

Prevalence of Corruption within the Administration Police Service in Kenya: A Case of Kirinyaga County

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Abstract

The menace of corruption continues to ravage societies and world economies, and Kenya in particular. There have been concerns regarding the vice of corruption within the police service especially the Administration Police (AP). The vice is believed to negatively influence service delivery to the citizens. The purpose of this study was to analyze the prevalence of corruption within the AP service in Kirinyaga County in Kenya. The study adopted the descriptive research design. The target population was 500 AP officers from five sub counties in Kirinyaga County and Kathuri and Pals sampling formula was used to select a sample of 50 police officers. From every sub-county, 10 police officers were selected using the stratified random sampling technique for the study, making a total of 50 officers. The Sub County Administration Police Commander and the County Administration Police Commander, DAPC/CONCAP hereafter referred to as police commanders were purposively sampled. Data was collected using questionnaires for police officers and interview schedules for police commanders. Collected data was analyzed using both the descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. The results of the study indicated existence of widespread corruption where 36 (77%) of the respondents said that there was favouritism or nepotism in the stations when dealing with deployment or promotions of AP officers against 11 (23%) of those who had opposing views. Bribery of senior officers by their juniors was reported as a common occurrence within the AP service where senior officers asked for bribes in order to treat their junior colleagues in a favourable manner. Specifically, cases of favouritism reported involved promotions, house allocations, duty assignments and transfers. Junior officers paid the bribes in cash or in kind such as through sexual exchanges especially for female officers (43%). Regarding corruption risky areas, junior officers were particularly mistreated by their seniors (43%), who directly or indirectly asked for bribes. The study concluded that corruption in the Administration police was basically initiated by the senior police officers who demanded bribes from their juniors and public in return for services. From the study findings, it is recommended that there is need to address the menace of corruption among the Administration Police by examining the relationship between the senior and junior police officers in terms of promotions, allocation of assignments and transfers. Open channels of communication should be developed where the officers could freely express their concerns under protection from reprisals from their seniors.

Keywords: Prevalence, Corruption, AP Service, AP Officers

INTRODUCTION

The importance of the police service in ensuring security, peace and stability of a nation cannot be overemphasized. Globally, the police service is very critical to any country's security measures and the resultant socio-economic progress of a nation. A fully functioning police service is instrumental for maintenance of peace, provision of security and enforcement of the law. The effective enforcement of the law, the maintenance of public safety, and guarantee of the protection of life and property are fundamental to economic

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growth and the creation of an enabling environment for both public and private sector-led growth and development (Arachi, 2013). However, corruption within the police operations is thought to be common, including within the Administration Police in Kenya (Ransley, 2009). This situation implies that corruption within the rank and file of the disciplined forces cuts across the entire spectrum of the police service. In this sense therefore, it further implies that all relevant government security agencies must come together to address this problem.

Corruption affects both the internal and external operations of the police, which in turn lead to lack of confidence by the public in police competence and integrity (Ransley, 2009). Police malpractices have been noted in several countries in the world. For example, Van Vuuren (2006) holds that in South Africa corruption remains notoriously difficult to manage and prevent in the police service. Similarly, in Britain, while the British Crime Survey (BCS) indicate that corruption within the police service has fallen since the 1990s, successive surveys show that there is a common perception that corruption is still rising in the police service, including when it comes to duty allocation (Rowland & Coupe, 2014). This demonstrates that the vice of corruption is very complex, extremely dynamic and fluid. This revelation further is indicative of the fact that the problem of corruption in the disciplined services affects almost all countries regardless of the level of development.

Although corruption in police service is often viewed from the perspective of how the public seeks favours by paying bribes for the service, corruption within the police ranks is also common hence affecting how services are delivered (Newburn, 2008). This is where sometimes officers bribe their seniors so that they can get favours in terms of how allocation of duty is done. Ultimately, this affects the provision of quality policing service as a result of low morale and lack of professionalism as well as delayed response to the scene of crime among other factors.

The absence of strong institutional mechanisms for holding police officers accountable in their actions and adherence to the rule of law makes it difficult to reprimand those officers who have contravened the law. Under the current law, formal mechanisms for holding the Kenyan police accountable are usually confined to the office of the President and independent bodies such as independent police oversight authority (IPOA). There are concerns that the police have been infiltrated by powerful individuals such as politicians and wealthy business people who end up interfering with their work (Adamu, 2007). The end result is for these powerful individuals to use the police for their own selfish ends hence contravening the law. Working under patronage, it means that the police are partly answerable to their godfathers hence always subservient to them. The end result of the patronage and godfather phenomenon within the rank and file of the police service probably is the lack of independence and fairness to all as dictated by the Kenya Police Service (KPS) and the Administration Police Service (APS) motto, 'Utumishi kwa Wote (loosely translated as Service to All) and Uaminifu na haki (Trust and Fairness).' In internal operations, senior police officers have been accused of being partisan in how they treat their juniors arising from the counter favours they receive either in cash or kind (Ransley, 2009). According to Ransley (2009), in order to achieve desirable outcomes within the police operations, it would be important to focus on all aspects of their work. Essentially, it would be very necessary to do away with outside interference which ultimately leads to widespread impunity in the service. Apparently, impunity shrouds accountability, with police officers engaging in misconduct, crimes and violation of human rights with confidence that they will not be held to account or be disciplined. Impunity thrives where there is no clear mechanisms for investigating and punishing individuals for their criminal acts. Police protection from powerful individuals also enhances impunity, essentially affecting service

