

Petty Corruption in the Police Department A Case Study of Slum Areas of Karachi

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Abstract

In the developing countries corruption has been regarded as the main obstacles in the process of economic growth and development. Corruption is also held responsible for deep rooted miserable poverty and deprivation among the masses by imposing an extra burden on the poor users of public services. The focus of this study is therefore to highlight the sources of petty corruption in services provided by the local police by gathering information from the deprived living in urban slums. The study identifies the problems face by the poor people of the urban slums of Karachi and highlights the determinants of petty corruption in the Police Department in these areas. It also suggests policies to improve the services provided by the police department to particularly poor people living in the urban slums.

Keywords: Petty Corruption, Public Services, Police Department.

1.1 Introduction

The issue of governance and efficiency of the public service delivery mechanism has been the main focus of development economists of the developing countries for the last decade (Kaufmann, at el. 2008). The empirical research on the factors affecting the quality of governments and their level of efficiency in public service delivery has started to gain momentum during late 1990's.

The evidence provided by the several studies including Knack, S. and G. Ander (1999), Gupta S. et al (1998), Mauro (1995), and Bardhan (1996) has shown negative impact of corrupt governance on the living conditions and income distribution in the society. It also reduces income per capita, literacy rate and raises the infant mortality rates. In addition to this, Mauro (1995) and Lambsdorff (1999) have also done a synthetic review of studies on factors of and implications of public corruption.

The Police Department in any society is primarily responsible for providing the security to the people against crimes, theft, and other criminals. It is also responsible for controlling law and order situation and registering complains of people related to personal and other society related matters. However the main responsibility of the police officer is the protection of life and property by implementing the laws and regulations. The patrolling and checking in the city and confronting developing problem situations and detaining the suspects are also considered as part of the police. A Police Officer is also expected to encounter emergency circumstances like road accidents, natural disaster and acts of aggressions and assists the sufferers and to overcome the crisis. In order to perform duties the police officers are required to effectively interact with the people to get information and solve the conflicts. Hence maintaining harmony and human rights of individuals are the sole responsibilities of the police in any country.

In the developing countries, corruption in the Police department has been regarded as the most prominent in the process of public service delivery in imposing an extra burden on the poor's. In this study, the data from the respondents who claim to have paid bribe to the police officials is used to underline the causes of offering bribe to the officials in police department. The extent and pervasiveness of corruption in the Police Department have been identified. It also suggests policies to improve the services provided by the Police Department to particularly poor people living in the urban slums. To the best of my knowledge this is the first corruption survey covering the slum areas of Karachi.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 1.2 presents the historical background. Section 1.3 discusses the data and econometric methodology. Section 1.4 provides the detailed analysis of data characteristics and followed by the empirical results in section 1.5. Concluding remarks are made in the last section 1.6.

1.2 Historical background

Sir Charles Napier initiated a police mechanism based on the structure of colonial Irish constabulary in Sindh during 1843. Under the supervision of the British Army Officers, the police mechanism was well-organized, competent, proficient and honest. Later on observing the efficiency of police system as developed by the Napier, in the year 1860, the British Indian Government founded a Police Commission under the command of Mr. H. M. Court. In addition to other responsibilities of the police of social nature, the structure and efficiency of this police commission was comparable to the British army. The current police organization in Pakistan is the adopted versions of the Napier's system with vision to meet the varying requirements of citizens. Main objective is to offer safety and security to the people to ensure good quality of life in city.

In the province of Sindh, the Sindh Police is responsible for providing the security to the citizens. In Karachi, the Capital City Police Office is headed by Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Karachi. The main police formations are divided into Zonal Headquarters. In the Karachi division there are three major zones the West Zone, East Zone, South Zone and other. Each of these zones consists of towns. These towns are headed by the Superintendent Police / Senior Superintendent Police. Numbers of police stations are working under each of these zonal headquarters. According to the mission statement of Sindh Police "The Sindh Police in pursuit of its mission believes in providing quality service with the highest possible degree of excellence, based upon the principles of fairness, integrity, honesty and respect for human dignity. Employees are reminded to familiarize themselves with the mission statement, statement of values and vision of success and to embrace these goals as we collectively strive to provide the most effective police service for our citizens". The stories of corruption in Police Department are usually read and heard in the media (both print and electronic). According to the various Perception Surveys of Transparency International Pakistan, Police sector has remained at the top on the ladder of corruption for the last ten years. The findings of these National Corruption Perception Surveys are given in the table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Ranking of Public Sectors in Corruption of Pakistan

