

Crime Combat in Developing Economies: The Dilemmas of the Ghana Police Service

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Abstract

This paper examines crime prevention in Developing Economies in Africa with special focus on Ghana and the Ghana Police Service. By and large, the Ghana Police Service has been in the news for wrong reasons partly as a result of several researched outcomes and public perceptions that tagged it as an institution riddled with corruption, extortion and embroiled in politics of patronage and clientelism with governments. This image of the Ghana Police Service has had negative repercussions on public understanding of its professionalism and the institutionalization of policing in communities in Ghana. In spite of these perceptions and bastardizations, public confidence in the police in combating armed robbery and preventing crime in general in Ghana has not completely waned. Indeed, records of the successes of the police in combating crime in Ghana abound and public memory of them continues to reverberate in some circles. This paper argues that the Ghana Police Service has been unnecessarily 'framed' in a negative limelight to the extent that its performance in crime prevention and protection of lives and properties has been glossed over.

Keywords: Armed robbery, Corruption, Crime, Developing economies, Patronage, Police capacity, Police Service, Stealing

1. Introduction

Political authorities play key roles in the fight against crime in both Developed and Developing Countries. Their commitment and role in the formulation of polices to fight crime and resourcing the Police Service affect the nature, magnitude, professionalism and successes of policing in any particular nation. By and large, Governments world-wide provide the Police Service resources in terms of logistics (ammunition, vehicles and recurrent expenditure to maintain the forces) to maintain peace and protect lives and properties. In most Developing Economies, the syndrome of inadequate resources has necessitated the understaffing of the Police Service and created dire logistic problems. The result is that the Police Service is usually handicapped as its resources cannot cope with the upsurge of crime. In spite of these staffing and logistic challenges, the Police Services in Developing Economies are expected to perform adequately in all facets of policing. In a small measure, the tasks of maintaining law and order and combating crime are extended to the Military to ensure effectiveness, expedition or unravel issues that have the potential to disturbing the peace (public order) or national security. In Ghana, as is the case in other Developing Economies, the military has been repeatedly invited to combat armed robbery, and to keep the peace during and after communal violence. In other instances, a joint Military-Police Task Force is created to combat crime and undertake patrols, usually at night.

In the unique case of policing in Ghana, successive governments have, to some degree, empowered the police with logistics such as vehicles and modern police accoutrements to combat crime. However, the Ghana Police Service is seriously understaffed in all departments and this undermines its capacity to perform its role adequately. It also makes the Police Service unable to meet the United Nations standard of 1:500 police-citizens ratio (one police to cater for 500 citizens). All attempts by the Police Administration to get successive governments to strengthen the manpower base of the Service through fresh recruitments and logistics have proved futile. The phrase 'Police capacity' in this paper refers to the ability of the Police Service to independently undertake and execute security plan(s) without any external influence or promptings.

2. Methodology

This paper is a product of processed and analyzed data from a multiple of sources. Data for this paper was originally collected over a nine-month period between September 2013 and May 2014 to determine the nature of general policing in Ghana with special focus on crime combat. The data for this study is in two parts. The first part consists of data, largely primary, drawn from respondents. The survey was conducted in all the ten regional capitals of Ghana with the exception of Greater-Accra Region and Central Region, where, in addition to the Regional capitals, the survey was conducted in Madina, Amasaman, Agbogba, Haatso, Tema, Pokuase, Dodowa and Adenta in Greater-Accra, and Kasoa, Winneba and Mankessim in Central Region. Respondents were randomly sampled for interviews, and were in most cases commuters, drivers, pedestrians, traders, and other members of the general public. In all, a sample size of 5000 respondents was used for this study. As the

fieldwork was conducted over a nine-month period and as respondents were randomly selected, the possibility that a respondent could have been selected more than once for interview cannot be ruled out. This, however, did not in any way tinge the validity of the overall data collected from fieldwork. The brunt of the informant from this component formed the “scaffold” of the analysis of the general public perception of the Ghana Police Service. Random sampling of key police officers was also made for interviews.

The second component of the data consisted of archival materials. First-hand information on policing in Ghana was obtained from other primary sources such as reports and national crime statistics from the Ghana Police Service. This study also made an appreciable use of existing secondary materials available. The data from the secondary sources were gleaned from various monographs, books and other journal articles on police performance and the security sector reforms in Ghana. These sources were carefully scrutinized, evaluated and synthesized.

3. Theoretical Debates

Why is there crime in society and what are the impelling reasons for people to commit crime? There is an avalanche of theories from various scholars that proffer tangible explanations to society’s understanding of the causes of criminal behaviour as a whole. According to Baker, ‘a theory is a proposed explanation for a set of coordinated occurrences, or relationships’ (Baker, 1999:50). In the words of Bohm and Haley, a theory is ‘an assumption (or set of assumptions) that attempts to explain why or how things are related to each other’ (Bohm and Haley, 2002:70). In this paper, crime is studied or understood within the framework of two theories, namely, “Strain Theory” and “Social Control Theory”.

According to the Strain Theory, a society is assumed to be cohesive and unified with those actions which are beneficial to its optimal running widely supported by most people. The thrust of this theory is that delinquency results from cracks in a unified whole, an area where the cohesiveness of the society has been strained. In the words of Hirschi (1969), strain theory assumed that:

Humans are moral, that we desire to obey the rules, and conform to the norms of society...those who break laws are therefore motivated by their inability to fit into the normal, cohesive order. They are “discontent,” “frustrated,” “deprived” (Hirschi, 1969:5-6).

The application of this theory to the explanation of crime in Ghana gives different scenarios of the cases of crime. In the context of the “Strain Theory”, the causes of crime can be imputed to the breakdown of the extended family ties or the communal spirit in Ghana, the inability of people to fit into their families or communities, absence or appalling family and community-support facilities for members, deprivations and economic and financial frustrations, among others. By compelling people to migrate from peripheral societies to the cities (mostly in search of non-existing jobs) where the norms of their society are escaped, urbanization can also be figured in the context of the “Strain Theory” as the cause of crime in Ghana. The theory explains why various crimes in Developing Economies including Ghana are prevalent in mostly populated or crowded slums, where the lower classes dwell, and where adverse social conditions exist in the urban and semi-industrialized societies. According to this theory, delinquency is aberrant; that is, it goes against the natural and widely held norms of the society as a whole (Baker, 1999:16). The implication is that crime will continue to exist in societies so long as there are cracks in society whether from the nuclear or the extended families. There is therefore the need to have an institution of social control mechanism to combat crime and allow the maximum security satisfaction for the majority of citizens.¹ In Developing and Developed Societies, the institution usually mandated to ensure these social controls is the Police Service. In the context of the “Strain Theory”, the effectiveness of the Police Service is contingent on the cooperation of the society to check the behaviours of deviants since those deviants largely live with the civilian population. Without this, the police cannot function effectively in crime combat.