delivery to the public (Peatsall, 2012). Where there is no serious accountability measures, there will always be individuals who are determined to take advantage of the situation and abuse their respective offices hence other people's rights. This would be more pronounced in the police services where the public has little chance to scrutinize the operations of the officers. Often, the police services, especially in sub-Saharan Africa such as Kenya use intimidation to bulldoze the public and in the process cover their ills.

Public confidence in AP, like in most sub-sectors of the police services in Kenya is thought to be very minimal partly due to alleged impunity, use of excessive force and unprecedented brutality of the public, corruption, and abuse of the human rights among other illegal acts (Krigler, 2008). Some security experts have argued that this undesirable attitude is partly due to the general unfavorable treatment the AP juniors receive from their seniors (Transparency International, 2000). Due to the weak internal mechanisms of accountability meant to help address in-house administrative arrangements, senior officers have been viewed as exploiting this chance to treat their subordinates unfairly (Adisa, 2003). Examples of such mechanisms would include a complaints channel meant to help in listening to and disposing of complaints regarding police bosses' misbehavior or negligence such as the Internal Affairs Unit (IAU). External mechanisms on the other hand refer to initiatives or programs located outside of the police such as the establishment of an IPOA, which has been accused of not protecting junior officers in the service (Ransley, 2009). Despite the existence of such independent institutions, high level of irresponsibility coupled up with intimidation make it impossible to unearth malpractices associated with the operations of the police.

Despite spirited efforts to streamline the operations of AP Unit and the entire Service in general, there are still cases of malpractices within the AP systems where some officers are mistreated, and others favored in many ways including in deployments (Transparency International, 2017). Some individuals are assigned duties in what may be considered favorable areas such as in banks or cash transit escorts where they receive extra pays which allegedly are shared by their bosses (Peatsall, 2012). In this sense it is expected that such individuals will give kickbacks to their seniors as a way of appreciation. Furthermore, such actions tend to be cyclic as those who demand bribes view this as the best way of making extra money while those who give the bribes view this as the best way through which to have their interests protected. Therefore, both the bribe givers and the bribe takers tend to have some kind of mutual agreement that this has to be perpetuated for sustenance of their respective interests.

Like in several other counties in Kenya, the AP in Kirinyaga County may be facing a number of challenges in their line of duty, which are both internal and external. The county has about five hundred AP officers in its five sub-counties namely Kirinyaga central, Kirinyaga east, Kirinyaga west, Mwea west and Mwea east sub counties. The study solicited responses from the officers stationed in Kirinyaga County pertinent to the research problem.

The menace of corruption within the police service and especially the AP is not clearly documented. Government, citizens and stakeholders continue to lament over corruption within the AP service. Organizations that deal with integrity and ethical issues in governance such as Transparency International (TI) have also expressed misgivings regarding the extent of corruption and unethical behavior among the AP officers. The prevalence of corruption among the police officers are believed to adversely affect service delivery to the public. The situation has eroded public confidence in the National police service in general. Although the problem of corruption has been attributed to various factors

such as poor remunerations and deprived working conditions for the officers, the actual cause of this menace still remains unclear. This setback in AP service is thought to lead to strained working relationships between the AP service and the public, as well as among the ranks and files within the service. This is thought to even affect how duties are assigned by senior officers to their juniors where the former are often accused of taking bribes so as to favour those who are ready to bribe. For instance, there are common allegations of deployment of some officers to perceived 'lucrative' assignments such as commercial banks or cash transits pegged on inducements they offer to their seniors. This ends up affecting the morale of those who cannot afford the bribes. On the hand, for those who are always willing to give bribes, this creates some level of collusion against those who are perceived as either not having the capacity to give bribes or are unwilling to cooperate. Ultimately this leads to not only tension amongst the officers but also affects their relationships with the public.

METHODOLOGY

Location of the Study

The location of the study was Kirinyaga County which is in Central Kenya. It borders Embu County to the east, Murang'a County to the south west, Nyeri County to the west and Machakos County to the south. Major towns in the county include Mwea, Kutus and Kerugoya. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2009) national census, Kirinyaga county has a population of about 528, 054 people. The county is endowed with rich volcanic soils that are favourable for agriculture. Most of the county residents are small scale farmers, mostly growing coffee, tea, rice, maize and bananas among other crops.

