

# Ideology, Ethics, Patriotism and Police Corruption: A Criminological Analysis

Mahamuda Ridia Roshni<sup>1</sup>, Md. Ashraful Islam<sup>2</sup>, Tahmina Khatun<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Criminology and Police Science, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Tangail, Bangladesh.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Statistics, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Tangail, Bangladesh.

<sup>3</sup>Department of Business Administration, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Tangail, Bangladesh.

**Abstract:** *Corruption is a complex issue and spread over in the society in several forms. Its roots lie deep in bureaucratic and political institutions, and its effect on development varies from country to country. The study was conducted to link up the relationship among Ideology, Ethics, Patriotism and Police Corruption. The improvement of police accountability, cutting down on excessive centralization and bureaucratization could improve employee morale. The study suggested that the effective enforcement of legal instruments, codes of conduct, national orders and instructions could further improve officers' moral and the adoption of mass education could enlighten corrupters to reduce their practices.*

**Keywords:** Ideology, Ethics, Patriotism, Police Corruption

## 1. Introduction

Corruption in the police department can be found in news reports of all countries from Kenya to Japan, from Mexico to Saudi Arabia, from the United States to the police department in the UK. Corruption has entered society at all levels and in all professions making police corruption a part of a whole range of corrupt practices carried out worldwide. No police agencies, as true with other professions can be completely free of corruption and as Ivkovic (2003) writes, 'the "blue knights" entrusted and empowered to enforce the law--can become some of the most aggressive criminals themselves' (p.593). Virtually no police department is entirely free of corruption. Despite the fact that the police officers' actions vary greatly from "systematically extorting money and favors from the owners of some of the city's most popular restaurants and nightclubs" (Police Corruption Trial, 1988, at A9), "bustling organized crime enterprise that collected and shared as much as \$1.5 million in illegal gains" (Peterson, 1999, p. B5), to money, guns and drugs seized from crack houses, planting phony evidence and falsified police reports" (Shepardson, 1998, p. 1), "conspiring to distribute cocaine" (Rollenhagen, 1998), and "working as armed escorts for what they thought was an international drug organization shipping" (Locy, 1994, p. B1), their common feature is that police officers in all of these cases were convicted for behavior that would be commonly understood as corrupt. However, legal codes in most countries do not incorporate a crime explicitly entitled "police corruption."

Sayed and Bruce (1998) delineate the elements in police corruption and give the following definition: Police corruption is any illegal conduct or misconduct involving the use of occupational power for personal, group or organizational gain.

The standard dictionary definition of Patriotism reads "love of one's country." In what is still the sole book-length philosophical study of the subject, Stephen Nathanson

(1993, 34–35) defines patriotism as involving: Special affection for one's own country, a sense of personal identification with the country, special concern for the well-being of the country, Willingness to sacrifice to promote the country's good.

Ethics can be generally defined as the personal values, ideas or beliefs that influence a person's conduct. In the context of the Force, ethics is regarded as the values and principles of conduct that apply to a police officer. Our professional conduct should be aligned with the Force Values.

## 2. Background of the study

Corruption in police officers is a widely discussed but scarcely deliberated issue in Bangladesh though we have been unfortunately reached at the top of corrupted countries and had remained the same for consecutive five years. Therefore, corruption is the number one problem in the World. In general, people think that only the bureaucrats are involved in this unwanted malpractice (Salim Rashid: 2004). Lack of accountability, unethical behavior and corrupt practices has become so pervasive in the CPU (Crime Prevention Unit) in the worldwide to the extent that one may refer to an ethical crisis among individual police officers. The CPU of the South Africa, Nigeria, Australia, Canada and Others Countries experiences various unethical practices, including outright bribery, corruption, patronage, nepotism, embezzlement, influence peddling, use of one's position for self-enrichment, bestowing of favor's on relatives and friends, moonlighting, impartiality, absenteeism, late coming to work, abuse of public property, leaking and/or abuse of government information, all of which have the potential to inhibit the effective implementation of the ethical framework in policing (Stone, 2004: 30). There are indeed various other common manifestations of this malady. The CPU mandated to provide safety and security

to members of the public; therefore, it is important to ensure a high standard of ethical functioning.