2010 Ranking	2009 Ranking	2006 Ranking	2002 Ranking
1. Police	Police	Police	Police
2. Power	Power	Power	Power
3. Land Admin	Health	Judiciary	Taxation
4. Education	Land Admin	Land Admin	Judiciary
5. Local Government	Education	Taxation	Custom
6. Judiciary	Taxation	Custom	Health
7. Health	Judiciary	Health	Land Admin
8. Taxation	Local Govt.	Education	Education
9. Custom	Custom	Railway	Railway
10. Tendering and contracting	Tendering and contracting	Bank	Bank

Source: Transparency International Pakistan 2010.

1.3 Data & Research Methodology

In this research, the survey on perception of corruption was undertaken in the slum areas of Karachi. According to the progress report of Katchi Abadies (slum areas) there are nearly five hundred and thirty nine Katchi Abadies in



Karachi. A sample of 500 respondents was collected from twenty Katchi Abadies located in the five districts. The sample selection is based on simple random selection technique. In every district nearly 100 respondents were contacted and all the relevant information was documented. To the best of my knowledge this is the first corruption survey covering the slum areas. This survey only targets the data collected on the perception of the poor people regarding their personal experience of corruption on interaction with the officials in the Police Department. For this purpose, the following form of the relationship between corruption and the explanatory variables for corruption is used.

$$\text{Log (PBribe)} = \beta_1 \text{DKCENT} + \beta_2 \text{DKEAST} + \beta_3 \text{DKMLIR} + \beta_4 \text{DKSOUT} + \beta_5 \text{DKWEST} + \beta_6 \text{DMAT} + \beta_7 \text{DINT} + \beta_8 \text{DGRAD} + \beta_9 \text{DJRSTF} + \beta_{10} \text{DSRSTF} + \beta_{11} \text{DSELOWN} + \beta_{12} \text{DFEML} + \beta_{13} \text{DHIGH} + \beta_{14} \text{WMEM} \dots \text{eq. 1}$$

“PBribe” is a measure of corruption which is equal to the amount of bribe paid by the respondent to obtain the services of the police department. Here corruption is defined as irregular payments (bribes) made by the respondents to the officials in the police department. The greater the amount paid, the greater is the corruption and vice versa. Here DKCENT represents the Central District, DKEAST is the East District, DKMLIR represents the Malir District DKSOUT represents the South District and DKWEST is the West District. The lack of education is regarded as one of the major causes of corruption in the literature. In view of the education system in Pakistan, the three levels of education are the, matriculate, intermediate and graduate. These are identified by the variables DMAT, DINT and DGRAD in above equation. To identify the officials involved in the corrupt practices two dummy variables are used here. The entire staff at the police department is divided in to two main groups the high grade officials and the low grade officials. The former case includes all the high-grade officers whereas later case includes all the clerical staff and other lower staff present at the police station. The junior staff is represented by the dummy variable DJRSTF. All the high grade officials are represented by the dummy variable DSRSTF. The reasons for corruption in the police department as perceived by the respondents are categorized into five main groups. The first is represented by DC1 is for the existence of lack of accountability and transparency in the Police Department. The second is represented by DC2, which shows the presence of discretionary and monopoly power in the Police Department. Similarly DC3 and DC4 is for low salaries of the employees in the public offices and the shortages of public services. DC5 represents power of influential people and lengthy as well as difficult procedures of acquiring public services. To incorporate the impact of wealth of the respondents in the process of bribe payment to the police officers, the dummy for the ownership of the house has been used. It is represented by the DSELOWN. DFEML has been used for the female head of the family. The dummy DHIGH is equal to one if the households has average family income of sixteen thousand rupees or more and wmem is the quantitative variable measuring the total working family members. The procedure of OLS that is ordinary least square is used to estimate the equation (1) for the cross-section data covering twenty-five Katchi Abadies of Karachi from the five districts. Here semi log regressions are used to estimate equation 2. The explanatory variables include qualitative as well as quantitative variables and the measure of corruption is expressed in logarithmic form.

1.4 Results and Discussion on Corruption in the Police Department

90.9 per cent respondents residing in the slum areas of Karachi have ranked Police Department number 1 in corruption. 317 respondents out of the total four hundred and eighty five respondents of slum areas of Karachi replied yes for the presence of Police Station in their locality. However, two hundred and sixteen respondents which make nearly forty five percent of the total 485 respondents claim to have gone to the police station and have interacted with the police officials for different reasons.