Like the rest of the counties in Kenya, Kirinyaga County is faced with numerous varied security challenges such as those that directly touch on the Administration police service. This study particularly focused on the issue of corruption among the AP service in the county in relation to service delivery to the public.

This study used the descriptive survey research design. The target population was all the Administration Police officers in Kirinyaga County. There were 500 AP officers spread across the five sub-counties within the larger Kirinyaga County. These included Kirinyaga central, Kirinyaga east, Kirinyaga west, Mwea west and Mwea east sub counties. The study used both quantitative and qualitative data. For this reason, stratified random sampling and purposive sampling procedures were used to obtain quantitative and qualitative data respectively. As a probability sampling technique, stratified random sampling was used to group AP officers based on their non-overlapping strata (ranks) before a random sampling was done. A sample was drawn from the target population using Kathuri and Pals sampling formula of 20-30%. Then, purposive sampling was used to specifically sample respondents who, based on their unique positions, were well placed to provide the kind of information the researcher wanted. This procedure was used to pick key informants, who constituted senior AP officers in a position to provide crucial information about the conduct of junior AP officers.

The Kathuri and Pals sampling formula of 20-30% was used to select a sample where the lower limit of 10% was used to select a sample of 50 police officers. From every sub-county 10 police officers were selected using the stratified random sampling techniques for the study, making a total of 50 while DAPC/ CONCAP hereafter referred to as police commanders were purposively sampled. The sample was grouped into police constables, sergeants and inspectors. Table 1 presents a summary of the sample sizes.

Table 1: Sample Size

Unit of Analysis	Target Population (N)	Sample Size (n)
Constables/Corporals	420	42
Senior Sergeants/Sergeants	60	6
Inspectors/Chief Inspectors	20	2
Total	500	50

Data was collected using the questionnaires for police officers and interview schedules for police commanders. The study therefore used both quantitative and qualitative data to address the research problem. For quantitative data, questionnaires were used as the main primary data collection tools. Depending on the availability of the respondents, questionnaires were self-administered or interviews were conducted face-to-face by the researcher and his research assistants. The questionnaire was used to collect data as it was able to capture a lot of information with ease.

The questionnaire contained section A for general demographic information of the respondents and section B containing questions to elicit responses in line with the specific research objectives. Section B of the questionnaire consisted of questions requiring Yes/No responses, as well as a Likert Scale, with the responses ranging from 1-5 on a rating scale. The questionnaire was mainly closed-ended but also had spaces for qualitative data in form of comments, clarifications or additional information. While closed-ended questionnaire was easy to analyze statistically, the open-ended questions offered opportunities for comments or suggestions that were very critical in enriching the data. For qualitative data, key informant interview schedules were used, and this was developed in line with the specific objectives of the study. The study proceeded in the following chronology: recruitment of two research assistants; conducting briefings for the assistants on the study objectives and study instrument administration, as well as on the general data collection processes. The research assistants were selected based on their level of education and experiences in terms of security expertise as this enabled the researcher gather more and accurate data for the study.

After pilot testing and revising of the questionnaire it was adequate copies were made and distributed to the respondents. The questionnaires were accompanied with an introduction letter, spelling out the purpose of the study. Data was collected through one-on-one and self-administered interviews. High level of confidentiality was assured to the respondents during data collection. Completed questionnaires were later collected and checked for completeness and assessed through serialization and coding for data entry. For key Informants (KIs), the researcher had to book for interviews and the participants were interviewed at their own place of convenience. This guaranteed their comfort hence creating confidence in them to be able to give credible information. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Results were presented using frequency distribution and percentages tables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Information

The demographic details of the respondents were captured in terms of gender, age, highest level of education, current designation or rank, period served in the AP Service in years, and number of years served in respective ranks.

Gender of the Respondents

From the findings of the study indicated in Figure 1, majority of the respondents were males, which accounted for (33) 70% against (14) 30% of their female counterparts.

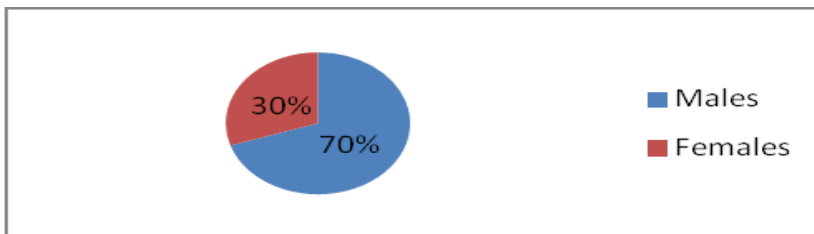


Figure 1: Gender of respondents

This may be an indication that there is some skewedness in terms of gender proportion in the AP Service. On the other hand, the results may be suggestive of the fact that more women than men feared to join or preferred to stay away from the profession. These statistics seem to correspond with previous studies which had indicated that the police service was dominated by men. According to the study by Uma and Eboh (2013) which was conducted to understand the level of corruption in the police service in Nigeria, it emerged that the ratio of men against women in the service was 2:1. Similarly, statistics by the Cleen Foundation (2014) and Ransley (2009) showed that more men than women took up careers in the police service. The explanation by these studies was that this was a very demanding job, and therefore by the nature of the women's gender roles in society it often became difficult for most of them to serve in the police service.