The second theory employed to guide this study is the “Social Control Theory”. This theory traces its origins to the work of Durkheim who perceived crime as a social fact and a normal segment of society. Modern “Social Control Theory” is traceable to the work of Travis Hirschi’s book *Causes of Delinquency* published in 1969. For Hirschi, proper socialization involves the establishment of strong moral bond between the juvenile and society (Hirschi, 1969:8). According to this theory, the primary effort of the society must be to control the largely selfish interests of individuals so that the society can function even minimally. The thrust of this theory is the supposition that crime or delinquency is a natural phenomenon or occurrence which can only be precluded only by a rigorous system of social control. Hirschi identified four broad thematic causes of delinquency or crime. These are: (1) inadequate attachment, particularly to parents and school, (2) inadequate commitment, particularly to educational and occupational success, (3) inadequate involvement in such conventional activities

¹ Institution of social control in this paper refers to any organization that will employ both persuasion as well as minimal or reasonable force to get members of a society to abide by the dominant values of society.

as scouting and sports, and (4) inadequate belief, particularly in the legitimacy and the morality of the law (cited in Bohm and Haley, 2002: 96) From the view point of Social Control theorists, people are naturally expected to commit crime unless there is a mechanism to prevent such individuals from doing so. The only option is to have them socialized from infancy in order to fit and function effectively into the larger society. By inference, the family, the school, sports and law all constitutes the important mechanisms for socialization and social control in society.

The significance of this theory lies in the fact that it does not only recognize the existence of crime in society, but also makes it dependent on variables such as societal decay and the selfish interest of humans which is a natural phenomenon. A discussion of the “Strain Theory” and “Social Control Theory” cannot be concluded without making a brief comment on their remedial measures. Both theories recommend a mechanism of institutional social control (socialization at the tender age to effectively integrate and function in the larger society) as a means to mitigate the adverse effects of crime on the majority of the population.

4. General Public Perception of the Ghana Police Service

There is no gainsaying that the Police Service is an important partner in community security as well as a catalyst for national development. The role of the Police Service in the growth of the economic wealth of a nation and its development cannot be ignored. The role of the Police Service in this direction can be categorized into five broad themes. These are: first, effective internal and external security arrangements; second, the trust of the citizenry to security apparatus of the state; third, collaboration between the security and citizens in crime combat; four, professionalism of the security in the eyes of the general public and, five, the impartiality of the police to all sections of the populace. These components are keystone towards achieving success in crime combat. It is significant to note that at the core of the effectiveness of policing is the efficacy of the collaboration between the police and the general public. The level of public confidence and trust reposed in the Police Service is the embryonic and first step toward a successful operation of the police in crime combat.

In Ghana, it is a consensual public opinion that the situation of the police is a pathetic one. One of the reverberating public views on the Police Service in Ghana is that it is inadequately equipped and that it lacks the optimum personnel to perform its core duty. There is also a general public outcry about the Police Service’s lack of public support to combat crime, the insanitary and poor office structures of the police, the dilapidated accommodation units of the police, the castigation of the police, usually employing vitriolic and vulgar words and epithets to describe it. In addition to the afore-mentioned aberrations and insinuations, the Ghana Police Service is gripped with a state of dilemma in the performance of its core duties. This study identified some major dilemmas of the Ghana Police Service.

First, the Police Service faces an image problem. Generally, the mere mention of the Police Service in Ghana invokes images from the large segment of the populace as an institution riddled with corruption, brutalities and disregard for human rights and that it is characterized by amateurism or that it lacked professionalism in the performance of its duties. This negative frame of the police by the general public in Ghana has dented its image to the extent that its performance in crime combat has been lost to many a Ghanaian. The negative frame is reinforced by various researches undertaken by civil society organizations in Ghana whose research outcomes are embarrassing spectacle to the police administration (Centre for Democratic Development-Ghana, Institute for Democratic Governance [IDEG]). Though the actions and inactions of the Ghana Police Service are inescapably noticeable, the unbridled public vilification of it has risen to a crescendo that has created an “image crisis” for the institution. The Service is therefore saddled with and enmeshed in an “image salvaging or cleansing war” to restore its professional identity or image.

Second, the Ghana Police Service faces a “house cleansing” dilemma. There is a growing public perception that the Ghana Police Service is infiltrated by miscreants. Citing examples of the engagement of the personnel of the Ghana Police Service, its many questionable activities that were tantamount to stealing, forgery, its dealing in narcotics such as cocaine and possessing of cannabis (popularly known as ‘wee), defilement, extortion through mounting of illegal road blocks, armed robbery or collaborating with armed robbers (hiring official weapons and uniforms to robbers) to commit crime, the public concludes that the Service has been infiltrated by miscreants. This perception of the public has burdened the Ghana Police Service with the dilemma of undertaking a “house cleansing exercise” to “weed out” all miscreants.

Third, alongside the dilemma of undertaking a “house cleansing exercise”, the Ghana Police Service is saddled with another serious dilemma, the dilemma of exonerating itself from the public perception that it collaborated and continues to collaborate with its miscreant members. The general public opinion gathered by this study is that the Ghana Police Administration shields police officers who commit various crimes against the public or the republic. The basis of this perception of the police hinges on the proposition that the Ghana Police Service does not apply stringent punitive measures to punish its miscreant members to serve as a deterrent. Instead of applying severe punitive measures such as outright dismissal and facing the full rigours of law, the Police Service simply applies subtle measures including the transfer of the miscreant members. As public

perception continued to soar, the Ghana Police Service faces a daunting dilemma of convincing the public that it institutes stringent corrective measures to punish its miscreant members.

