Police corruption in Bangladesh: An empirical study

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Abstract

In Bangladesh, corruption is rampant in different sectors, be they public or private, and has become a national malady. The Bangladesh Police has by now got disrepute as one of the most corrupt institutions. This paper mainly explores the types and techniques of police corruption in Bangladesh based on a small sample survey from Paikgacha Upazila (sub-district) of Khulna District. The study finds that bribery, gratuities, kickbacks, shakedowns, and falsifying evidence are the major forms of police corruption in the study area. Majority of the respondents reported bribery as the most common type of corruption committed by police members. The police commit corruption by using several techniques, such as threat fear, physical torture, mental torture, excessive force, abusive word and political party pressure. Showing fear was mentioned by more than half of the respondents. The implications of the study findings are enormous for further research and policy reforms including the police reform program and the anti-corruption initiatives as well as awareness rising in the community.

Key words: Police, Corruption, Bangladesh, Perception, Experience.

Introduction

Corruption is a widely discussed social, political and economic issue of today's Bangladesh. Bangladesh was listed as one of the top corrupt countries as per the Transparency International's (TI) corruption perception index (Chowdhury, 2003). Corruption is undoubtedly one of the main barriers for the development for any country (UNODC, 2019). According to a Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) survey, 66.5 percent of the households suffered from corruption in 18 service-oriented sectors in Bangladesh (The Daily Star, August 31, 2018).

The police in many countries are corrupt but not as corrupt as the police in South Asia including Bangladesh (Suddle, 2006). In 2017, law enforcement was the most corrupt

sector in Bangladesh and 72.5 percent of the households there were victims of corruption by law enforcement agencies (The Bangla Tribune, August 30, 2018). This is consistent with prior surveys. More than 70 percent households reported that they bribed the police (UNDP Bangladesh, 2007; Chowdhury, 2003).

A number of factors—low salary, absence of updated performance appraisal systems, inadequate logistics and facilities and absence of effective internal and external accountability mechanisms can be attached to police corruption in South Asia (Suddle, 2006). Prominent causes of corruption in police administration of Bangladesh include the lack of accountability, discretionary power, lack of transparency, influence of powerful people, and the menace of red tape, and absence of appropriate laws (Rahman, 2019; ADB, 2006; TIB, 2012).

Public confidence in police is associated with social order and economic development (Rahman, 2010; 2019). In citizens' eyes, the quality of police service reflects the quality of the government system and forms of good governance. According to a baseline public attitude survey conducted by the UNDP in 2006, bribery, negligence of duty, bad behavior with less powerful citizens, and corruption are the key obstacles to obtaining justice in Bangladesh (UNDP Bangladesh, 2007). The lack of public confidence in police activities is linked to the prevalence of police corruption. In Bangladesh, the police have become synonymous with terror and ferocity (Haque, 2006). The level of politeness of police is very low in Bangladesh (Rahman, 2010; Kashem, 2003; Huda, 2006). Police who are untrustworthy may create fear and anxiety among the general public for which the public do not cooperate police. In his series of studies of Kashem (2000, 2001, 2002 2003, & 2005) reported that the general public is dissatisfied with the quality of police work. On the average, between 80 and 85 percent of the citizens of Bangladesh believe that police are not doing good job and rate police work is extremely poor.

The police are reluctant about fair procedures during arrest, during interrogation, or investigation (Rahman, 2010, 2019; Rahman & Hossain, 2014; Kashem, 2002; Shahjahan, 2006; Huda, 2006). Misbehavior with complainants, harassment and arrest of innocent persons, misconduct with traffic violators, illegal detention and detention for longer period in the lock up, custodial violence, and creating scope for earning illegal money are different types police malpractices in Bangladesh (Huda, 2006; Rahman, 2010; Rahman & Hossain, 2014). The police use torture, crossfire and even extra-judicial killing, and even involve themselves in rape, robbery and extortion (Ain-O-Salish Kendro, 2010).

In Bangladesh, the law enforcement agencies (police, BDR, Ansar) committed 46 percent of total corruption (by all sectors) in 1997 and 30 percent in 2000 (Ahmad, 2005). Police members perform corruption by the way of misuse of power, taking bribe, doing embezzlement and extortion, adopting misuse of resources and negligence of duty (Ahmad, 2005). The recent TIB survey still finds the police as the most corrupt among eighteen service-oriented sectors of Bangladesh (Table 1).

