ENHACEMENT OF CURRENT ANTICORRUPTION PRACTICES TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC SAFETY

Author:

Jelena Karapetrovic

New Mexico State University

E-mail address: iskra@nmsu.edu

Introduction

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2013), about 1.24 million people die and 20 to 50 million are injured in traffic crashes each year. Traffic is the eighth leading cause of death on a global scale, and is expected to reach the fifth position by 2030. Further, it is the primary cause for young people's deaths (aged 15-29 years) (WHO, 2013).

Investigation of events leading to traffic crashes is crucial in inhibiting the occurrence of crashes (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2008). Malfunction of vehicles, road condition and human factor are the main crash contributors (U.S. General Accounting Office, 2003).

The WHO (2004) defined major behavioral contributors to road crashes: alcohol or sleep deprivation combined with vehicle operations, inappropriate speed and non-use of protective equipment (e.g., seatbelts, child restraints, and helmets).

Education, engineering and enforcement help overcome these traffic safety impediments. Educating individuals on their responsibility and rights and making the roads and vehicles more forgiving through engineering, require legislation.

Effective enforcement of traffic safety policies is important for traffic fatalities reduction, but is often diminished by police corruption. Corruption is defined as misuse of authority for personal advance (The World Bank Group, 1997). Lindgren (1993) described most common acts of corruption in traffic police: bribery and extortion. These specific, usually overlapping actions, represent corrupt payment either given or taken, to influence officials' operation.

A typical case might involve traffic police halting a driver without explanation, and demanding bribes before letting him or her proceed. Processing unjustifiably demanded driver licenses and vehicle certificates is another example. Corrupt police bring inefficiency and unfairness. Further, genuine traffic policing is diluted by corruption when officers' efforts are diverted away from meaningful enforcement. Instead of time going to bribery, it should go to the impaired driver, speeding in an unsafe vehicle.

A Brief Summary on Corruption Issues

Hors (2000) asserted that although evident in developed countries, corruption is especially wide spread in developing countries and is accepted. Hors expanded this statement by defining obstacles in corruption combat: economics and politics. Developing countries do not have the same means as developed countries to combat corruption. Also, politicians are generally not ready to take a stand against corruption, because it might lead to disciplinary sanctions. (Hors, 2000)

According to Ivkovic (2003), people of the State of Latvia consider their traffic police the most corrupt agency in the country, extracting bribes in every third encounter. Moreover, Cambodian traffic police extracts bribes in 4 out of 5 cases.

Neild (2007) reported that Nigerian and Mexican citizens expect to bribe police whenever they meet. Further, Ghanaians and Ugandans admit to bribing police in 92% and 63% of cases, respectively. Vehicle stops in Russia and Eastern Europe are associated with routine unlawful disbursements. (Neild, 2007)

Current Practices on Anticorruption

Anticorruption measures can improve traffic safety. Strategies in Vietnam decreased number of traffic fatalities in capital city by 10%. (Anbarci, Escaleras, & Register, 2006)

Countries around the world facing corruption in traffic use combinations of measures. Measures concerning police officers involve: added employment benefits, monitoring and control of their operation and increased sentence if involved in bribery/extortion. Further, education of both officers and public through media is a common approach. Finally, advancement of technology is extensively used for decrease of contact between officers and public, and for easier corruption detection.

Mexico, Georgia, Hong Kong and Singapore represent developing countries/regions according to United Nations (UN) classification. (Development Policy and Analysis Division, 2014)

Among these four nations, only Mexico has been unsuccessful in fighting traffic police corruption- over 70% of people still has little or none confidence into traffic police force. Comparison of Mexico's experience with other three nations' might be useful in anticorruption measure improvement. However, Mexico identified one succesful measure: Mexico City introduced the deployment of purely woman-based police patrols. The rationale for this measure was based on the belief that women are naturally less corrupt and fairer than men. This unit issued over three times more tickets in comparison to their male co-workers. This

accomplishment suggests that involving more women in traffic police departments might bring success in fighting corruption. But, Mexico's overall result demonstrates presence of shortages:

1. Media involvement and public exposure were introduced in all of these nations, but the influence of discrediting in different cultures has to be noted. For example, a research conducted by Sznycer, et al. (2012) investigated the cultural influence on feeling of shame. The results revealed that Japanese subjects were more shame-prone than their British and American counterparts. Mexico might be also less sensitive to community dishonor.