Fourth, the Ghana Police Service is challenged by the dilemma of demonstrating its impartiality to politicians and the general Ghanaian public. It is altruistic that Ghanaian politicians have made the police force even more unpopular and exposed them to public ridicule. The two main political parties in Ghana (National Democratic Congress and the New Patriotic Party) that have alternated power since the inception of Ghana's Fourth Republic in 1993 continue to bastardize the police force as engaging in politics of patronage and clientele relationship with the government of the day. This accusation comes mainly from political parties in opposition. For example, through press conferences and demonstrations, the NPP since 1992 have repeatedly accused the police of being bias and engages in preferential policing for the NDC government and its cohorts and a crackdown and intimidation on the activities of the opposition political parties. The same accusations were also levelled against the police by the NDC since 2000 when the NPP won the general elections. For the eight years the NPP was in power (2001 to 2008), the opposition NDC then consistently and unrepentantly accused and vilified the Ghanaian police for being manipulated by the NPP government to make arbitrary arrest and intimidate members of the opposition. As a result of the jigsaw of accusation and counter accusations of bias against the Police Service, its duty stations were/are usually besieged by supporters of the two main political parties (NDC and NPP) whenever a member of either party was invited or arrested for allegedly fouling the law. The actions and inactions of these politicians have further eroded the police capacity to enforce the law without looking on their shoulders.

Fifth, the Ghana Police Service faces the dilemma of injecting professionalism into its activities and extricating itself from acts of brutalization. The public sees the Ghana Police Service as an institution that disregards human rights of suspects in their custody. They are instances suspects were said to have been allegedly brutalized or their health needs ignored while in custody. It was alleged that some of these suspects died as a result of negligence on the part of some police officers. Some of these widely publicized issues in the media have further alienated the public respect and cooperation towards the Ghana Police Service. In recent times, there has been several media reports of suspects who lost their lives across the country while in police custody (a suspect was recently arrested and placed in custody by the Madina Police and died less than 48 hours in March 2014). A police Lance Corporal Gabriel Kofi Tettey in Madina was also alleged to have unleashed unprovoked attacks on civilians by chasing and whipping them at Madina Zongo Junction where he was supposed to ensure law and order (Daily Graphic, 2013:13) Another example of a high profile case was the death of a political activists and former Northern Regional Chairman of the Convention People's Party (CPP) in 2004. The former chairman (Issah Mobila) reported himself to the police having been informed by relatives that the police were looking for him. The deceased was arrested by the police and subsequently placed in custody. The suspect was subsequently transferred to the military by the police for no convincing reasons. In the next few days, the former chairman had died. This sparked serious controversy and public resentment toward the police in particular for the role they played in the handling of the case. An autopsy report which was made public indicated that the suspect died as a result of broken ribs, scalp, and limbs resulting into an internal bleeding leading to death.

The above verdicts on the police by the Ghanaian public, whether real or imaginary, need further analyses. The Police Service, just like any other human institution, is not perfect institution. There are bound to be bad lots in the midst of the many 'good' officers and personnel. The public view that the activities of these recalcitrant police personnel have ditched the image of the 'good' officers and men, and indeed the entire Police Service into the doldrums cannot be denied in entirety.

One key adjunct of the Police Service that has caused and still causes damage to its reputation and professionalism in the eyes of the Ghanaian public is the Motor Traffic and Transport Department (MTTD) of the Ghana Police Service. The activities of some of the personnel in this department are not a perception but like a chronic sour that has developed in the most embarrassing part of the human body. In other words, the illegal activities of some personnel of the MTTD of the Ghana police service have become a blot on the image and hard won reputation of the Ghana police service. The Ashanti Regional Police Commander, DCOP Kofi Boakye, bemoaned the activities of personnel of the MTTD and admitted how embarrassing it is to the Police Administration. In the words of the Commander,

their actions tend to taint our reputation as a bunch of corrupt people ... I must state that most of the MTTD officers are really embarrassing the service. If only anybody could report that any of them is involved in bribery or extortion, then the police will take action to the fullest (Daily Graphic, 2014:26).

Majority Ghanaians do not differentiate between the MTTD and other adjuncts of the Ghana Police Service. They see every police personnel as same and doing same job in the same department. The admonition of the commander to the public is one of those several calls by the police service to citizens to report such officers to the appropriate authority (The police administration). These calls hardly receive cooperation from the public because of the perception that the police shield their own. After a careful scrutiny of the views of respondents,

this paper arrived at three key modus operandi of the Motor Traffic and Transport Unit/Department personnel, which dent the image of the Police Service on daily basis include the following:

First, the MTTD are responsible for the education of road-users or motorists in general on the traffic regulations and rules. It is a commonplace that some personnel of the Unit or Department mount road blocks (either legal or illegal) periodically to check that those who are driving are licensed or qualified, to ensure the roadworthiness of vehicles and the safety of both drivers and passengers. On the contrary, most of these personnel purporting to be performing their mandated functions are engaged in extortion and/or receiving bribes in broad day light from private and commercial drivers for various motor traffic offences. The most affected commercial vehicles that fall prey on daily basis to these activities of the “extorting MTTD personnel” are the long journey articulated trucks; tipper trucks; buses; taxi and ‘trotro’ vehicles. This study observed the activities of the MTTD personnel in Kasoa, Winneba, Mankesim (towns in Central region of Ghana) Amansaman-Pokuase road, Madina (usually Haatso and Agbogba roads), Dodowa (toll booth), Tema and several other swift and snappy operations undertaken in the suburbs of the capital city of Accra reveals that extortion of money from drivers is a daily ritual. Over ninety percent of respondents allege that commercial vehicle drivers popularly known as ‘trotro’ drivers in Ghana usually asked the driver mate to give out GH¢1 (one Ghana cedi) as soon as the MTTD personnel are spotted on the road. This money is usually given to the personnel alongside the driving license who usually swiftly pick the money under the pretension of perusing the driving licence. Thereafter, the ‘ritual’ was deemed completed and the licence returned to the driver or the mate. They conclude that the action of the MTTD personnel is a shameless professional misconduct, and that it sometimes took place broad day light.

Second, according to respondents, another modus operandi of the MTTD personnel in extorting money from drivers is the so-called “demand for the driving license syndrome.” Usually the MTTD personnel asked ‘offenders’ to drive the vehicles to a Police Station (depending on the area or proximity of the station or personnel undertaken the ‘operation’), ostensibly to impound the vehicle or arrest the driver. Victims were usually processed for court by filling forms indicating the particular offence(s) committed. The police personnel then demanded specific amount of money depending on the offence, threatened drivers to pay the money or risk paying loftier amount of money or fines at the law court(s). More than half of the respondents believed that drivers who either refused or lacked the money to pay these bribes were processed for court for prosecution. Respondents further alleged that in order to absolve themselves from this professional misconduct, the police kept the court forms completed by those who paid the bribes for a few days before destroying them. The documents could be tendered later as evidence against those who reported “extorting activities of the MTTD personnel” to superior officers.

