

Chapter 5

An Assessment of Unethical Work Behavior Among Police Personnel in Nigeria

Olugbemiga Samuel AFOLABI

Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, Nigeria & Osun State University, Osogbo, Nigeria

Adeyeye Adebawale

Osun State University Osogbo, Nigeria

Olumide Omodunbi

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3432-2940>

Osun State University Osogbo, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The Nigerian police force is an institution established to protect the lives and properties of residents. Some of her duties include tackling armed robbery, banditry, recovery of stolen assets, investigation of cases, and settling violence-related issues among persons. Just like every other institution, her operations are premised on certain ethical codes and conduct which guarantees checks and balances in her relationship with ordinary citizens. Maximum productivity can be achieved by the Nigerian police if only they display ethical behaviour in the discharge of their lawful duties to the public. Growing unethical work behaviour among Nigerian police officers has drawn attention to the various despicable and condemnable acts perpetrated by some personnel. This study makes a scholarly attempt to investigate the trend of the unethical work behaviour in the Nigerian police force. Using content analysis, the findings suggest that only a handful of Nigerian police officers display professionalism and ethical behaviour in the discharge of their duties.

INTRODUCTION

Policing has existed for decades in human history. Policing has derived its importance from the dire need of individuals to be protected lawfully from another individual and its relevance to achieving security has continued to sustain its value through the years. Historically, policing has been traced to the reign of Roman Emperor Augustus when highly trained Praetorian Guards protected the palace and the emperor. They were responsible to the emperor and certain rules guided their operations. (Dempsey & Frost, 2008). Iwarimie-Jaja (2010) opined that in Nigeria, indigenous policing existed before colonial rule. Men of stature and strength who had native intelligence performed the duty of a policing in local communities in the most effective way.

In modern times, policing has increasingly gained more importance as crime rates continue to increase in developing countries. This is not to say that the developed world is entirely free of crime. However, the forces of poverty, inequality, and poor governance has greatly contributed to increased crime rate, which calls for more organised and effective policing (Ojukwu, 2016). Policing refers to professional work conducted by a police officer whose primary duty is to enforce the laws through means that are within legal jurisdiction. It is expected that police officers respect human rights in the discharge of their duties. Adherence to ethical codes by the police ordinarily would lead to respect for human rights and professionalism. Ethics in this regard, therefore, means abiding by a clear set of rules, respect for other people, fairness, and honesty. Ethical behaviour simply means the display of these values by individuals in relationship with others (Dibie, 2014).

The Nigerian Police force was established in 1930 and was later enshrined in section 194 of the 1979 constitution (BBC, 2009). Since then, the role of a Nigerian police officer has been the enforcement of law, maintenance of internal peace and security, and protection of lives and properties. Recently, tension between the populace and the Nigerian police force has increased because of negligence of constitutional duties by the Nigerian police officers. It seems the police have wandered away from their primary assignments toward harassing, killing, and extorting those they have sworn an oath to protect. As noted by David et al. (2015), there is growing concern among the Nigerian populace regarding unprofessional activities and behaviour of Nigerian police officers which includes pay offs on the roads, bribery, extortion, and false accusations on ordinary citizens. These have further damaged public trust in the Nigerian Police force so that the citizens see police officers as enemies.

Ladapo (2011) also observed that those of low socioeconomic status are always in constant fear of extortion when they come across police officers. For many years, the relationship between the Nigerian police force and the populace has been poor due to a lengthy history of unethical conduct and unprofessional acts of the NPF. What are the unethical work behaviors among the Nigerian Police officers? Are there internal and external contributing factors to the rising trend of these behaviors? What should be done to curtail these behaviors? This chapter seeks to provide answers to these questions. To achieve this, the chapter employs an analytical and empirical review method in assessing the unethical work behaviour among the Nigeria police force. The paper relies on secondary data sourced from journals, newspapers, and internet.

8 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/an-assessment-of-unethical-work-behavior-among-police-personnel-in-nigeria/285723

Related Content

Teacher Leadership as a Value of Restorative Justice Practice in Schools

Bryan S. Zugelder and Oris T. Griffin (2023). *Restorative Justice and Practices in the 21st Century* (pp. 131-149).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/teacher-leadership-as-a-value-of-restorative-justice-practice-in-schools/322565

The United States Intelligence Community: Improving Interagency Interoperability

Eugenie de Silva (2021). *Intelligence and Law Enforcement in the 21st Century* (pp. 41-56).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-united-states-intelligence-community/284257

The Limitation Argument, Part 2: Minimizing the Transfer Method

(2023). *Realizing the Purpose and Benefits of Juvenile Transfer to Criminal Court* (pp. 368-389).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-limitation-argument-part-2/319064

Tragedy and Trajectories of Human Trafficking: A Biblical Perspective for Sub-Saharan Africa

Oluwaseyi Shogunle (2022). *Handbook of Research on Present and Future Paradigms in Human Trafficking* (pp. 103-118).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/tragedy-and-trajectories-of-human-trafficking/303832

An Assessment of Unethical Work Behavior Among Police Personnel in Nigeria

Olugbemiga Samuel AFOLABI, Adeyeye Adebowale and Olumide Omodunbi (2021). *Global Perspectives on Reforming the Criminal Justice System* (pp. 76-85).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/an-assessment-of-unethical-work-behavior-among-police-personnel-in-nigeria/285723