India has the police at the top as well (Table 1). In a survey conducted in India in 2005 by the Transparency International India, police were ranked highest among nine public services on its corruption index (Transparency International India, 2005). Police corruption in India has long been associated with extortion and brutality (Verma, 1999). Embedded in various deviant practices in India, the cultural roots of police corruption can be traced to the British colonialism (Verma, 1999). Lee (2018) argues that pretty police corruption is more pervasive and less subtle in India compared to China. Among other South Asian countries, the law enforcement is perceived as the most corrupt sectors in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, and Nepal is less prone to police corruption but more to land administration sector (Table 1). A study conducted by the Safer World in Nepal showed that for recruitment as a post of assistant sub inspector, US$ 4,600 to 7,700 was paid bribe, and for inspector position, US$ 7,700 to 10,800 was paid (Dhurgana, 2007).

Table 1. Three Most Corrupt Sectors by Countries

Countries	Sector (Percent of respondents who perceived)		
Bangladesh	Police (39%)	Health (25%)	Land Administration (18%)
India	Police	Health	Power
Nepal	Land administration (50%)	Customs (41%)	Police (24%)
Pakistan	Police (28%)	Power (15%)	Taxation (13%)
Sri Lanka	Police (39%)	Health (5%)	Education (4%)

Source: Transparency International (2012)

Police were the fourth most corrupt public institution among 86 countries following the top three --- political parties' public officials, parliaments and legislature (Transparency International, 2010). In Africa, police commit 4.6 percent, political parties commit 4.2 percent corruption, legal system judiciary 4 percent, and educational system 3.8 percent (TI, 2006). In Asia Pacific, police commit 3.8 percent, political parties 4 percent, judiciary 3.3 percent, and educational system 3.1 percent (TI, 2006). The police have become "a symbol of unfettered corruption, mismanagement, and abuse in Nigeria (Human Rights Watch, 2011). According to the Global Corruption Barometer (2013), 75 percent of the surveyed respondents paid a bribe during the past 12 months in Liberia.

While many Western countries conduct public perceptions of the police study on regular basis, there is no such attempt from the government or police authorities in Bangladesh. Police corruption remains as one of the under-researched topics here. The study of police corruption is essential for a number of reasons. Various studies indicate

the lack of public confidence in the police due to police corruption (Rahman, 2010, 2019). More than two thirds of Bangladeshi citizens were dissatisfied with police behavior and attitude (UNDP Bangladesh, 2007). More than one-fifths of the citizens are not willing to go to the police if they are threatened with violence (Saferworld, 2008).

Although around two-thirds of the residents of Dhaka City had confidence, trust and overall satisfaction in the police and were positive about some characteristics of the police (i.e., politeness, responsibility, responsiveness to the needs and competence), more than two thirds of respondents were very negative for police corrupt practices (Rahman, 2010; Rahman, & Akter, 2015).

United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Bangladesh has undertaken some reform initiatives to reform the police by modernizing the force, yet police corruption has continued at an alarming rate. Police reform measures must address the public perceptions of police corruption. Police makers and practitioners have to develop measures to address police deviance, corruption, misconduct and abuse of power based on the findings of the study. This study is aimed to investigate the forms and nature of police corruption in a subdistrict - Paikgacha Upazila under Khulna District of Bangladesh. There is hardly any study on police corruption at sub-district level so far. This study

1. What are the patterns of police corruption in Bangladesh?
2. What are the techniques of police corruption in Bangladesh?

Corruption, Police and Police Corruption

Corruption is a global phenomenon. It has been found in every society in one or the other form since time immemorial. In ancient times, the judges received bribes in Egyptian, Babylonian and Hebrew societies. In Rome, bribe was a common feature in elections to public offices. In France, judicial offices were sold during the fifteenth century. England was described as a 'sink-hole' of corruption in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries as well as in the nineteenth century (Gibbon, 1994).