Age of the Respondents

Regarding the age distribution of the respondents, most of them fell within the category of 26-35 years, which accounted for (14) 30% of the total interviewed. They were followed by those aged 46-55, those aged 36-45, those aged 18-25 and lastly those aged 56 years and above. These age brackets were represented by (12) 26%, (8) 17%, (7) 15% and (6) 13% respectively. Based on these tabulations indicated in Figure 2, it shows that a greater majority of the respondents were aged between 26 and 55 years which cumulatively added up to (34) 73% of the total interviewed.

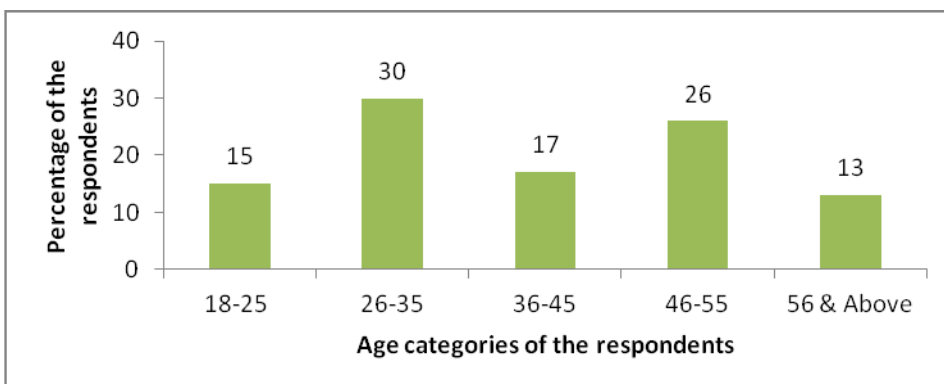


Figure 2: Age categories of the Respondents

This may further point to the fact the AP Service is dominated by relatively young people. The trend in terms of age of the officers was reflective of what previous studies have

documented where the police service is generally dominated by relatively young people. In a study by OECD (2007) to determine what motivated police officers in their work, it had emerged that most officers fell below 45 years of age. The study went ahead to document that perhaps young age among officers also played a critical determinant role when it came to alleged rampant corrupt practices within the service. Many of these officers desperately wanted promotions before hitting 50 years and that is why they would go to great lengths, including bribing for the few promotions available.

Falk and Rodgers (2011) had also established that the police service was mostly dominated by relatively young officers, who were heavily pressured by numerous family and work-related issues. It was at the young age for example that majority of the officers were still educating their children, siblings and even sponsoring their spouses for further education. Given these heavy responsibilities, some of them were forced to engage in corrupt activities to obtain favours in terms of promotions, transfers to perceived better work stations or for allocation of better housing for their young families.

Level of Education of the respondents

The respondents were also asked about their highest level of education. From the findings, majority of them had high school certificates, accounting for 35 (74%). These were followed by those who had university degrees, who made 9 (19%). The least 3 (6%) had tertiary education as indicated in figure 3 below.

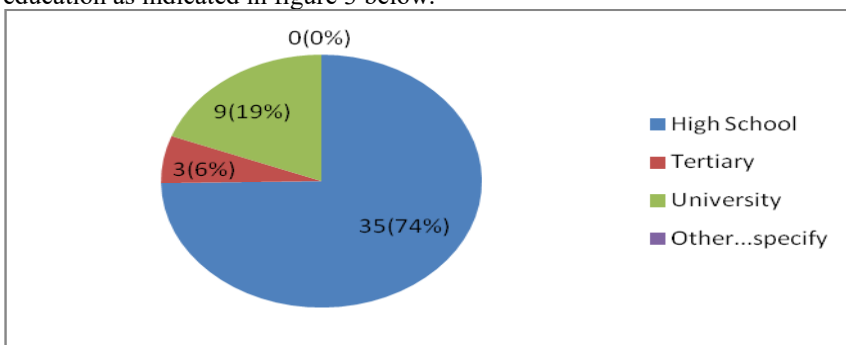


Figure 3: Education Level of Respondents

From these findings, it was clear that majority of the officers in the AP Service had high school education. These findings were in agreement with a number of previous studies which had indicated that the police service was not generally highly educated. Those who pursued higher education after joining the service tended to venture into private consultancy services or sought employment in the private sector, which generally had better employment terms. Ransley (2009) had established that the police service in Kenya did not have many officers with more than high school qualifications. Similar sentiments had been expressed by KutnjakIvkovic (2005) posited that that police corruption was an action or omission by an officer, which was often triggered by low self-esteem of the concerned officers as a result of low levels of education.