### 3. Statement of the Problem

During the integration, transformation and democratization process of the police systems, various challenges became eminent. According to the Service Delivery Review (2004:100), the integration of the police officers from the various police structures of the SAPF, the former homelands (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei) as well as from the self-governing territories of Lebowa, Gazankulu, Kangwane and Kwandebile into the new police service (now SAPS) presented various problems. Those integrated police officers were poorly educated and had received little or no police training in their homelands. This led to a situation where the SAPS was saddled with a substantial number of police officers speaking different languages, possessing different ranks, uniforms, firearms and varying levels of training, dedication and commitment. Furthermore, approximately one third of the incorporated police officers were functionally illiterate, 30 000 did not have driver's licenses and 20 000 possessed criminal records (Masuku 2005:52). The key indicator of the size of the problem can be found in official figures revealing that 14 600 police officers faced criminal charges ranging from murder, rape, armed robbery, assault, theft, bribery and reckless driving in the year 2000 (Masuku 2005:52). Therefore, the SAPS inherited a series of unethical practices from the incorporated police officers, which has been prevalent among them for many years. Considering that many of these police officers are in the SAPS, it would be reasonable to expect the continuation of unethical conduct. The SAPS could be likened to a poorly made barrel containing a large number of bad apples. The usefulness of the bad apple approach is that it highlights the reality that there are specific police officers who would be more likely to engage in unethical activities than others for a host of complex psychological and personal value reasons (Chapman 1993:18).

### 4. Objectives of the Study

To know the link among Ideology, Ethics, Patriotism and Police Corruption.

### 5. Literature Review

This section of the report canvasses the genesis of the main ideas and theories concerning the ethical basis and role of policing, as argued by the leading commentators in the field. Unsurprisingly, these debates are largely generated by the exposure of corruption in policing and aimed at finding ways to resolve ethical and administrative uncertainties that are characteristic of policing. This literature is divided into American and British responses to policing scandals as these are the debates that have fundamentally shaped the Australian response to police corruption.

O.W. Wilson was a police chief during the 1960s at a time when American policing was struggling to free itself from corrupt local democracy. Wilson's vision for policing was

of a high-tech, highly trained corps of police officers operating to clear rules, independent of local politics, acting with impartiality and integrity. This is described by Elliston and Feldberg (1985) as the 'moral administrator' role of police and by Klokars (1985) as the 'snappy bureaucrat' model.

Edwin Delattre (1989) and Lawrence Sherman (1985) both tried to find solutions to the seemingly endemic problem of corruption. They returned to the ideas of Muir and Skonick - free will and the nature of policing. For Delattre, the solution was 'character'. The way to achieve ethical policing was to recruit and develop people who had the habit of integrity. For Sherman, the environment of temptation in which the recruit worked was the problem. The 'slippery slope' from small gifts and gratuities to major graft could only be prevented by police managers being intolerant of minor gratuities.

William Westley (1970) and Jerome Skolnick (1975), both sociologists, examined the ability of police to meet Wilson's professional agenda. At a time when American political consensus was breaking down under the weight of the Vietnam War and race riots, Westley studied violence by police officers. For Westley, the police failure to attain Wilson's vision was a product of a culture of isolation and mutually hostile relationships with the public. Westley's solution was for more open and accountable policing. For Skolnick, the problem lay in the inherent tension within the police role.

### Methodology

The data for this study have been collected both from primary and secondary sources. Secondary data are drawn from the existing literatures like books, newspaper reports, previous research works, seminar papers, reports, the Internet, Intranet, Police TV (POLTV), unpublished dissertations and theses, books, articles in journals and speeches (media briefings).

### 6. Findings and Analysis

Police corruption necessarily involves an abuse of position. As police officers exercise extraordinary powers over members of the public, any corrupt act by officers is an abuse of the 'special trust' invested in their position. However, corruption that leads to perceived lawful outcomes also can occur - process corruption or noble cause corruption is an example of this. Kleinig's broad definition of corruption, that is when police officers 'in exercising or failing to exercise their authority, act with the primary intention of furthering private or departmental/divisional advantage' is useful in that it encompasses both the means and the ends of corrupt acts. Studies of Australian police officers have shown a correlation between years of service and a drop in the perceived seriousness of incidences such as potential conflicts of interest for officers and reasonable use of force. This study shows that recruits, particularly male recruits, acculturate within one year of service. Sherman's assertion that the 'slippery slope' of corruption is greased by the relatively small moral gaps between each act of corruption.

Police corruption is a complex issue. While operating in an environment that offers both temptation and opportunity, clearly most police officers do not participate in corruption. Evidence from those that do and have been caught shows a range of motivations from not wanting to be ostracized by other officers, to the genuine belief in a suspect's guilt despite the lack of evidence. They consistently believe that once they have committed the act, they are compromised.