In India, giving bribery is a common act that is considered Adharma, i.e., sin as per Hindu scripture. Kautilya, in his 'Arthasastra' reports the prevalence of embezzlement of state revenue by government servants during the ancient time in India. About forty ways of embezzlement is mentioned in Arthasastra. While the movements of birds flying high up in the sky could be marked, it was impossible to ascertain the secret movements of government servants (Samasastry,1967).

Corruption, a complex social, political and economic phenomenon, affects democratic institutions, economic development and governance of a country (UNODC, 2019). There are many competing definitions of corruption given by academicians, thinkers, researchers and governments. Corruption generally refers to "the misuse of power to obtain an illegitimate gain" (Kratcoski, & Edelbacher, 2018, pp. 3). It may involve "the

commission of a variety of act defined as criminal, such as bribery, extortion, graft, embezzlement, and various forms of fraud" (Kratcoski, & Edelbacher, 2018, pp. 3). According to Punch (1985), corruption occurs "when an official receives or is promised significant advantage or reward (personal, group or organizational) for doing something that he is under a duty to do anyway, that he is under a duty not to do, for exercising a legitimate discretion for improper reasons, and for employing illegal means to achieve approved goals."

Sutherland (1940) identifies corruption as white-collar crime '(i.e., those crimes committed in the course of occupations). Corruption occurs when one who has the power commits an illegal act "to determine the outcome of some matter such as a financial matter (obtaining a contract), a political matter (bribing a political official), or a personal matter (obtaining rewards of a sexual nature) to obtain benefits not deserved" (Kratcoski, & Edelbacher, 2018, pp. 3). Transparency International, a Berlin-based international NGO that leads in curbing corruption defines corruption "the abuse of entrusted power for personal gain". Bribery, embezzlement, fraud and extortion constitute the main forms of corruption. The Bangladeshi Code of Criminal Procedure 1898 section 161 defines corruption as illegal gratification that includes not only the pecuniary benefits as well as other types of gratification.

The term 'police' has no universal definition or meaning, and the idea of police has evolved over time (Klokars, 1985). According to the principles expounded by Sir Robert Peel – the creator of the London Metropolitan Police and the Royal Irish Constabulary, the police is the public and the public is the police. As per the Police Act of 1861, based on which the Bangladesh Police was created, the police are responsible for: preventing crime, protecting the safety of citizens and anyone else in the country, maintaining peace, law and order, investigating complaints and crimes, including identifying witnesses and securing evidence and identifying and arresting suspects, making sure witnesses are brought to Court, and serving summonses and executing warrants of arrest (UNDP Bangladesh, 2015).

Police corruption involves abuse of power and misconduct of police officers. Roebuck and Barker (1974) define police corruption as 'deviant, dishonest, improper, unethical or criminal behavior by a police officer'. According to Sherman (1974), police corruption means accepting money or money's worth for doing something that a policeman is under a duty to do or to exercise legitimate discretion for improper reason. Fjeldstad (2008) characterizes police corruption as an act where a member of the police department uses his/her position, his/her rights to make decisions, access to information, or other resources of the organization, to the advantage of a third party and thereby receives money or other economically valuable goods or services where either the payment itself or the services provided are illegal and/or against the organization's own aims or rules.

The term 'police corruption' may refer different activities: bribery; violence and brutality; fabrication and destruction of evidence; racism; and, favoritism or nepotism.

(Newburn, 1999). According to Newburn (1999), police corruption has some features: it is pervasive – i.e., corrupt practices are found in some form in a great many police agencies in all societies; it is a continuing problem – i.e., there is evidence of corrupt practices from all stages of police history, and it is not simply financial – corrupt activities go beyond bribery and extortion. Three forms of corruption can be found among the police members identifies three forms of police corruption: a) only a few isolated policemen accept bribes; b) a large number of officers (lower and higher ranks) take bribes but they are not joined together to form networks of corruptions, and c) pervasive organized corruption (Sherman, 1974).