Third, it was the strong conviction of respondents that the preoccupation of most personnel of the MTTD has been reduced to an interest in checking insurance and road worthy certificates on windscreen of vehicles to the detriment of directing traffic especially the early morning rush hour to work places. For instance, the traffic situations from Kasoa to Accra and Amasaman to Accra in the mornings are usually problematic. Drivers are seen crisscrossing to outwit other drivers thereby making the traffic situation from bad to worse. Repertoires of the MTTD personnel were and continue to make their presence visible the Kasoa-Winneba and Accra-Amasaman roads ostensibly to direct traffic, but in reality they focused their attention over-speeding, licenses, roadworthy and insurance certificates of vehicles. In the case of the Kasoa MTTD, commuters and drivers plying the Kasoa-Winneba stretch of the Accra-Takoradi road lamented that the police personnel “paraded themselves”, usually at obscure points of the road, to extort money from unsuspecting drivers. They alleged that Police Commanders of various units “farmed out” or gave quotas to subordinate staff as daily returns from the extortion scheme. It is the view of the informants that the scheming of the MTTD is a blot on the image of policing in Ghana.

The purpose of this study is not to paint a gloomy picture of the MTTD of the Ghana Police Service; neither does the paper intends to absolve the personnel of other departments of the Ghana Police Service in a way that would portray them as sanctimonious. A few Ghanaians who have had direct contact with the Criminal Investigation Department (C.I.D) of the Police Service gave accounts of extortion(s). The limelight is on the MTTD because they are closer and visible to the public than other departments. They are on the roads daily and interacting directly with drivers and indirectly with passengers and other road users. Consequently, when personnel of the MTTD engage in the unorthodox professional behaviours and shameful extortions from motorists, they are seen in broad day light by the citizens. It is usually not uncommon for passengers in commercial vehicles to shout at drivers to give the police “something” (literary means money) in order to safe time to travel to their work places. While passengers on board of vehicles may not directly have any contact with the personnel of the MTTD, their modus operandi of extortion and receiving bribes is seen by many of them. The view of the informants is that this unprofessional conduct by most personnel of the MTTD has a complex reversible damaging effect on the Police Service.

4.1 Trends in Crime Rates in Ghana

The success of the Ghana Police Service in crime combat between 2010 and the first quarter of 2014 is a “mixed bag”. In all intend and purposes, police personnel in Ghana have worked and are still working under strain conditions to give adequate internal security to the masses. Over the years, the Ghana Police Service has faced and continues to face logistical and personnel constraints as well as inadequate cooperation from the general public. These constraints, notwithstanding, the Ghanaian public has tagged the Ghana Police Service as inept and moribund in the discharge of its core functions. A critical analysis of the staff strength vis-à-vis the task assigned and the general performance of the Ghana Police Service in crime combat will refute or affirm the above claim.

The Ghana Police Service currently is understaffed in all departments. According to official figure from the Ghana Statistical Secretariat, the total population of Ghana based on the 2012 census is 24.7 million. This means the Ghana Police Service requires the minimum staff strength of 40,000 (Forty thousand men and officers) to meet the minimum United Nations standard of 1:500. The staff strength of the Ghana Police Service as at May 31, 2014 stands at 30, 143 (thirty thousand, one hundred and forty three) men and officers (Statistics from the monthly establishment of the Ghana Police Service, May 2014). In order to determine the accurate staff shortfalls of the Ghana Police Service, there is the need to subtract thirty thousand, one hundred and forty three, from the required staff strength of forty thousand. This is mathematically expressed in the following parenthesis as (30, 143 – 40, 000 = - 9857). This calculation indicates that the Ghana Police Service is seriously understaffed and there is an urgent need to recruit additional nine thousand eight hundred and fifty seven (9857) personnel to augment the required staff strength of the police service. As it is, the ratio in Ghana is 1:819 which is beyond the global standard of 1:500.

The political authorities are not unaware of this defect in numbers, but rather they echo public sentiments by unleashing virulent criticism(s) against the Police Service for occasionally failing to deal decisively on certain crimes like armed robbery, theft, murder among others. The police effort and successes in crime combat has been totally eclipsed by the general public perception. The dilemma of the Police Service is that the state gives them less logistics and personnel but expect them (police) to perform to the optimum. They are virulently scolded when their inability to perform a specific duty was traced to logistical constraints, due to the failure of the state to honour its responsibility. Just as other Developing Economies, the lack of money-syndrome has been the reason for Ghana government’s inability to give the green light for new police recruits. This scenario generally negatively affected crime combat and performance of the Ghana Police Service. The summary of the police strength, shortfalls in rank and by gender is graphically shown in the following tables below:

Monthly Establishment as at 31/05/2014

	ESTABLISHMENT	STRENGTH	VACANCY (RANKS)
IGP	1	2*	-1
DEPUTY IGP	1	-	1
COMMISSION	7	10*	-3
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER	25	17	8
ASST. COMMISSIONER	96	73	23
CHIEF SUPT.	180	123	57
SUPERINTENDENT	267	181	86
DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT	380	266	114
ASSIT. SUPERINTENDENT	490	644	-154
C/ INSPECTOR	1, 643	1, 886	-243
INSPECTOR	2, 562	2, 050	512
RSM	-	45	-45
DSM	-	23	-23
SERGEANT	4, 935	2, 425	2510
CORPORAL	6, 850	5, 692	1, 158
LANCE CORPORAL	8, 000	7, 872	128
CONSTABLE	8, 800	8, 834	-34
RECRUITS	5, 763	-	5, 763
GRAND TOTAL	40, 000	30, 143	9, 857

SOURCE: Ghana Police Service

9, 857 vacancies should be used as the basis for future recruitment of personnel

UN standard police-citizen ratio is 1:500

Current police-citizen ratio is 1:819 (Ghana population currently is 24.7m (2012)

The asterisk (*) include those on secondment.