2. Mexico did not offer training on corruption to police officers. Singapore and Hong Kong did. The nation of Georgia used hotline for complaints and the readiness to report corruption increased. The number of non-anonymous reports in Georgia increased drastically because public there felt safer and more successful when whistleblowing than before. In contrast, Mexico did not involve public at all. Combat against corruption placed other officers and public only as observers, not as an active participants in discovering corruption. Mexican anticorruption fight relied solely on monitoring units and cameras, neglecting another excellent source of data.

3. Mexico implemented negative motivation by introducing prison punishment. In contrast, Singapore's police are positively motivated with increased salaries and introduced benefits.

Additional effective measures conducted in the nation of Georgia involve use of technology: video cameras, payments only through bank accounts, and simplification of vehicle license and registration service process. Hong Kong emphasized importance of anticorruption education by

offering seminars and establishing a website. Singapore highlighted a hiring process of police officers and their corruption training.

Anticorruption measures addopted by the developing countries are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Anticorruption Measures in Developing Countries

Source:	Anticorruption measures:	Overall Result:
Mexico (Mexico City)		
(Anozie, Shinn, Skarlatos, & Urzua, 2004) and (Sabet, 2014)	Increased penalties for bribery and prison sentence is introduced	Almost 70% of public has little or none confidence into traffic police
	Monitoring unit is hired to control traffic patrols	
	Installment of standing cameras by the road	
	Media involvement in public naming and shaming of bribery partakers	
Georgia, Asia		
(The World Bank, 2012)	Entire traffic police force of 16,000 officers is fired in a day and replaced by new officers	First in the world in terms of relative reduction in the level of corruption in 2010.
	Undercover agents are used to control police officers	
	Fines are paid through bank accounts, not in cash	
	Video cameras are installed by roads	
	Introduced hotline for corruption complaints	
	Media campaigns are applied to affect people's attitudes towards traffic police	
	Technology implementation in vehicle license and registration service	
Hong Kong		
(Man-Wai, 2006)	Collaboration with media to publicize effective enforcement cases and for education	Increased readiness to report corruption (75% of complaints are non-anonymous)
	Websites for youth education and ethics development are established	
	Corruption prevention seminars are offered to police officers	
Singapore		
(Quah, 2006)	Increased salaries and benefits of traffic police officers	Corruption is very low
	Careful investigation of employee's backgrounds	
	Well-conceived training on corruption	
	Media involvement in public naming and shaming of bribery partakers	

Hungary, United Kingdom, Australia and the Czech Republic are "developed countries" through UN categorization (Development Policy and Analysis Division, 2014).

Two particular measures failed in Hungary. First, police officers used to be entitled to determine fines according to the offender's family status and income level, which left the opportunity for corruption (Kosztolanyi, 1999). Second, strict policy established in 1999, increased fines by 500%. This had a negative effect. The number of fines fell by 20% (Pap, 1999). The high fines encouraged corruption.

Hungary offers immunity for one of the participants in a bribe, if reported on time. Whistleblower protection can increase the risk of bribing and decrease the risk of incrimination. United Kingdom took this approach, too. The example of the United Kingdom shows that even countries with low levels of corruption have to be persistent in this fight by finding new ways and establishing new policies to kill it. Australia uses cameras, GPS technology and background checks on officers thoroughly. The Czech Republic's efforts to diminish contact between officers and public through cameras at intersections and use of bank accounts exclusively for payments, gave positive outcomes.

Procedures used in developed countries to tackle corrupt behavior amongst traffic police are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Anticorruption Measures in Developed Countries

Source:	Anticorruption measures:		Overall Result:
Hungary			
(Open Society Institute, 2002)	Provided corruption training programs to officers		Bribe-taking decreased
	Immunity offered to one party of a bribe if reported on time		
	Police officers are not allowed to accept any fines on the spot		
United Kingdom			
(Department for Business, Inovations & Skills, 2014)	Continuing fight against corruption		Corruption is not prevalent
	Protection of whistleblowers		
	Clearly defined core principles and high standards of behavior		
Australia			
(Porter & Prenzler, 2012)	Officers subjected to a range of integrity and suitability checks		Corruption is very low
	Cars equipped with cameras with video recording		
	Cars equipped with GPS allowing patrol vehicles to be tracked		
Czech Republic			
(Czech Republic - Corruption, 2013)	Using technology to automatically enforce traffic (cameras at intersections)		Corruption is decreasing
	Payments through bank accounts		

Proposed Enhancement of Anticorruption Measures

The comprehensive review of anticorruption measures around the world shows that we need to improve. There follows a set of measures to contribute to addressing this.