Roebuck and Barker (1974) identifies nine major types of police corruption, i.e. corruption of authority, kickbacks (receipts of goods), opportunistic theft, shakedowns (acceptance of bribe for noncriminal reasons), protection of illegal activities, the fix (undermining criminal investigations), direct criminal activities, internal payoff and flacking or padding (alteration of evidence). Police can receive fees for referring arrested suspects to bail bond agents and defense attorney (Kickbacks). Police officers accept money from citizens in lieu of enforcing the law (shakedowns). Police involve in predatory criminal activities, either directly or through complicity with criminals (Planned theft and robbery). Police have numerous opportunities to pilfer valuable items named jewelry and other goods from the scene of a burglary or from a suspect (Opportunistic theft).

Police commit corruption for multiple factors or reasons. "Police officers act corruptly when, in exercising or failing to exercise their authority, they act with the primary intention of furthering private or departmental/divisional advantage" (Kleinig, 1996:166). It is often argued that power tends to corruption and absolute power corrupts absolutely. As our law gives absolute power to the police, they do corruption as well. Two major factors of police corruption: 'constant' and 'variable factors' (Sherman, 974). The constant factors of police corruption include discretion, low managerial visibility, low public visibility, peer group secrecy, managerial secrecy, status problems, and association with lawbreakers/contact with temptation are, while community structure, organizational characteristics, legal opportunities for corruption and moral cynicism are considered as variable factors (Newburn, 1999).

Police Corruption in Bangladesh

Police corruption is a very serious problem in Bangladesh. Since its independence in 1971, police corruption has been increasing at an alarming rate, and it has, by now, been rooted like cancer in the society. The Bangladesh Police is the main law enforcement agency. The law enforcement agencies include various branches according to function, such as the local (thana) police, traffic police, the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), industrial police, Tourist police, and Highway police (Rahman, 2019; Khondaker, Kashem, & Rahman, 2019; TIB, 2012). The security sector of Bangladesh includes the Bangladesh Armed Forces,

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), Bangladesh Police, Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), Bangladesh Ansar & Village Defence Party (VDP) and the secret services (Uddin, 2009). The media have always published reports of police corruption. Police have been hugely alleged for their involvement in corruption from recruitment to operational stage (Uddin, 2009).

The Regulation 33(a) of the Police Regulation of Bengal says, "No Police force can work successfully unless it wins the respect and good-will of the public and secures its cooperation (Police Regulation of Bengal, 1861). All ranks, therefore, while being firm in the execution of their duty, must show forbearance, civility and courtesy towards all classes". Various legal measures such as the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Prevention of Corruption Act, the Penal Code, and the Money Laundering Prevention Act, and the police Regulations of Bengal criminalize corruption, extortion, bribery and using public resources or confidential state information for private gain. Bangladesh has also acceded the United Nations' anti-corruption convention. Yet, the police have remained as one of the most corrupt institutions in Bangladesh (Rahman, 2010; TIB, 2004, 2005, 2012, ADB, 2006).

According to an earlier survey conducted by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), more than 90 percent of respondents experienced harassment by the police in the form of corruption (about 41 percent), misconduct (about 22 percent), threats of torture (about 11 percent), false FIR/charge sheet/case file/negligence in filing cases (about 11 percent) and others (about 7 percent) (TIB, 2004). In rural areas, over 90 percent of rural household respondents, who went to the police to make a general diary (GD) entry, had to pay bribe (TIB, 2005). TIB's 2010 survey identified some of the main reasons for paying a bribe: for lodging a complaint (74.7 percent of the households) followed by for avoiding arrest (38.1 percent), for properly lodging charge sheets (11.4%), and for avoiding torture (11.1%).

According to a recent study (Rahman, 2010), about 97 percent of the respondents in the City of Dhaka viewed the police as corrupt, and more than 85 percent of them believed the police abuse their power and were involved in the acquittal of criminals through their abuse of authority. More than 18 percent of the respondents expressed their unwillingness to call the police in case of any incidence of crime at home in the future (Rahman, 2010).

The study conducted by the UNDP Bangladesh –the initiator of the PRP revealed that low salaries, lack of skills, negligence of duty and practice of bribe and corruption of police (more than 70 percent respondents reported), social and political interference in police work (more than 70 percent respondents reported), harassment of harmless and good citizens, lack of community-police relations (more than 90 percent households reported), unwillingness to report to the police, maltreatment of powerless, the poor and females (more than 90 percent victims reported), and absence of neutrality in police work are major problems of the law and order that affect the levels of public satisfaction in the police service. The baseline study found that more than 70 percent respondents

were dissatisfied with police behavior, and police attitudes were particularly bad toward poor and vulnerable people (UNDP Bangladesh, 2007).