Designation or Ranking of the Respondents

The respondents were also asked about their present designation or rank in the service. From the findings, majority of them fell within the rank of constable or corporal, which were the lowest and second lowest ranks in the service respectively. These accounted for (39) 83% of the total number interviewed. Six (13%) of those interviewed were either sergeants or senior sergeants, while the least number accounted for the members of the inspectorate, which were

composed of the inspectors and chief inspectors. This made two (4%) of the total interviewed as presented in Figure 4.

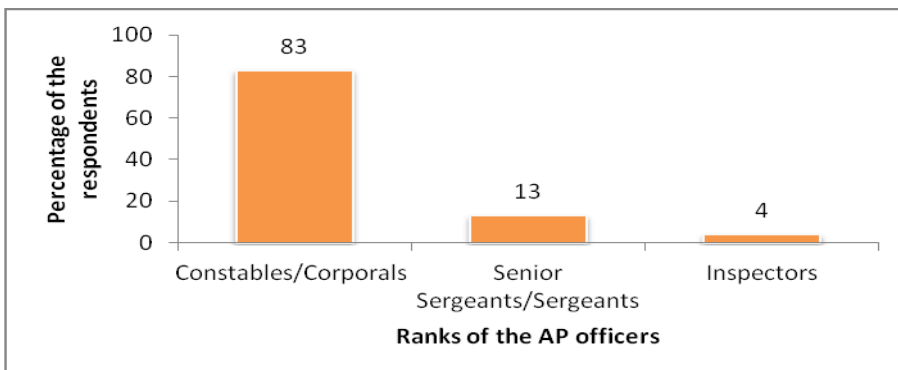


Figure 4: Designation/Rank of Officers

In all the previous studies on police operations, the composition of the service has been reflected as being dominated by the lowest rank, which is that of the constables. Like in many corporate human resource arrangements, the lowest rank of employees constitutes the highest number of employees. More so, given the nature of policing where much of their activities happens in the field at the community level, naturally more officers would be required for patrols. Hence, this distribution reflected what would typically be expected in terms of the number of officers at every rank; not so much about the exact numbers, but the distribution or proportion estimates.

Period Worked in AP Service of the respondents

The respondents were asked about how long they had served in the AP Service, majority of the respondents said they had worked for 7-9 years, which accounted for 15 (32%). This group was followed by those who had served for 10 years and above which accounted for 13 (28%), those who had worked for 4-6 years, which made 11 (23%), and those who had been in employment for 1-3 years, which accounted for 8 (17%). Generally, a greater majority of the officers had served for at least 4 years, which made 39 (87%) of the total interviewed. Results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Length of Service in Administration Police Service

Period Served in AP (in Years)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1-3 years	8	17
4-6 years	11	23
7-9 years	15	32
10 years and above	13	28
Total	47	100

From the statistics, majority of the officers had been in the service for long enough to understand the inner workings of their profession. This meant that they were all well placed to answer the research questions. Given that most of the officers fell in the ranks of constable and corporal, this also implied that majority of them may have overstayed in their current employment ranks. These revelations were in agreement with what Ransley (2009) had found out – that majority of the officers in the police service had served in their ranks for more than 5 years. Serving for so long in a given position often ended up creating some

level of frustrations and a sense of apathy in the officers, which in turn pushed them to indulge in professional malpractices such as corruption.

Period of Service in Current Rank of the Respondents

The respondents were also asked about the period they had served in their respective current ranks or designations. Based on the analysis, majority of those interviewed said they had served in their respective ranks for 1-3 years, accounting for 21 (45%). The least number, which was 8 (17%), indicated that they had served in their current designations for 7-9 years. Generally, majority of the respondents had worked for 1-6 years in their respective offices. Results are presented in Figure 2.