Monthly establishment by Gender as at 31/05/2014

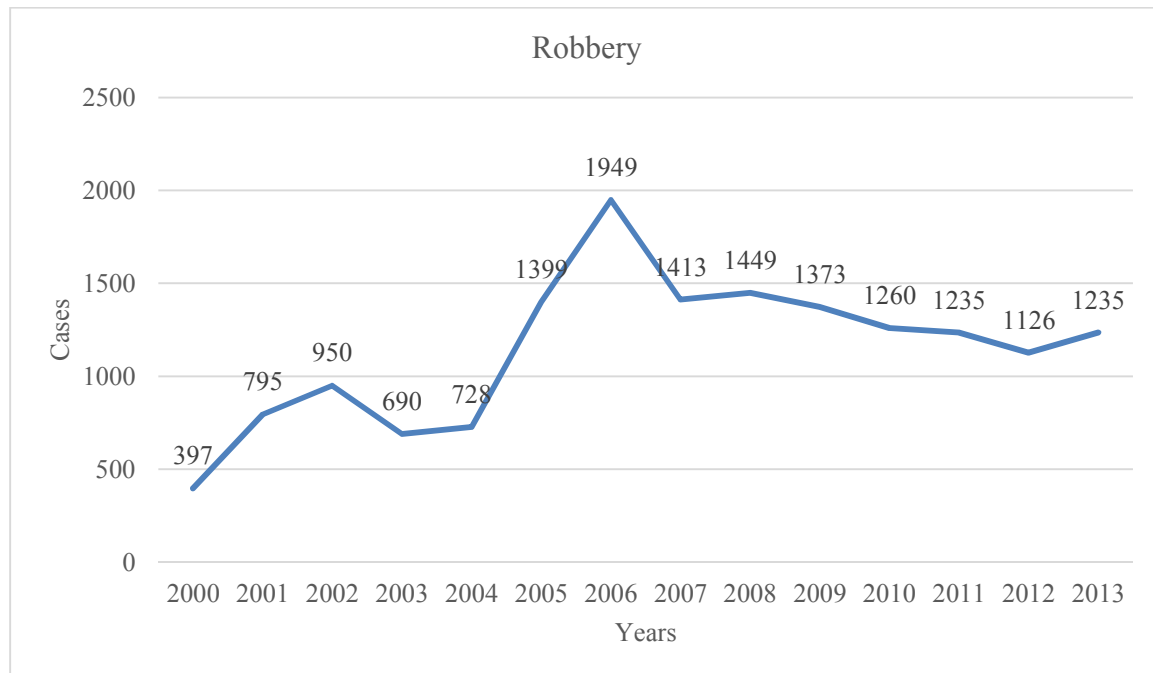
	MALE	FEMALE	STRENGTH
IGP	1	1*	2*
DEPUTY IGP	-	-	-
COMMISSIONER	8*	2	10
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER	16	1	17
ASST. COMMISSIONER	62	11	73
CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT	120	3	123
SUPERINTENDENT	155	26	181
DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT	219	47	266
ASST. SEPERINTENDENT	536	108	644
C/INSPECTOR	1,526	360	1,886
INSPECTOR	1,535	515	2,050
RSM	45	-	45
DSM	23	-	23
SERGEANT	1,991	434	2,425
CORPORAL	4,544	1,148	5,692
LANCE CORPORAL	5,783	2,099	7,872
CONSTABLE	5,996	2,838	8,834
RECRUITS	-	-	-
GRAND TOTAL	22,560	7,583	30,143

THE ASTERISK (*) INCLUDES THOSE ON SECONDMENT

Again, modern policing demands an effective collaboration between the police and the general public. The seemingly negative behaviours of a few police men and officers have derailed the confidence level of Ghanaians to the police. Hence, the general public usually decline in providing vital information to the police to combat crime. Yet, the police are expected to fight crime in the bedrooms of individuals. Besides, Ghanaians generally are not security conscious. As a result, the general ability of Ghanaians to provide accurate information to the police to undertake effective and efficient investigation leading to arrest of desperados is a major challenge to the police in crime combat. The police personnel are then accused of not doing enough to fight crime in the republic. The dilemma of the Ghana police in this perspective is that, the public need them to protect life and property, but they are unwilling to provide information that will lead to the public good.

4.2 Trends in Crime Rates in Ghana

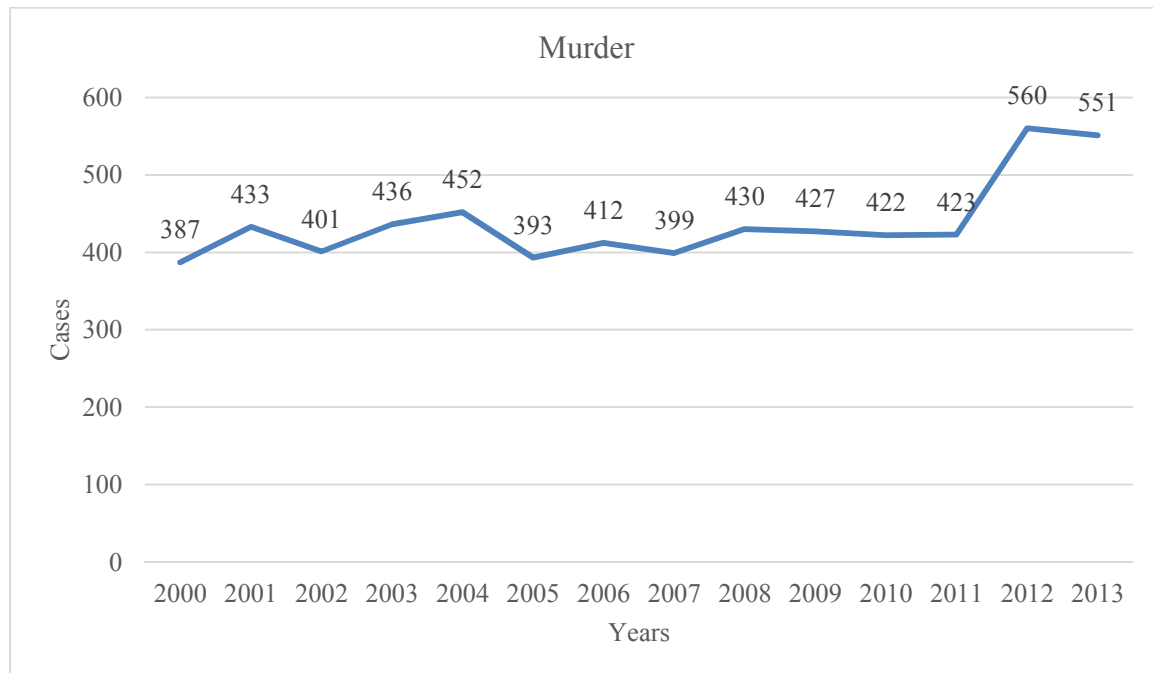
The trends in crime rate in Ghana have a mixed success and failures. Crime rates continue to surge in Ghana in spite of the efforts of the police and the military to reduce it. This surge in crime in Ghana is partly due to the movement of large-scale arms from Ghana's neighboring states emerging from armed conflicts. Second, the influx of refugees from conflict zones to Ghana increases the crime rate. For instance, it is not uncommon to see arrested criminals or robbers dominated by foreigners from Nigeria, Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Sudan, Benin, and Togo; and in recent times China and other European nationals. The most commonly and widely reported crimes to the Ghana Police include stealing, armed robbery, unlawful entry, rape, defilement, murder. The summary of statistics of the most reported crimes to the police service are graphically shown below:



Source: Statistics from the Ghana Police Service. The pictorial linear graph is the authors' conception of robbery cases in Ghana.

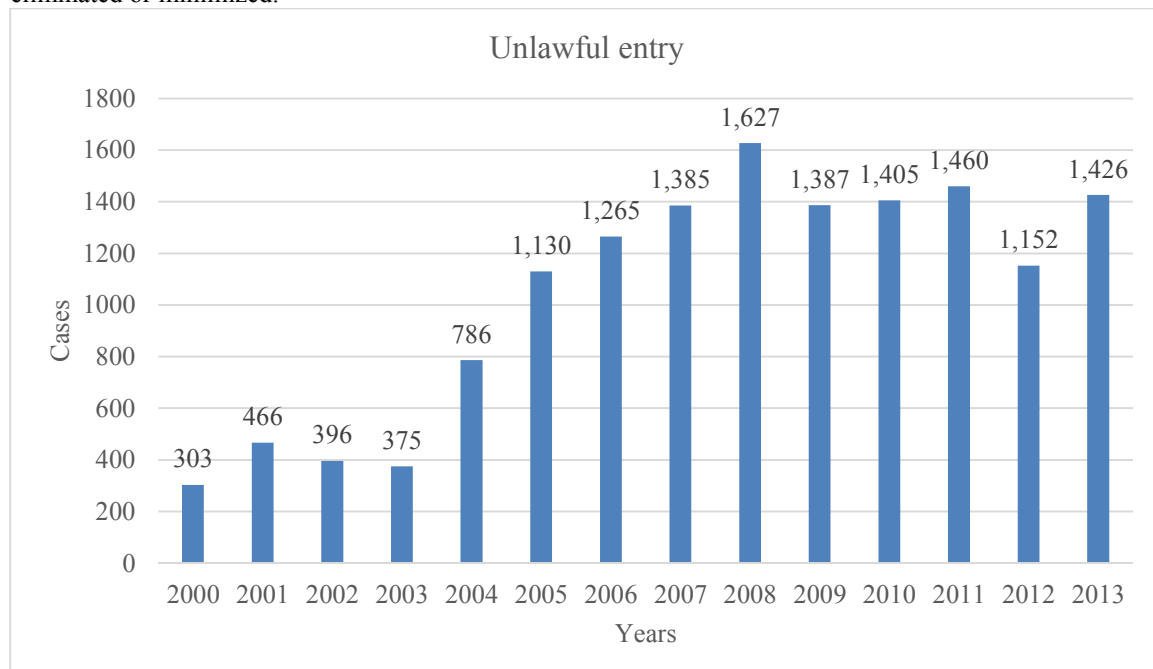
The above statistics indicate that stealing cases are still high in Ghana. The Police Service, to some extent, has marginally succeeded in reducing the incidence of stealing. For example, the total stealing cases increased from 53, 467 in the years 2000 to 64, 501 in 2007. The stealing incidences marginally declined to 56, 375 in 2013. These figures, as shown in the graph above, are certainly not acceptable in a modern state like Ghana. The citizens must take security issues seriously by volunteering information to suspicious characters in their community for police surveillance. Countries where crime rates are minimal achieved that feat through police-citizen collaboration or cooperation.

The upsurge of robbery cases is a mind-boggling not only to the Police Service but the general public. Hardly any day passes without reported cases of robbery attacks on individuals and companies at gun point. The police personnel have proved they are up to task of fighting the robbers. But the sheer decline in numbers/personnel as a result of dismissals, removals, death and retirements in the service; without a corresponding increase in replacing or recruiting new personnel. For instance, the graph above shows a steady increase in robbery cases from 397 in 2000 to 1, 949 in 2006. Robbery cases paltry declined from 1, 413 in 2007 to 1235 in 2013. The situation could have been worse if the police had not intensified joint night and day patrols with the military across the length and breadth of Ghana.



Source: Figures/statistics from the Ghana Police Service. Pictorial graph from authors' impression of the rates of murder cases in Ghana.

Cases of murder also have gained notoriety in recent times in Ghana. The Police Service has succeeded in arresting and prosecuting people involved in murder cases. Largely, the police succeeded in dealing with murder cases upon a tip off from the public, or where individuals volunteered information to the police in lieu of financial reward. However, the murder cases continued to rise marginally from a figure of 387 in 2000 to 560 in 2012. The figure declined to 551 in 2013. Usually, murders are/were committed in communities or societies, and it is through community policing and collaboration between the police and the citizens that murder cases may be eliminated or minimized.