1.4.1 Reason for Interaction with the Police Department

Nearly forty five percent of the total 485 respondents claim to have visited the police station and have conversed with the police officials for different reasons. Almost 78 per cent respondents who interacted with police claimed that they have faced some kind of corruption. And thus they have personnel experience of dealing with the staff of the police department. Some of them even interacted with the police more than once. Therefore total number of

interactions is two hundred and fifty five which is greater than the total number of respondents who claim to have interacted with the police department. Majority of them have gone to the police station to register their complaints (33.8per cent), to get release from false arrest (28.2per cent), for violation of law (12.0per cent) and as accused (8.3per cent). However 7.9per cent respondents have gone to police station for verification of job and 5.1per cent to get vehicle fitness (See for reference figure 1.1). All together the major reason for interaction with the police is for the purpose of registering complaints, the second major reason is “to get release from the false arrest” followed by the “verification of job and violation of law”. It is estimated that in 181 cases people paid bribe.

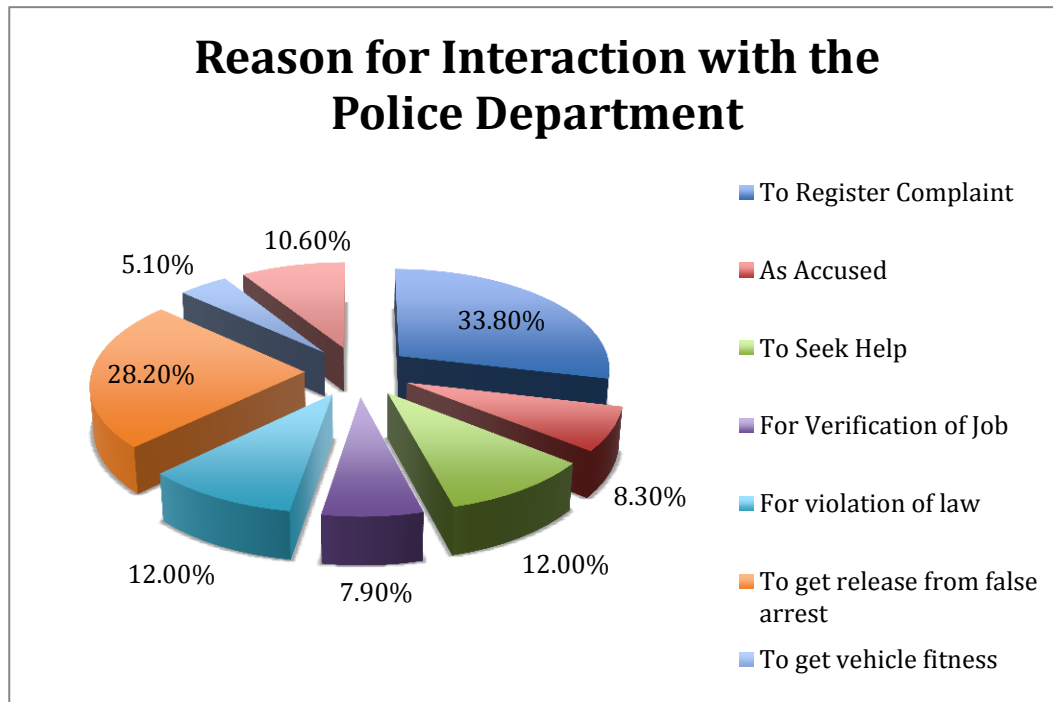
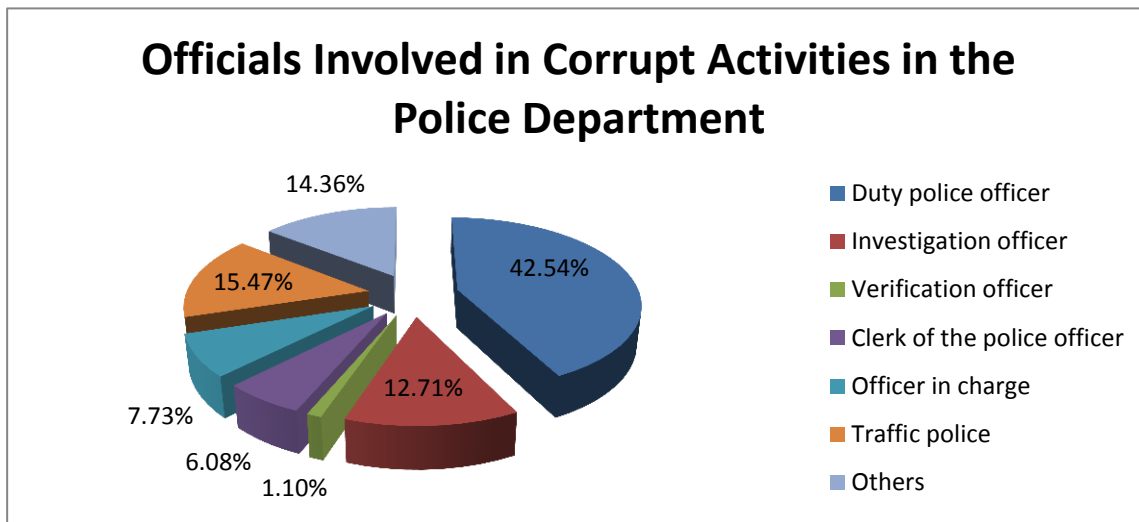