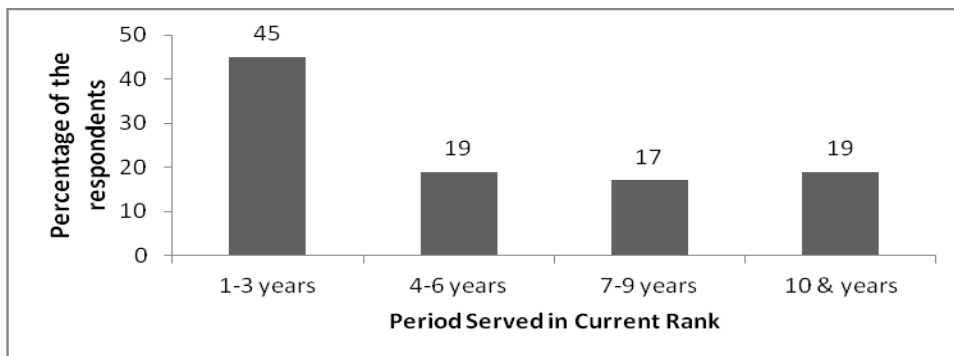


Figure 5: Period Served in Current Ranks by the AP officers (Emmy Plse see above it should be 10+ Years

Previous studies have indicated that in order to motivate the police officers and dissuade them from engaging in corrupt practices, it was imperative for the higher authorities to create mechanisms of regular promotions that were based on merit. A study done by Hellman and Kaufmann (2001) had established that corruption and abuse of office was commonly reported for officers who had served in their respective current offices for long. This was due to either frustrations or the desire to claim more authority through such acts of abuse of office such as nepotism, favouritism and even bullying of officers in lower ranks. Cases of bribery and conflict of interests as misuse of public resources through fraud or bribery were also reported.

Corruption Cases in AP Stations

The respondents were asked about corruption in relation to particular areas in their respective AP stations. This was a YES or NO response to a question that was intended to gauge the officer's views about how rampant this problem was. Based on the analysis, all the 47 (100%) respondents had a unanimous 'yes' response. This meant that this was largely a common perception about how rampant the practice was in the AP service. These responses are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Corruption Cases in AP Stations

Particular Corruption Areas	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	47	100
No	0	0
Total	47	100

Furthermore, on a 5-point Likert scale where 1=very rarely and 5=very often, the respondents were asked their opinions regarding the kind of corruption practices that were likely to be experienced in their respective stations. Concerning mistreatment of junior officers by their senior counterparts, majority (43%) of the respondents had the opinion that this happened very often. More or less the same trend was witnessed regarding the idea of misuse of public resources where majority (55%) said that this was being experienced very often. However, about suppression of individual freedom and exploitation of the public, there was an opposing trend where 79% of those interviewed said that individual freedom was rarely suppressed while 83% had the opinion that exploitation of the public was very rarely being witnessed as indicated in table 4.

Table 4: Frequency of Corrupt Practices in AP

Corruption Practices	1= very rarely	2= rarely	3= Never	4= often	5=very often	Total
	n(%)	n(%)	n(%)	n(%)	n(%)	n(%)
Mistreatment of junior officers	9(19)	6(13)	4(9)	8(17)	20(43)	47(100)
Suppression of individual freedom	2(4)	37(79)	8(17)	0(0)	0(0)	47(100)
Exploitation of public	39(83)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	8(17)	47(100)
Misuse of public resources	21(45)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	26(55)	47(100)

From these responses, it was clearly demonstrated that corrupt practices were common amongst the AP service where junior officers were mistreated by their seniors. These responses would generally imply that although there were mixed reactions touching on various aspects of malpractices by senior AP officers and the mistreatment of their junior counterparts, the fact of the matter was that senior officers were biased against their juniors. This kind of behaviour was likely to be extended to the public especially by those officers who were likely to feel that they were wrongly treated. This would be the more reason therefore why corrupt practices must be rooted out amongst the AP officers.

The role of Administration Police was very important in helping the local people deal with dispute resolutions and in the administration of justice. Like other past studies have indicated, this study established that the AP offices or camps were located within the deputy county commissioner's office, assistant county commissioner offices or the chiefs' camps. The officers assisted in curbing crime within their respective areas. Majority of the public members who had personal differences with the national administrators tended to use the AP officers in handling their civil or domestic issues. Be it as it may, this study revealed that some of the AP officers had the habit of asking for bribes from the public before assisting them. This practice was not only common between AP officers and the public, but also amongst the officers where senior officers took advantage of their juniors. For instance, the study noted that there were strong allegations of one tribe particularly that from the DAPC, enjoying all the privileges at the expense of the rest of the tribes. There were cases where sergeants or senior sergeants were used to soliciting cash from constables before allocating to them houses or deploying them to various banks' assignments.

A study by Ransley (2009) had also indicated that the police service was deeply involved in corrupt practices even within its rank and file, and therefore needed to be redeemed from the vice for the sake of public service. While it was common for the senior officers to mistreat their junior officers for the former's pleasure, it was imperative to be noted that this habit

was likely to boomerang on the senior officers as the people with bigger responsibility of ensuring smooth service delivery to the public.

Corruption Practices and Service Delivery

The respondents were asked if there was favouritism or nepotism in the stations when dealing with deployment or promotions of AP officers. Thirty six (77%) of them said yes, against 11 (23%) who had a contrary opinion. This was an indictment on those charged with the administrative responsibilities within the AP Service since the statistics seemed to suggest that there was rampant corruption in terms of favouritism and/or nepotism when it came to deployments, house allocations or promotion of officers. Table 5 presents a summary of these responses.