Davidson Local Area Command said:

*"I wasn't strong enough to stop. I remember every time I got money, I didn't really want it. But I didn't say no once you are on the dark side, you are always on the dark side."*

### 6.1 Police Corruption – an ethical or administrative problem

As can be seen from the literature review, commentators tend to treat corruption as either an ethical or administrative problem. For Sherman, corruption is essentially an administrative problem that can be substantially dealt with by preventing officers from accepting gifts. The challenge in this approach is to find the right kind and combination of administrative safeguards which will ensure corruption will not occur.

Goldstein, Muir and Delattre adopt an ethical approach, finding that the solution to corruption lies in the officer's free will or character. While these authors' approaches differ, they agree that officers' decisions are grounded in free will and moral choice.

The solution, therefore, is to recruit and develop officers with the habit of integrity. There are shortfalls apparent in both the purely administrative and ethical approaches. No matter how many administrative rules exist, such is the nature of policing that an unethical officer will sooner or later have the opportunity to engage in corrupt behavior. A purely ethical approach relies on officers internalizing a set of ethical standards, with no accompanying attempt to rectify any organizational issues that can lead to corrupt behavior. In practice, police departments have adopted a mixture of ethical and administrative measures to combat corruption. This has involved recruitment screening processes, enhanced training, and the introduction of organizational codes of conduct and integrity testing, amongst other initiatives.

#### The American experience

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2. William Westley (1970) and Jerome Skolnick (1975), both sociologists, examined the ability of police to meet Wilson's professional agenda. At a time when American political consensus was breaking down under the weight of

the Vietnam War and race riots, Westley studied violence by police officers. For Westley, the police failure to attain Wilson's vision was a product of a culture of isolation and mutually hostile relationships with the public. Westley's solution was for more open and accountable policing. For Skolnick, the problem lay in the inherent tension within the police role. He viewed maintaining order and upholding the law as potentially irreconcilable.

3. W.K. Muir (1977) and Herman Goldstein (1977) were both writing about policing against a backdrop of concern about the police use of discretion. Goldstein felt that the answer lay with managers who should formalize informal processes and ensure that officers were trained in the proper exercise of discretion. Muir took a bottom up approach to the same problem and, through observation of officers on patrol, saw morality more as a product of police officers' view of human nature. While trainers and managers could influence behavior, individual officers had free will to exercise choice about their style of policing. Both Muir and Goldstein are proponents of the idea of free will amongst officers, in contrast to Westley and Skolnick for whom the structural and social conditions of policing predetermine morality.

4. For the writings of Elliston and Feldberg (1985) and Garry Marx (1988), growth of covert policing methods in the US formed the backdrop. A series of high profile scandals had raised questions about privacy and the use of deceptive policing methods. Elliston and Feldberg tried to show that, in debating such issues, standard approaches to moral philosophy such as utilitarianism were flawed. A more complex approach involving other disciplines such as law and sociology was required. They called this approach to police ethics 'joined up thinking'. Marx applied this approach to covert policing and what he termed 'surveillance culture', which he felt was damaging privacy, trust and freedom of expression. He maintained there was a distinction between 'ethical deception' (authorized by the citizenry and controlled by law) and 'deceptive ethics' (the state doing by stealth what it could not do lawfully). The difference between the two was not just a matter of law; the outcome and likely collateral impacts also needed to be considered.

5. Edwin Delattre (1989) and Lawrence Sherman (1985) both tried to find solutions to the seemingly endemic problem of corruption. They returned to the ideas of Muir and Skolnick - free will and the nature of policing. For Delattre, the solution was 'character'. The way to achieve ethical policing was to recruit and develop people who had the habit of integrity. For Sherman, the environment of temptation in which the recruit worked was the problem. The 'slippery slope' from small gifts and gratuities to major graft could only be prevented by police managers being intolerant of minor gratuities.

6. Joycelyn Pollock (1998) and John Kleinig (1996) were writing after a decade of debate about the role of police, police brutality (particularly after the beating of Rodney King) problems with covert policing and new corruption scandals. They sought a solution in broadening the definition of police as 'public servants', rather than 'crime

fighters' (Pollock) or 'social peacekeepers' (Kleinig), who needed to build trust and reconciliation in communities.

7. Tom Barker (1996) has had a longstanding focus on police corruption. His catalyst was the resurgence of corruption in the US and the issues arising from the trial of O.J. Simpson. The resulting crisis of public confidence in policing was typified by adverse jury verdicts and national calls for investigations into policing. This parallels debates in the UK about the murder of Stephen Lawrence. Barker proposed a proactive approach in order to re-establish the police reputation for integrity. This involved opportunity reduction, undermining peer pressure for unethical activities, and deterrence.