According to the 2002 TIB report, police committed 20.67 percent of corruption whereas local government 11.67 percent, education sector 10.93 percent, health sector 7.8 percent and other sectors48.92 percent (TIB, 2002). In a recent study of TIB, the law enforcement agency (committed 75.8 percent of total corruption by all sectors) stands in the first position for corruption in Bangladesh (TIB, 2010). The 2005 TIB study on the police corruption indicates that 92 percent people who lodges FIR to the police station had to pay average 2,430 taka as bribe, 91percent households who registered GD to the police station paid 939 taka as bribe, 80 percent household who takes clearance certificate paid 881 taka as bribe and the 77 percent household of the accused pay for 5,718 taka as for bribe (TIB, 2005).

According to Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer 2011, 82 percent of the citizens who came into contact with the police identify police as one of the most corrupt institutions in the country (TI, 2011). More that 80 percent of respondents gave bribe to the police in the last 12 months (TI, 2011). In Bangladesh, the police force is purposively used by the political government to maintain their control of the political arena (Nawaz, 2012). The police often use torture, physical abuse and arbitrary detention (Freedom House, 2011).

According to the Global Integrity (2010), nepotism and political affiliations are common factors that influence recruitment in the Bangladesh Police. Bribery is widely used to recruit, transfer and promote police officers. It is also the fact that police officers have very low salaries and difficult working conditions in Bangladesh (Nawaz, 2012), and this situation lead to high levels of bribe-taking and extortion (Freedom House, 2011). Moreover, extrajudicial killings by security forces, arbitrary detention, deaths in police custody as well as harassment and torture of opposition leaders, journalists and activists are widely visible in Bangladesh (Freedom House, 2011). While looking at their opportunities, the police force of Bangladesh lacks adequate resources to be able to properly undertake their duty and the lack of funds makes the institution more vulnerable to corruption and undue influence.

According to a recent report published by the Transparency International Bangladesh, people don't make complains against a crime without paying bribes to the police (TIB, 2010). People expect that police will save them from being victim of crime. But in our country many crime victims never call the police for various reasons such as: a) they don't believe that police can help them i.e., many believe that calling the police make no difference since police can neither capture the offender nor recover stolen property; b) reporting cause too much inconvenience i.e. fear of harassment by the police; c) they are corrupt and would not help the victim without paying bribe to them (Kashem, 2001). The same TIB report states, 91.5 percent of the people pay illegally in a metropolitan police station, 85.7 percent in a district level police station, and 81.64 percent in a thana

level police station. In a study (Ahmed, 2011) on police users' views about their service in Dhaka Metropolitan Area, 34 percent of the respondents who paid speed money for the police service paid speed money willingly while the vast majority (66 per cent paid) unwillingly. Among the reasons for providing graft twice, 29 percent reported follow-up investigation, 50 percent who paid once was filing police case and 47 percent reported recovering dues. Moreover, in case of graft taking, every time, it took place among users who went to police stations for reasons of meeting prisoners (23%) and resolving conflicts (17%).

Method of Study :

The study is quantitative in nature as it was based on survey on a convenient sample of 31 respondents from a purposively selected police district called Paikgacha Upazil under Khulna District. The study used a questionnaire schedule for face-to-face interviewing of the selected respondents as the literacy rate is low in the study area. Respondents who were willing to participate in the survey were interviewed. The collected data were coded carefully for analysis. This processing (included coding) was done with the help of SPSS program through computer. The data were analyzed with primarily descriptive statistical tools.