Table 5: Presence of Favouritism/Nepotism in AP Stations

Favouritism/Nepotism	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	36	77
No	11	23
Total	47	100

Furthermore, the respondents were asked to state why cases of favouritism and/or nepotism were being witnessed. Some of the ways in which cases of such kind of corruption were happening included the fact that a number of senior officers were very much inclined towards promoting officers from their tribe; senior officers wanted to give favours to his/her friendly junior officers; and that personal differences or interests among officers sometimes determined the kind of service that was going to be given to the junior officers. There were also cases of male officers asking for sexual favours from their female counterparts so that they could dish out favours such as promotions, favorable job assignments or better houses among others. Furthermore, there were instances of positively appraising some individuals associated with particular tribes, especially those from the DAPC side. This gave them undue advantage over their perceived ‘uncooperative’ colleagues when it came to promotions.

It also emerged that some police vehicles were hired out to do such work as transporting rice for private business people and performing ambulance services for local medical facilities instead of performing police duties. These cases were especially associated with some officers who bribed their bosses so that they could be given some leeway to practice farming of rice within the locality. Similarly, some officers were bribing their seniors so that they could be transferred to what was perceived as ‘better’ working stations. In addition, assignments at the banks and other money escorts were based on the kind of relationships you had with the assigning/deployment officers as these were deemed to attract better allowances. Many reports of bribe taking were linked to some senior officers including the DAPC assigning complicit junior officers to collect the bribes on their behalf. Closely associated to this were incidences of stolen rice being linked to AP drivers and senior officers who assisted in quick transport of goods around the area. As one of the senior administration officer said:

“There are rampant cases of corruption in the Service where senior officers want to dish favours to their errand junior officers. These come in form of assigning them to what is perceived to be lucrative duties such as deployment to banks and money escorts as well as other less risky areas. Female junior officers are also coerced to indulge in sexual favours so that they can be treated favorably when it comes to some services from their

seniors. This demoralizes the rest of the officers who may appear to be out of this bracket. Unfortunately this keeps on happening with what appears to be blessings from the very senior ranks”.

The respondents were asked to give their opinions regarding some of the propositions touching on the improper management actions, to which the respondents had varied answers. On a scale of 1-5 where 1=very rare and 5=very often, majority (55%) of the respondents seemed to suggest that AP officers were being promoted on merit. A similar trend was witnessed regarding the deployment of officers where majority (79%) said that very often this was done in a fair manner. However, these sentiments were contradicted by majority (64%) of the respondents who seemed to suggest that there was a lot of patronage when it came to promotions and that some senior officers very often abused their powers, accounting for 60% of those who were interviewed. A summary of these responses is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Senior Officers’ Corrupt Practices

Authorities’ Practices	1= very rarely	2= rarely	3= Never	4= often	5= very often	Total
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
AP officers are promoted on merit	12(25)	0(0)	7(15)	2(4)	26(55)	47(100)
Deployment is done in a fair manner	0(0)	7(15)	0(0)	3(6)	37(79)	47(100)
It is always the senior AP officers’ prerogative to deploy	2(4)	8(17)	19(40)	16(34)	2(4)	47(100)
AP Junior officers are deployed or promoted with the help of their patrons	13(28)	1(2)	0(0)	3(6)	30(64)	47(100)
Senior officers often abuse their powers and tend to those closest to them	9(19)	5(11)	0(0)	2(4)	31(60)	47(100)

Besides the forgoing malpractices by the senior AP officers, there were other common unpopular practices that were meant to favour just a few. For instance, the respondents were asked to explain any other forms of corruption that occurred during promotions or deployment of AP junior officers. They were quick to indicate that it was common for female officers to engage in sexual affairs with their seniors in exchange for favours such as promotions or allocation of better houses. Buying favours was even extended to those who wished to be deployed to the County Governor’s residence where they were expected to give money to their bosses before they were attached there. AP government vehicles were also mostly used by civilians as opposed to the police officers because civilians paid some cash. An example was the AP vehicle in the area within the sub-county that was being used as a dispensary ambulance for ferrying pregnant women to Murang’a County hospital and in return paid cash to the office.

Undisciplined officers also got promotions based on the fact that they had cash to bribe their bosses and buy the few available chances. There were also allegations that one particular tribe was occupying all the critical offices within the county, hence an indication that majority of the officers were not happy with the way things were being managed around. Other cases of corruption had to do with junior officers collecting bribes from bar operators on behalf of their seniors, and this appeared to taint the image of the AP Service in addition

to creating a bad relationship between those who were perceived to be working for their seniors and those who were not involved in these kinds of actions.