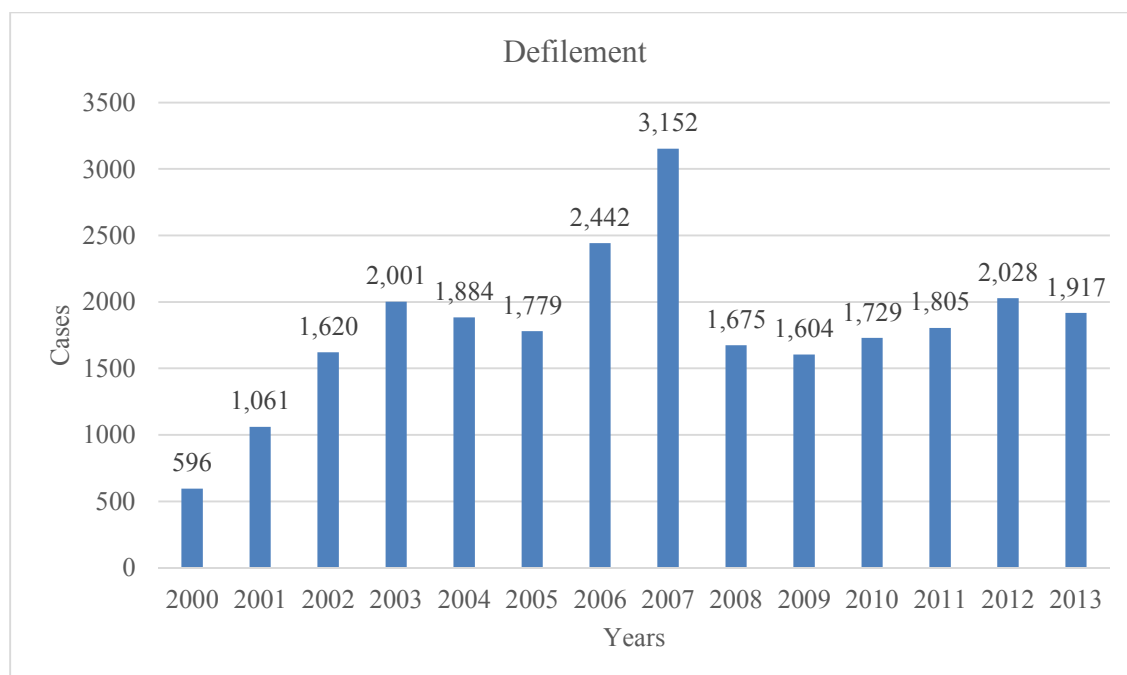
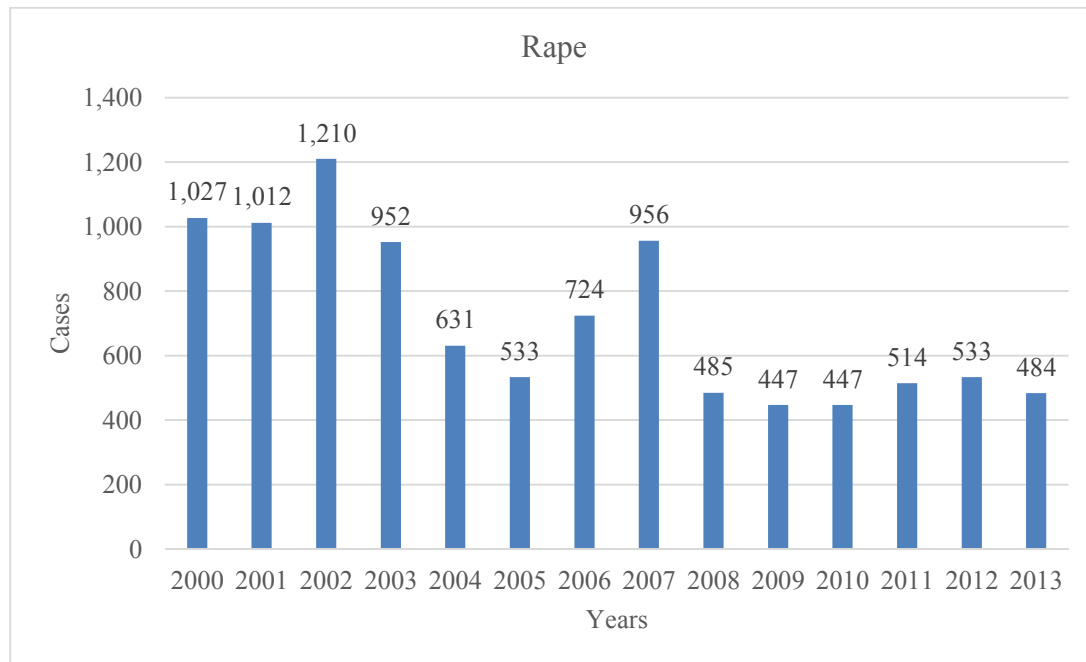


Source: Figures/statistics from the Ghana Police Service. Bar chart is from the authors' impression of a pictorial explanation of the rate of unlawful entry.

The above chart shows the steady increase of cases of unlawful entry. This is a second degree felony in Ghana's criminal code. Unlawful entry is a phenomenon where an individual or groups of persons enter a

building with the intention of committing crime or offence. This criminal offence gained notoriety from 786 cases in 2004 to the highest of 1,627 in 2008. The efforts of the police have only reduced the crime marginally to 1,426 in 2013. The situation would have been worse if the police force were inactive. Most robbery related crimes including unlawful entry and murder cases have either been foiled or the perpetrators have been arrested. There are several crime cases being prosecuted and others pending at various administrative regions and districts law courts across the country.

In the cases of rape and defilement, the Police Service has performed creditably and deserves some commendations. The charts below show the ever declining cases of rape and defilement in Ghana. The decline is not a fluke, but the swift arrests and prosecution of offenders by police. For instance, rape cases dropped from the highest of 1,210 in 2002 to 484 as at December 2013. In the case of defilement, there has been decreases from 3,152 in 2007 to 1,917 in 2013



Source: Figures/statistics from the Ghana Police Service. Bar charts form authors' pictorial impression of the crimes.

4.3 Intelligent-led Policing and General Crime Prevention

There has been a worldwide paradigm shift in policing from traditional brute coercion to an intelligent-led. Intelligent-led policing also strives on a partnership between the police service and the public who are supposed to assist by providing vital information or clues to the police to combat crime. From the above statistics, it is clear that the phenomenon of crime in Ghana is way beyond police capacity without the cooperation of citizens. The negative perception and the lack of trust for the Police Service by citizens explains the upsurge of crime in recent times. As aptly captured by Nweke:

The public and the police had negative perception of each other and the prejudice therein had serious negative consequences on the ability of the police to handle crime in the society. The distrust for each other had denied the police necessary ingredients for dealing with crime and that both the police and the society have been at lost for a long time (Nweke, 1996).