Table 1 presents the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents of the study. Among the 31 respondents surveyed, all respondents were male, and the average age was 31 years (Table 1). The majority of the respondents fell between 41 years and older (45 percent) of age followed by 29 percent (31-40 years) and 26 percent (20-30 years). In terms of education,

Table 1 : Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (n=31)

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Age Group		
Young (20-30)	8	25.81
Adult (31-40)	9	29.03
More than 41	14	45.16
Level of Education		
Primary	8	25.80
S.S.C	7	22.58
H.S.C	10	32.26
Honors and Masters	6	19.35
Occupational Status		
Public service	5	16.13

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Private service	3	9.68
Business	17	54.84
Other (Labor)	6	19.35
Monthly Income Level (Taka)		
3000-5500	10	33.30
5501-7000	5	16.65
7001-9500	6	19.98
9501-14500	9	29.97

majority (32 percent) of them were Higher secondary certificate (HSC) graduates, followed by primary (26 percent), Secondary school certificate (SSC) (23 percent) and the rest (13 percent) were higher educated (Honors and masters). Most of the respondents (55 percent) were businessmen followed by public service holders (16 percent), private service (10 percent), others (about 19 percent). Among the respondents, 33 percent had monthly income bracket of Tk. 3000 to 5500 followed by Tk.9500 to 12000 (23 percent) and the rest with Tk. 14500 to 17000 (3 percent).

Findings and Discussion

Perception and experienced corruption

Table 2 : Perceptions and Experienced Corruption

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Attitude toward police (n=31)		
Police are good	6	19.35
Police are bad	15	48.39
No idea	10	32.25
Perception about corruption (n=15)		
Perceive that police are corrupt	14	93.33
Does not perceive that police are corrupt	1	6.66
Corruption experienced at police station (n=28)		
Faced corruption	25	89.29
Did not face corruption	3	10.71

This study showed that only about 19 percent respondents rated police as good, about

48 percent bad and the remaining did not report their attitude (Table 2). An overwhelming majority (about 93 percent) of the respondents perceived that police are corrupt, and more than 89 percent of the respondents reported that they experienced corruption at police station (Table 2). This finding is consistent with the finding of a TIB 2010 survey that 91.2 percent of households who received services from law enforcement agencies experienced corruption perpetrated by thana police.

The study revealed that the public attitude towards the police is generally negative, which is consistent with previous studies and reports (Rahman, 2010, Kashem, 2002, 2003; Saferworld 2008; UNDP, 2007). Prior studies indicate that the general public is dissatisfied with the quality of police work, believe that the police are not doing a good job, and rate police service is extremely poor, indicating that the police are impolite, dishonest, corrupt and not dedicated (Kashem & Bhuyin, 1998; Kashem, 2000, 2001, 2002; TIB, 2003, 2005; Huda, 2006, 2009; Khondaker & Lambert, 2009; Rahman, 2010). These studies argue that the police rarely use fair procedure in apprehending criminals /suspects and given the very low confidence in the police, many crime victims never call the police for various reasons including fear of further retaliation, or harassment by the police, corruption, and ineffectiveness.

Techniques of police corruption

Table 3 : Types of corruption

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Types of corruption experienced at police station		
Gratuities	2	8.00
Bribes	15	60.00
Theft of property	2	8.00
Falsifying evidence	3	12.00
Kickbacks	1	4.00
Shakedowns	2	8.00
Total	25	100.00

The study finds the police at Paikgacha used different types of corrupt practices at police station, outside police station and after arrest (Table 3). Bribery is the most common form of police corruption. Falsifying evidence, gratuities, shakedowns, and theft were also used by the police in Paikgacha area. The study also finds that the police also resort to kickbacks (Table 3).

Table 4: Techniques of police corruption at police station

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Technique used for corruption at police station (n = 25)		
Physical torture	1	4.00
Mental torture	1	4.00
Excessive force	4	16.00
Showing threat	14	56.00
Abusive word	3	12.00
Political party pressure	2	8.00
Total	25	100.00

The study identified that majority of the respondents (above 40 percent) in all three cases (at police station, outside police station and after arrest) reported showing fear as technique of corrupt practice followed by excessive force (12 percent and/or above in three cases), abusive word (8 percent to 12 percent) and political pressure (8 percent) and mental torture, physical torture (about 4 percent to 13 percent). Physical torture and excessive force were found higher after arrest than at or outside police station, while showing fear was found lower after arrest than at or outside police station (Table 4).