1) *Diagnose corruption and show that you care*

   a. Use extensive online anonymous research. According to Ivkovic (2003), studying police corruption by surveying police officers and citizens usually encounters resistance. The reason is either "Code of silence" practiced by the officers or lack of motivation to reveal misconduct by citizens who were involved in it. Therefore,

anonymous research will be more relevant. Also, online surveying format can substantially decrease the cost of research.

b. Introductory surveys can be obligatory part of an electric bill payment. Later surveys should be mandatory with every vehicle registration. These reviews could examine if someone witnessed police misconduct or irregularity during vehicle registration or licensing and show the extent of it in the previous 12 months. This method would determine the trend of corruption change.

c. Participants in surveys should be asked for their opinion on what are the reasons for traffic police corruption. This helps define weak spots in traffic department and provides ideas for future anticorruption measures. It also convinces public that the government is enthusiastic about fighting the corruption.

2) *Education*

a. Mandatory seminars with topics on traffic safety and ethics need to be offered twice a year within department. The consequences of corrupt activities need to be emphasized. This should create higher awareness of police officers.

b. Public needs to be informed on their rights and obligations not only through media (TV, radio, internet), but through formal education as well. Primary and high schools should have a workshop once a year about importance of traffic safety measures and proper enforcement. The result of this is early involvement of each citizen in fight against corruption.

3) *Increase penalty for unethical behavior*

   a. Police officer can abolish retirement benefits and possibility of getting a bonus after the first passing corruption complaint. He should be fired after the second violation.

   b. The bribe offeror can be protected if reports it in 24 hours. If he/she fails to do so, punishment should be monetary and license points should be reduced. If police officer declines the bribe, the driver will still be prosecuted for proposing it.

4) *Establish interdepartmental control*

   a. Random co-working officer will have to analyze audio and video recordings of the employee's encounters with public semiyearly, and write a report.

   b. Internal control, as a separate unit, should have access to all recordings and reports, too. If an internal control discovers unreported corruption, both officers (corrupted officer and co-worker who has written the false report) will be equally punished. Maintaining ethics will become a team assignment for the entire department.

5) *Technology incorporation*

   a. Driver's examination centers and vehicles used for licensing drivers need to be equipped with cameras. Vehicle inspector needs to record his/her examination and the owner should submit the video with other registration paperwork.

   b. Registration and licensing process has to be simplified and majority of paperwork should be possible to submit online.

   c. Every patrol vehicle should have audio/video recorder. Also, small audio/video recorders can be attached to the officers' uniforms to record discussion with

traffic violator. Officers should be obliged to communicate with public only while recorded.

   d. Public should be allowed to record encounters with police officers without prior announcement. This leads toward the increased possibility of getting caught.

   e. Payment of fines needs to be possible exclusively through the traffic department's website.

Conclusions

Incorporation of proposed improvements allows closing the circle of corruption control, so there is no room for potential misconduct. This is the main advantage of proposed approach. The practices around the world prove that any anticorruption system deficiency can be an opportunity for corrupt behavior. Use of education, technology and reward/punishment tactic can diminish these shortages.

Decrease of contact between police officers and drivers through online payments and document submission will decrease the probability of bribery/extortion. Emphasizing ethics importance and benefit of misconduct indication help to define scarcities through traffic department and to discourage misbehavior. If corrupt activity occurs anyway, there will be four levels to detect it:

- Audio/video cameras are mandatory in every encounter with public.

- Public is allowed to secretly record officers, so probability of detection is even higher.

- Whistleblowing of both officer's co-workers and public is stimulated.

- Internal control as an independent unit can discover and punish all of the participants: officers, their co-workers and public.

Consequences of discovered corrupt behavior are losing benefits or immediate departure from the department for the officer. On the other hand, offering a bribe, if repeated, can cause subtraction of driver's license. The risk for corrupt behavior involvement becomes very high for both traffic police and public.

All these steps need to be incorporated systematically and with regular evaluation of results. Strong governmental support through each stage is necessary. Carrying out the fight with corruption is both time and money-consuming process that eventually pays off. The result includes fewer fatalities and injured due to traffic. Also, revenues from additional fines can be used for further fight against corruption. Eventually, the traffic safety will not be decreased by the venomous corruption.

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