Figure 1.1

1.4.2. Officials Involved in Corrupt Activities in the Police Department

In the slum areas of Karachi, data indicates that in the Police Department duty police officer is the most corrupt. Almost 42.54 per cent respondents claim that they have paid money as bribe to them (please see figure 1.2). 15.47 per cent respondents paid bribe to the traffic police. Almost 12.71 per cent respondents claim that they had to bribe the Investigation officer. However, verification officer seems to be the least corrupt officer in the Police Department.

Figure 1.2



1.4.3. Amount of Bribe Paid To the Officials in the Police Department

In order to identify the mechanism of corruption involve in the process of service delivery we ask the respondents who demanded the bribe. In 66.3per cent cases, it is evident that bribe is demanded directly by the concerned police officer (please see figure 1.3). In 23.3 percent cases, bribe is demanded indirectly by the concerned police officer through some other person. Nearly 10 per cent respondents offered bribes themselves to the officers to get their problem solved and to save time. Moreover, in all of these one hundred and eighty one cases who paid bribe to the police officials it is estimated that nearly three hundred fourteen thousand five hundred and fifty rupees were involved (refer table 1.2). Calculations have shown that approximately in thirty cases of first information registration (FIR), resident of these slum areas claim to have paid six thousand five hundred and fifty rupees. In twenty-seven cases to avoid of false arrest people paid nearly one hundred eighteen thousand and eight hundred rupees. Twenty-four respondents paid ninety eight thousand rupees to get released from false arrest. There are nearly thirty-five cases of traffic violation or vehicle fitness in which respondents claim to pay sixteen thousand five hundred and fifty rupees.

Figure 1.3

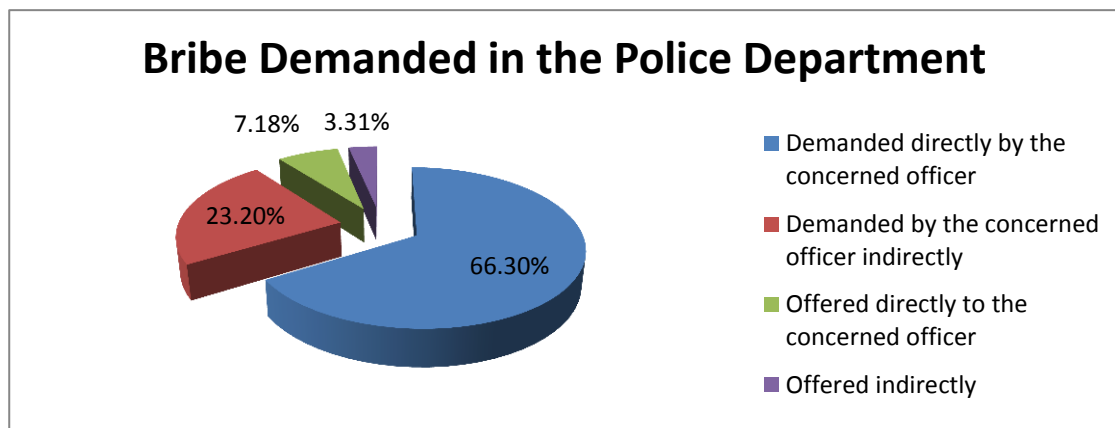


Table 1.2 Amount of Bribe Paid to the Officials in the Police Department

Type of Cases	Number of cases	Total Bribe paid in Rs.
General Dairy	11	4800
First Information Report	30	6550
Verification of Job	10	4550
To Arrest Accused	15	7650
To Send Charge Sheet to the Court	3	1500
To Avoid False Arrest	27	118800
To get Released from False Arrest	24	98000
Traffic Violation or Vehicle fitness	35	16550
Others	26	56150
Total	181	314550