The Ghanaian society is a reflection of noncooperation with the police in crime combat. The ‘criminals’ live not at the various Police Posts or Stations, but live in society with the rest of the citizens. Intelligent-led policing may include the citizens serving as informants, eyewitnesses, community policing, reporting suspicious characters to the police and their like. If the citizens cooperate with the police by providing accurate and timely information, then there will be pre-emptive/preventive and not a reactive policing in Ghana. In the unique case of Ghana, the citizens do not trust the police for two main reasons: first, the police are accused of divulging the identity of informants to the criminals thereby putting their lives at risk; second, the police inaction in arresting the reported criminals or desperados in the community explains the uncooperative attitude of citizens. The Ghana Police Service thus has a responsibility to assuring the public of their safety when they cooperate.

4.4 Towards Building a Positive Self-Image of the Ghana Police

In a desperate attempt to change the status quo, the police administration has embarked on several reforms aimed at “image cleansing” of the Police Service in order to beguile the police-citizen relations. This paper found out that, contrary to the perception that the Police Service shielded servicemen who violated the law, it is rather one singular institution that is working day and night to rebuild its image. The Police Administration continues to prosecute its own personnel that fall foul to the law. The tables below show disciplinary action(s) initiated by the Police Administration against servicemen who were found culpable to the ethics and professionalism of the service have some of them dismissed, removed from office, confined to barracks, reduce in rank among others.

GHANA POLICE SERVICE ANNUAL STATISTICAL BREAKDOWN ON DISCIPLINARY RESULT BY RANK 2013

RANKS	CB	W/L	REPM	S/REP	RED	REMV	DIS	TOTAL
C/SUPT						1		1
SUPT			1					1
DSP				1				1
ASP								
C/IN/RSM					1			1
INS/DSM			4	1	5		4	14
SGT				6	9		3	18
CPL		1	1	7	5	1	15	30
L/CPL	2	6	6	18	27		42	101
CONST	8	10	11	2			42	73
TOTAL	10	17	23	35	47	2	106	240

FIRST QUARTER OF 2014

RANK	CB	W/L	REPM	S/REP	RED	REMV	DIS	TOTAL
C/SUPT						1		1
SUPT					1			1
DSP		2						2
ASP						1		1
C/IN/RSM					1			1
INS/DSM								
SGT								
CPL					1		2	3
L/CPL			2	1	6		15	24
CONST		1	2	1			4	8
TOTAL		3	4	2	9	2	21	41

NOTE

CB = Confinement to Barracks
 WL = Warning Letter
 REPM = Reprimand
 S/REP = Severe Reprimand
 RED = Reduction in Rank
 REMV = Removed
 DIS = Dismissal

4.5 Lessons

The study provides useful lessons that would help improve the quality and professionalism of the Ghana Police Service. To inject professionalism into the Ghana Police Service and to pre-empt the possible infiltration of criminals to “hijack” it for clandestine activities, it is imperative to scrutinize the background of recruits. Names of recruits with accompanying photographs should be advertised in the National Dailies; the general public should be encouraged to report any criminal involvements of the recruits to the Police Service. Furthermore, it is important that the Police Service uses its investigation department (the Criminal Investigation Department [CID]), to thoroughly investigate the recruits to ascertain their background. As most of the perceptions of the public about the Ghana Police Service are, to some extent, intangible and exasperatingly exaggerating, it is necessary for the Service to institutionalize and intensify its public education programme. Educating the public, using the phrase “the police is your friend”, will help to establish a rapport between the police and the general Ghanaian public. The publication of the sanctions carried out by the Ghana Police Service against its defaulting personnel is undoubtedly a “panacea” to the erroneous impression that the Service shields and condones the unlawful actions of its members. Furthermore, internal control mechanisms should be effectively resourced to inject professionalism, vibrancy and transparency into the Ghana Police Service in order to create a good niche for itself. To this end, the Police Intelligence and Professional Standard Bureau (PIPS) should be well-resourced to perform its duties efficiently. A key lesson drawn from this study is that the Ghana Police Service is understaffed and is unable to meet the 1:500 UN police-citizens ratio. As far as domestic security is concerned, it is imperative for the Police Service to be given the financial clout to make recruitments to augment the existing staff. However, successive governments of Ghana have used the “no money-syndrome” as an excuse to renege on their duty to resource the Police Service. The tendency is that it is most improbable that the shortfall in the numbers of the personnel of the Ghana Police Service can be met by orthodox means in the shortest time possible. Exploring other alternatives is the way out of the quagmire of the “policing deficit” in Ghana, and one of such alternatives is the engagement of the public in community policing.

GHANA POLICE SERVICE ANNUAL STATISTICAL BREAKDOWN ON DISCIPLINARY RESULT BY RANK 2013

<u>RANKS</u>	<u>CB</u>	<u>W/L</u>	<u>REPM</u>	<u>S/REP</u>	<u>RED</u>	<u>REMV</u>	<u>DIS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
C/SUPT						1		1
SUPT			1					1
DSP				1				1
ASP								
C/IN/RSM					1			1
INS/DSM			4	1	5		4	14
SGT				6	9		3	18
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FIRST QUARTER OF 2014

<u>RANK</u>	<u>CB</u>	<u>W/L</u>	<u>REPM</u>	<u>S/REP</u>	<u>RED</u>	<u>REMV</u>	<u>DIS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
C/SUPT						1		1
SUPT					1			1
DSP		2						2
ASP						1		1
C/IN/RSM					1			1
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RED = Reduction in Rank

REMV = Removed

DIS = Dismissal

5. Conclusion

A number of key conclusions emerged from this study. In the first place, there is an avalanche of public perception about the unprofessionalism of the Ghana Police Service. The perceptions indict the Police Service as

a public institution riddled with corruption, partiality, unprofessionalism, which gives unfettered protection to its members that fall foul of the law. The perceptions are not entirely true as concrete evidence shows the contrary. The Police Service has in-built internal mechanisms to punish its members, and has consistently over the years used sanctions to that effect. The task of the Ghana Police Service is tasking and onerous. This is complicated by the fact that the Service is under-staffed and is unable to meet the 1:500 UN police-citizens ratio. Successive Governments of Ghana have used the “no money-syndrome” as an excuse for their inability to resource the Police Service and stimulate a recruitment drive. Notwithstanding the fact that the Ghana Police Service is under-staffed, all in all, it has discharged its duties creditably well. The rating of the performance of the Ghana Police Service in relation to crimes is one of a mix blessing. The rating can be likened to a balance sheet with credit and debit entries. As far as reported cases of stealing, murder, unlawful entry, defilement, rape, among others were concerned, the general trend was a mixture of marginal increases and decreases. The overall trend of the performance of the Ghana Police Service in combating crime is appreciable and commendable.

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