is always from a good driver who gives voluntarily. They could give gifts but extorting them forcibly is not happening. This is why we have monitoring unit, for the highway. Most drivers usually give voluntarily to the police. The purpose of being on the highway is not to make money and at the same time police are not supposed to be in possession of money (KII/M/Police/Ibadan/2017)

On the implications of the negotiation on road safety and general well being of the people, most respondents agreed that exchange of bribery between the police and commuters poses a great threat to the security and well being of the commuters and the populace in general. Many criminals, car snatchers as well as kidnappers have evaded arrest once they are able to settle police officers found on the highway. It's also imperative to note that many commercial drivers who purchased cars on loan have been unable to meet the payment for car purchased on loan. The inability to pay for car purchased on loan has affected the social, economic and psychological status of the commuters.

A passenger stated that:

The safety and well-being of the passengers are not guaranteed at all, most of the officers nowadays prefer to collect bribe than to check passengers and the luggage. They don't bother about number of passengers in the bus; they don't bother about overloading or otherwise. What they are interested in is their own bribe. We don't know whether robbers are part of the passengers or not (IDI/F/passenger/Ibadan/2017)

Others are of the opinion that,

Yes, it affects us, even the vehicle owner. For instance, from Ilorin to Ibadan, one may spend close to N2, 000 and driver must deliver plus his daily wages. However, drivers are sometimes forced to lie to the owner that the car broke down so that the driver will not be short charged. It is not everything we can explain to the owner, therefore it is affecting (IDI/M/Driver/Ilorin/2017)

An official of NURTW expanded the above statement as it affects the take home of most of the motorists. He narrates that:

Many times especially during the night, they don't normally search anything. What they do most is to collect money and give motorist number tag in case of when coming back. They will allow thieves or car snatchers among others to evade arrest or apprehension once they settle the police. The money collected is also very frustrating, at times the daily delivery of most drivers may not complete and so the motorist may not be able to go home with anything and these may lead to another thing entirely (KII/M/NURTW/Ibadan/2017)

The above position suggested that many kidnappers, car snatchers and ritualists can evade arrest was corroborated by another respondent as follow

It affects business, because the money meant for returns and delivery and the drivers take home will be reduced. It affects me personally and even my children feedings and school fees (IDI/M/driver/Ilorin/2017).

On the contrary, an official of the NURTW stated that police perform an important functions particularly the safety and security of the commuters. The respondent narrates an encounter he had with the police thus;

All the delay that we usually encountered during the journey is always as a result of answered prayers. I had an accident not long ago during night travelling, if not because police stopped us; all the passengers would have been burnt to death. This is because my car was on fire from the bottom during the night and I didn't know but when they stopped us, they told us that there is fire under the bus, they demanded for my fire extinguisher but in the process of getting it the fire caught up with me. If not because they stopped us or we refused to stop when they commanded us, it would have been deadlier. It is never a crime when police stop vehicle on the highway but we drivers are always in a hurry, after all whenever we had a flat tire driver will stop. (KII/M/NURTW/Ilorin/2017)

The above submission was also supported by a top police officer during IDI session

The law doesn't respect anybody except those that obeys it or abides by it. Forget about the uniform, if I am caught taking something from the commercial drivers as against my duty, a civilian can arrest the police, because what we do on the highway will tell more about the profession and the image. The press can also publicize the act to the public. Since you have your salary, it doesn't make sense to exploit or extort innocent drivers for whatever reasons. I know it is happening but I have never seen it (IDLM/Police/Ilorin/2017).

Discussion of Findings

Findings from this study show that the perception of the personality of the Police Force and the understanding of the concept of Police interaction with the members of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) of the Police Force. This to a large extent has impacted negatively on the police-citizen relationships in the country that have brought resentment and mutual hostility (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2000). Despite its vaunted slogan: "Police is your Friend," most Nigerians perceived the Police as enemy that must be avoided by any means possible. This is in line with assertion of Alemika and Chukwuma (2000) who posited that relationships between the Nigeria Police and the citizens are largely characterized by suspicion, prejudiced, mutual disrespect, conflict and violence. In essence, the inability of the Police to connect with the public as a result of their widely reported belligerent and criminal attitudes has alienated the public.

It's also evident that the interaction can be established mostly when the road users obstruct or defy traffic rules and regulation. The inability of the highway drivers to conform to the traffic laws often resort to negotiation and exchange of favour between the commercial highway drivers and the police. This resonates (Amuwo, 2005 and Obayelu, 2007) arguments that the extent of police officers corruption, is found in their ability to use their position, resources and power to suppress individuals in order to bargain for bribe. Many persons who refused to comply with N50.00 bribe demanded by policemen on the check points have met their untimely death (Oyewale, 2005).

Findings also revealed that the police frequently extort money from the public at taxi stands, in marketplaces, or while going about their daily lives. However, the most common venue for extortion occurs at police check points, ostensibly put in place to combat crime. In practice, these checkpoints have become a lucrative criminal venture for the police who routinely demand bribes from drivers and passengers. Motorists are frequently detained and endure harassment and threats until they or their family members negotiate payment for their release. Confrontations between the police and motorists often escalate into more serious abuses. The police have on numerous occasions severely beaten, sexually assaulted, or shot to death ordinary citizens who failed to pay the bribes demanded.