Source: Author's own calculations based on the survey of Katchi Abadies of Karachi

1.4.4. Reasons for Corruption in the Police Department

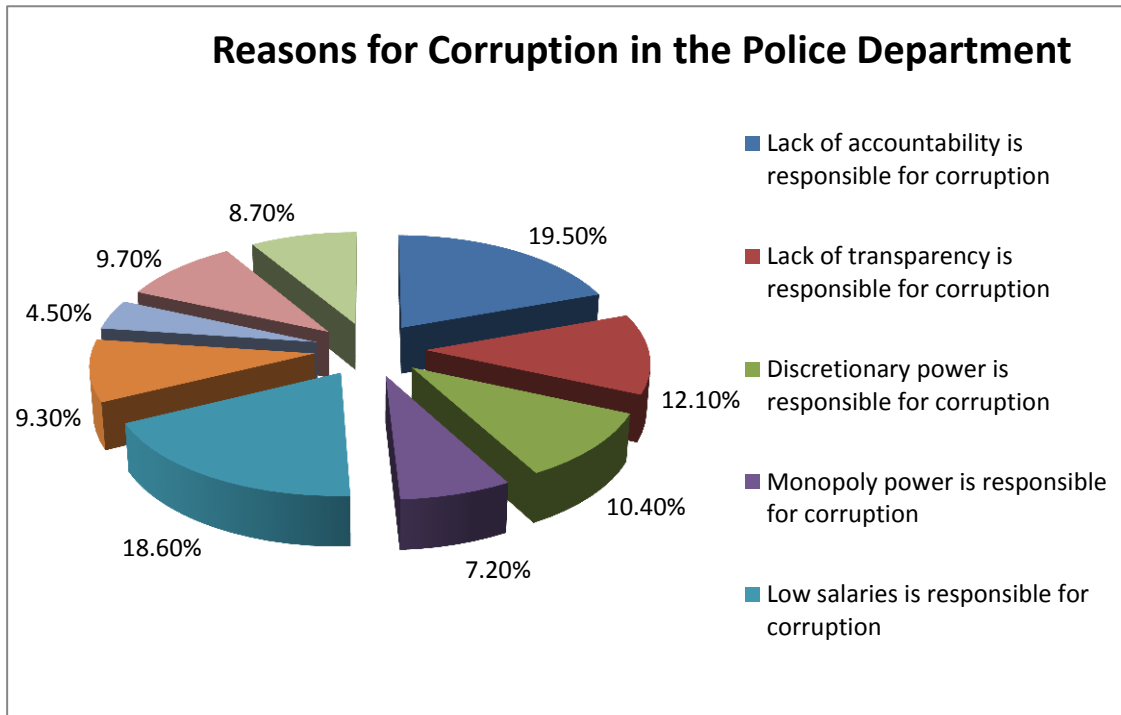
The statistic also show that out of the total persons who have interacted with police department, 19.5Per cent respondents feel that lack of accountability is responsible for corruption in the police department. 18.65per cent respondents think that low salaries is the main cause of corruption in the police department and 12.1 percent held lack of transparency responsible. However 10.4Per cent respondents say that discretionary power and 9.7Per cent say lack of information are the main causes of corruption. Other reasons include power of influential people and monopoly. (See for reference table 1.3). It is concluded that people living in slum areas of Karachi are well aware of the importance of registering FIR's and are willing even to pay higher bribes to get their complains registered. But to get release from and to avoid the false arrest, these people have paid greater sum of twenty five thousand, however for the violation of law that is a more serious crime in any rational society, people can easily escape the charges against them by paying only Rs. 50 to Rs.2500. In most of the cases the main actor is the duty police officer (that is in forty percent cases). Another important finding of this survey is that in most of these cases bribe is directly demanded by the actor.