It was also common for junior officers on transfer to bribe the DAPC in order for them to be given means of transport to carry their belongings to their new working stations. This was contrary to the general rule where officers were supposed to be given free means of transport whenever they were transferring to new working areas within the county. While disciplinary actions were supposed to be meted on unruly officers regardless of their tribe or affiliation, it was reported that often some of them were treated favourably depending on whether the senior officer came from their tribe or if they had the cash to buy their innocence. Extreme cases also emerged where junior officers were maliciously framed on false allegations so that they could bribe their bosses in order to avoid being ‘disciplined’. All these rampant cases of corruption within the AP Service in Kirinyaga County were aptly captured by one junior officer who had the following to say:

“Cases of corruption in the AP Service have been with us for a very long time. Senior officers often abuse their offices without giving it much thought. For instance, AP vehicles are commonly seen carrying senior officers’ wives or mistresses to do shopping in towns and nobody seems to be held responsible those officers misusing public resources at the expense of community around. This is happening against common practices where junior AP officers are levied some taxes by their seniors incase they want to use the AP vehicle for transfer purposes or even rushing themselves or their family member who became sick while in the AP camp to the nearby health centre. We have also seen instances where officers who have enrolled for further studies in universities or colleges are always given more duties or are transferred to further places from their learning institutions so as to make it hard for them to continue with their studies. This is another avenue for the seniors to ask for bribes so that they can make it relatively easier for those who are willing to part with some money”.

The issue of corruption has somehow been institutionalized in the AP Service, with some junior officers making demands to be attached to guarding rice millers’ factories where they were receiving some allowances. These demands came with the knowledge that they were supposed to bribe their bosses. One officer at the rank of a corporal had this to say:

“The issue of kickbacks is so common here. You can imagine that almost nothing is expected to be done to a junior officer without the officer giving something to his or her bosses in return. For instance, whether one has the requisite experience or not, for one to be promoted to the next rank or office, 10-50 thousand shillings is used as a bribe. Lady officers are forced to engage in sexual relationships with their seniors for them to be promoted or be allocated better houses. Further more, the AP vehicle is often used to collect bribes from bar owners or changaa brewers”.

The importance of AP service in maintaining order and peace in the country cannot be gainsaid. A fully functioning administration police service is instrumental for maintenance of peace, provision of security and enforcement of the law for the general safety of individuals and their property. However, like it emerged in this study, previous studies have indicated that corruption within the police operations is common not only in relation to the

police and the public, but also amongst the members of the service where senior officers often exploit their juniors.

Like previous studies have revealed before, this study established that corruption was still rampant within the AP service hence affecting service delivery to the public in a significant way. As Ransley (2009) had established, it emerged in this study that corruption affects both the internal and external operations of the police, which in turn lead to waning of confidence by the public in police competence and integrity.

Although corruption in police is often viewed from the perspective of how the public seeks favors by paying bribes for the service, corruption within the police ranks is also common hence affecting how services are delivered (Newburn, 2008). In this study it came out that the administration police service was significantly affected by tribalism, nepotism and favouritism. Most of the sub county commanders misused the appointment privilege by proposing only officers from their clans or tribe to work in their offices or perform what was perceived as special duties. On the other hand, heavily loaded work assignments were performed by officers from other tribes. Deployment of officers in areas without allowances was given to officers with poor relation with the head office within the sub county. Furthermore, good houses within the AP camps were allocated to perceived good characterized officers. But in some cases officer in charge of AP line like the sergeant and senior sergeant were said to levy 'tax' on officers for them to be allocated a good house or be deployed to an assignment that had some allowances. Most of these sentiments have been captured in past studies, such as Ransley (2009) which indicated that the police service had become inimical to the public as a result of corruption within the service.

CONCLUSION

The study established that majority of the respondents were male, which indicated that there was skewedness in terms of gender proportion in the AP Service. Majority of the AP officers were relatively young (26-35 years), had high school education and were in the ranks of constable or corporal and had a working experience of 7-9 years in the service. The study established that corrupt practices were common amongst the AP service where junior officers were mistreated by their seniors. Corrupt practices were manifested by senior officers in tribalism, whereby officers' promotions, duty assignments and favours were sometimes determined on the basis of ethnic extraction. There were also cases of senior male officers demanding for sexual favours from junior female officers so that they could recommend positive job appraisal, promotions, favourable work assignments, better houses among others. The study further established that police vehicles were sometimes hired out to provide transport for private enterprises instead of performing police duties. Conversely, some junior officers bribed their seniors so that they could be transferred to what was perceived as 'better' working stations, such as bank sentries, cash on transit escorts among others.

RECOMMENDATION

This study recommends the need to put in place internal and external oversight mechanisms in the AP force so as to provide a platform that can be used to competently address the rampant corrupt practices evidenced within the police force. In addition there is need to establish a gender desk to address cases of gender related harassment of junior female officers by senior male officers in the AP service.

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