Suggestions for Controlling Police Corruption

The findings of the study are critical to the police reform in Bangladesh, particularly concerning the salient issues of police corruption. Police malpractices and loss of police legitimacy can also make people disrespectful toward the police and non-compliant with the law (Bradford, Stanko, & Jackson, 2009; Sherman, 1992; Tyler, 1990). Public perceptions of the police must be improved by addressing the factors of police corruption (e.g., police misconduct, abuse of power and bribery practices) that are associated with the satisfaction with police service in Bangladesh.

The government and policy makers need to enhance the image of the police and to improve the quality of police service in Bangladesh. Negative attitudes toward the police result in mutual ill feelings, lack of respect, disorder and inefficient police functioning (Cao & Burton, 2006; Brown, Benedict, & Wilkinson, 2006; Redlet, 1986). Salary, training, facilities, equipment, and logistics must be tailored to the needs. Bangladesh Police incorporated various units like RAB (Rapid Action Battalion), Highway Police, Industrial Police, Marine Police, Special Police Squad, APBN, Police Investigation Bureau (PIB). Community policing approach has been increasingly supported following the model police station (Rahman, 2010). The impacts of Model Thanas introduced under the PRP

have been found positive in several studies (PRP, 2009; Rahman, 2011; Kashem, et al, 2009).

To discourage corruption, exemplary punishment to corrupt police members must take place on regular basis redressing the culture of immunity and impunity, and the political interference that constitute the major issues for police reform in Bangladesh (Rahman, 2010; 2019). Weak implementation of laws such as the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Prevention of Corruption Act, the Penal Code, and the Money Laundering Prevention Act, and the police Regulations of Bengal criminalize corruption must be addressed to curb corruption. The anti-corruption commission must be independent in terms of legal authority and budget.

Political will is the key to police reform in Bangladesh. Like colonial masters, our governments since independence politicize the police and use the police to harass and intimidate their political opponents (Rahman, 2010). The police must be independent of political interference and accountable to the law and the people. The law (The Police Act of 1861) that governs the police needs reform for transforming the Bangladesh Police from a force into a service. The 'Bangladesh Police Ordinance 2007 (Draft)' was proposed during a caretaker government to promote the improvement of police service (Rahman, 2019; Uddin, 2009). The draft ordinance suggests reforms that include creating a national police commission, removing the political patronisation of police, improving police behaviour and making the police more responsible, transparent and accountable to the people.

Conclusion

Police is one of the most important and most contacted components of the criminal justice system of any country. The police station is a gateway for citizens to access police services. While police members are supposed to serve the public and not to abuse their power and authority, corruption and abuse of power are the characteristics of many police forces of the globe today. Given the increased importance of the area of policing in the criminal justice system, a growing body of literature has been developed over the last five decades based on the policing in developed democracies (Rahman, 2010). There are hardly any scientific studies on attitudes toward police and police service in Bangladesh.

The implications of the findings of the present study for policy and further research are immense. This study revealed that the public are negative about the police as they are corrupt. The findings of the study indicate that the respondents faced police corruption at police station. The study also identified the types and techniques of corruption committed by the police at police station. The study found that corrupt police members practice bribes, kickbacks, gratuities, theft of property, falsifying evidence and shakedowns. The study identified that police staff use techniques like showing threat, abusive word, mental torture, physical torture, excessive force and political party pressure. Appropriate mechanisms need to be established to ensure the rights of victims

and offenders so that they are not forced to pay bribery or are subjected to torture, threats or fear. The policy makers must take seriously this as our police show fear or threat for getting bribe. Independent police oversight mechanism has been found effective in many countries (Rahman, 2019). Police corruption can be reduced if the policy makers establish effective mechanisms so that victims can freely make complaint against corrupt police staff, and police executives can monitor and ensure punishment of corrupt police members.

The study scope limited to a subdistrict and a small number of respondents selected purposively. Hence, the findings cannot be generalized to other police districts at all. But the study reveals that the fact that corruption is rooted in police work in Paikgacha Subdistrict, and it is the part of police culture in Bangladesh. As survey respondents were selected conveniently, they are not representative of the country, even neither of the district or sub-district at any means. But this study can help understand whether the nature of police corruption and techniques in a sub-district are more or less similar to the findings previous studies that are mostly at other levels of geography.

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