Table 1.3 Reasons for Corruption in the Police Department

No.	Reason	No. of Respondents
1	Lack of accountability is responsible for corruption	92
2	Lack of transparency is responsible for corruption	57
3	Discretionary power is responsible for corruption	49
4	Monopoly power is responsible for corruption	34
5	Low salaries is responsible for corruption	88
6	Power of influential people is responsible for corruption	44
7	Lengthy and difficult procedure is responsible for corruption	21
8	Lack of information on Law and Procedures is responsible for corruption	46
9	Other factors is responsible for corruption	41

Source: Author's own calculations based on the survey of Katchi Abadies of Karachi.

Figure 1.4



1.5 Empirical Results for the Police Department

The model has been estimated by applying the ordinary least square method to identify the possible determinants of corruption in the Police Department. The results from the regression model of corruption in the Police Department are presented in Table 1.4. The coefficients of all the five districts are significant and positively related to the incidence of corruption in Police Department. However, the people living in the District Malir and District South are more exposed to corruption as compared to the other districts as the value of their coefficients is higher. Households whose heads who have secondary or the higher secondary level of education are successfully encountering the corrupt officials in the Police Department. The significant negative sign of these variables reflects this. However the insignificant coefficient of the female head shows the households with female head have no participation in the police related matters. This is may be due to the fact that in these slum areas male members of the society are found to be more indulging in the theft, drinking, drugs and other kinds of such illegal activities and hence females are ineffective in this case. The households with average family income of sixteen thousand rupees or more are significantly circumventing the corrupt activities. Furthermore it is evident that people with better earning opportunities are likely to stay away from illegal activities and successfully avoid corruption. This model also provides insight to the fact in these slum areas; number of working family members is an important significant positive variable. The households having large family size and hence greater number of working family members are paying more bribes to the Police Officers.

Table 1.4 The Regression Model for Corruption in the Police Department

Dependent Variable: Bribe Paid by the respondents to the official of the Police Department		
Variable	Coefficient	t-Statistic
Female Head	0.294	0.338
High Income	-0.604**	-1.908
Graduate	-0.421	-1.129
Intermediate	-0.582*	-1.646115
Matriculation	-0.813***	-2.724892
Junior Staff	0.434	1.474981
Senior Staff	0.290	0.905658
District Central	5.945***	12.93192
District East	6.163***	11.05995
District Malir	5.578***	11.32117
District South	6.693***	14.27961
District West	5.952***	12.88467
Ownership of house & plot size	0.001	0.345327
Working Family Members	0.282***	2.812615
R-squared	0.173	
Adjusted R-squared	0.097	
Sample: 1 216	Excluded obs.: 61	

* Significant at the 10% level

** Significant at the 5% level

*** Significant at the 1% level

1.6 Conclusion

It is concluded that the incidence of corruption is deep rooted in the Police Departments concerning the all slum areas located in the five districts of Karachi. However the people living in the District Malir and District South are paying relatively more bribes to the police officials for registering their complains, avoiding false arrest, vehicle fitness and for other police related matters. Better education and income of the respondents seems to be creating hindrances for corrupt police officials. This study also shed light to the fact that number of working family members in a household is an important variable. The families with greater working individuals end up paying more bribes to the police officials hence are more prone to the corruption. Hence provision of greater and better earning opportunities as well as education to the people living in the urban slum areas (Katchi Abadies) of Karachi can be effective in controlling corruption in the police department in those areas. Programs for creating awareness regarding procedures to report corruption of the police officials should be made part of the curriculum. Recently with establishment of the information technology section in the Police Department information related to crimes statistics, car lifting, most wanted and others can be accessed online. In addition to this, currently work on the other projects like E-Police Project, PROMIS (Police Record & Office Management Information System) and AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System) is under way. Unfortunately these steps may be effective to some extent in the urban areas but alone may not be enough for tackling corruption in the slum areas of Karachi. To cause this work will apparently need the establishment of independent anticorruption cell with in the vicinity of these slum areas mainly for providing information and registering the complains regarding the service delivery of various public departments of the deprived people of these areas. This can be very effective in situations where E-Police Project may be

ineffective as people are relatively less educated and economically weak. Moreover, improvement in the existing accountability and transparency mechanism is urgently required to make the officials responsible and answerable to the higher authorities.

However, the data do not present information on the quality of the services provided and problems faced by the Police Officials, which causes them to get involved in the corrupt practices. Additional investigation of this nexus with the service delivery mechanism can help to better understand the underlying factors responsible for the corruption in the Police Department particularly in the slum areas of Karachi.

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