### **The UK experience**

Robert Reiner (1978) first concentrated on police culture in the form of 'police unionism' which was dominant in the 1970s arising from poor pay and conditions. In 1985 he turned to politics and accountability, and focused on the 'democratic deficit' in policing. His writing is in line with Skolnick, that police culture and behavior is a product of their role, and the external environment. His most direct treatment of police morality has been his studies of police images in the media.

8. Lord Scarman (1982), reporting on the Brixton riots, placed great emphasis on the importance of 'consent and balance' in policing. The community relies on police to have the skills and common sense to exercise discretion and do so in a way that balances maintaining order and upholding the law. Scarman argued maintaining order should always be given the highest priority. By implication then, 'hard policing', which overemphasized enforcement and failed to take into account community support, was not good policing. This approach, which is a reversal of Skolnick's solution to the dilemma of balancing enforcement with upholding the law, became the dominant ideology in British policing by the end of the 1980s.

9. John Alderson (1979 and 1984), who as Chief Constable gave evidence to the Scarman Inquiry, developed the theory of 'community policing'. This concept is grounded in the notion of contractual government. Implicit in this is the idea that policing is an activity for the whole community, within which the police role was one of balancing competing rights. This has become more explicit in Anderson's 1998 work where securing and preserving human rights has become central to the police role.

The recent shift towards evidence-based policing (paralleling the move toward evidence-based policy in government) suggests that there will be a volume of research into new policing initiatives. This, as yet, has not been forthcoming in either policing or public policy.

### **6.2 A strategic Approach to Building Patriotism and Integrity and Reducing Corruption in Police**

A strategic Approach to Proposed in this Compendium aims at Reducing Corruption in Police Sectors by-

- Reducing Perceived Rewards of Corrupt Behaviors.

- Increasing the Expected Costs.
- Increasing Transparency increases expected Punishment by Raising the Probability of Detection.
- Improving Accountability through Legislative and Judicial Reforms increases the Expected punishment of corrupt behavior by raising the probability of Conviction if Detected and the penalty if convicted. It increases the expected of corrupt behavior and reduces the perceived net benefit of a corrupt act.
- Approach the problem of defense related corruption, strategically aiming to reduce potential reward of corrupt behavior, while increasing the moral burden and the expected punishment.
- Reduce Corruption through Good Governance, evaluating alternative approaches to deter corruption and respond to corrupt behavior.
- Adopt a multi-year Programmatic approach to integrity building initiatives.

### **6.3 The Legacy of the Wood Royal Commission - the Police**

#### **Integrity Commission**

Established following the release of the Royal Commission's Interim Report in February 1996, the Police Integrity Commission (PIC) was designed with the dual purpose of investigating matters brought to the attention of the Royal Commission which the Commission did not have time to investigate, as well as being a permanent investigative agency focused solely on police corruption. The PIC has conducted a number of investigations into police corruption including references from the Wood Royal Commission, joint operations with other agencies such as NSW Police Internal Affairs and the Crime Commission as well as instigating own motion investigations. Some of the more recent matters the PIC has inquired into include allegations of improper associations between Bondi police and officers and drug dealers (Operation Saigon) and links between current and former police officers and Kostas Kontorinakis and Roger Rogerson (Operation Oslo). The PIC also published research projects, notably Project Dresden, an audit of the quality of NSW Police Service Investigations and Project Oracle, a review of assault complaints involving officers of the NSW Police Service. Most recently the PIC, in a joint investigation with Internal Affairs and the Crime Commission, uncovered substantial corruption in the former Manly-Davidson Local Area Command. Networks of corrupt officers, who maintained their activities throughout the course of the Wood Royal Commission, were exposed as having engaged in such activities as 'green lighting' and networking drug dealers, taxing drug dealers, stealing money while conducting searches of properties and perverting the course of justice.

### **7. Conclusion**

From the above, it can be concluded that the achievement of Ideology, Ethics, Patriotism and Police Corruption is critical for the enhancement of Positive and Negative work Ideology, Ethics Patriotism and Integrity in the World like South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya. Furthermore, it is

important to note that both management and individual police officers' conduct has a direct impact on determining and shaping the organizational culture. That is, the conduct of individual police officers in their private and professional lives has the potential to change the perceptions of members of the public about the organization as a whole. Thus, the police officers should observe, uphold and enforce all laws without bias or prejudice in order to gain public confidence as the catalysts of honesty, stability, fidelity and morality. Furthermore, it can be concluded that the establishment of a good incentive structure has the potential to enhance positive work ideology, ethics and patriotism in the world.

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