The submission above shows that by implication, collection of money and other illegal dues by the police on the highway is dangerous and grievous. This obnoxious actions of the police has led to a morbid and porous security situation that has resulted to the wanton destruction of lives and property as currently initiated by deviants groups such as Boko Haram and a cortege of criminal sociopaths such as armed robbers, carjackers, kidnappers, ritual killers and assassins in the country. In a related note, Alemika (1999:10) argues that: Police corruption elicits serious concern for three significant reasons. First, the police are expected to be moral as well as law enforcement agents. If the police which are employed to prevent and detect corruption, and bring culprits to judgment are themselves stinkingly corrupt, the society's crusade against corruption is guaranteed to fail. Second, the police exercise powers that have profound implications for the life, property, safety and freedoms of citizens. Where the exercise of such powers is contaminated by corrupt motives, the citizens feel exceedingly vulnerable, insecure and powerless. Third, police corruption is often tantamount to extortion, a form of robbery or demand with force. These dimensions of police corruption explain why the public is threatened by such practices ... The most significant source of negative police community relations is corruption. Corrupt motive is also a source of police brutality. In many circumstances, police brutality is a means of coercing individuals to succumb to demands for bribes, and at some other time, it is punishment for not cooperating with the police in their demand for gratification. (Alemika 1999: 10).

The results obtained from the field confirmed that "Nigeria Police Force falls short of optimum performance". This According to Odekunle(2004) manifested in the widespread inefficiencies, corruption, unfairness in dealing

with suspects, occasional over-use of legitimate force, bad temper, bullying, and other abuses of citizen's rights with impunity. From the submissions above, it is evident that criminals can evade arrest once they settle the police. Kidnappers, car snatchers can also evade arrest or unnoticed as soon as they throw little cash to the highway police. This can further increase the incidence of robbery, murder and loss of lives and property. The incidences of robbery, murder will affect not only the drivers, passengers but other members of the society. Illegal collection of dues is responsible for most drivers' inability to make complete financial returns to the car owners. They (commuters) sometimes find it difficult to meet up with demands occasioned by prompt time delivery and arrival.

Conclusion

This study examined the pattern of relationship between highway commercial drivers and the police in Ilorin-Ibadan highways and concludes that the pattern of interaction between police and NURTW members in Ilorin-Ibadan is characterized with bribery and taking of bribe and this has cost a lot of physical, psychological, emotional and economical damage to police-NURTW. Lawlessness, indiscipline and corruption are mostly responsible for Police extortion on NURTW members in Ilorin Kwara State and Ibadan, Oyo State.

The study revealed that the practice of the police extorting commercial highway drivers have existed for long in Ilorin and Ibadan. Forcefully Collection of Money which has been perceived as Extortion by the NURTW members has constituted a cultural practice over time. This is often considered as rub my back; I rub your back because highway police officers usually extort drivers who fail to comply with highway codes and traffic. Many drivers preferred to settle the police than to be delayed. Drivers usually rationalize their action by bribing the police with gratification whenever they obstruct the highway codes.

Recommendations:

The conduct and operations of the Nigeria Police Force bear almost no resemblance to the requirements of Nigerian law. Far from protecting human life, safety, and security, the NPF increasingly endangers them. It has been observed by Adamu (2011) that over the year, there has been failure on the part of the government to institute or exercise due intelligence in investigating or ensuring accountability for Police abuses. Urgent measures are required to return policing in Nigeria to the path of lawfulness, respectability, and public confidence.

It is plausible to say that the Nigeria Police Force are not adequately empowered and supported by the government, they are not properly equipped with modern equipment such as security cameras, computers that would reduce their physical interaction and involvements with the citizen clashes between Police officers and NURTW members was found to be result of economic struggle for survival. The salary scales of most police officers are nothing to write home about. The take home is not convincing enough, the organization is underfunded and understaffed and also the statutory budget for police organization cannot be compared with other agencies in the country. In line with the review of the findings of the study, the study recommends the following:

Increase the Autonomy of the Nigeria Police Force: To be more accountable and responsive to the people it serves, the Nigeria police force must have greater autonomy from political control, but with greater internal control and external oversight.

Increase External Oversight of the Nigeria Police Force: Government should create a dedicated federal prosecutorial unit to pursue felonies committed by active duty police officers. This unit should have investigative capacity separate from the NPF. It should be endowed with the power to investigate and prosecute any acts of misconduct and/or criminal acts by NPF personnel.

Increase Internal Control of the Nigeria Police Force: Police Authority should establish a system for receiving and processing civilian complaints about police misconduct or crime. This system must provide confidential means for reporting police misconduct and guarantee the safety of victims and witnesses. Maintain an effective internal affairs unit that can investigate specific complaints, seek out police misconduct, and use data to identify patterns of misconduct and problem officers.

Improve Recruitment and Other Personnel Practices: Police Authority should revise recruiting and vetting processes to ensure only persons with clean criminal records, adequate experience and/or preparation, and appropriate temperament are recruited as police officers. Maintain records of all candidates who have been

rejected by the NPF because of prior criminal conduct and those officers who have been disciplined by the NPF or criminally prosecuted. This will prevent unsuitable candidates from being hired and former officers from being rehired.

Improve Working Conditions for NPF Personnel: Government should Review and improve the overall compensation provided to members of the police. Establish pay system are keyed, in part, to performance. Secure adequate group life, health, and disability insurance coverage for employees. Employ social and taxation policy—such as lower taxes for police officers and free or subsidized access to public health and education for their children

Training and Re-training of Public Transporters: There should be a training structure for every public transport drivers on knowing their fundamental human right and about traffic rule and regulations.

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