

ABSTRACT

The Nigeria Police personnel are widely criticized for their inability to observe and display virtues that promote the protection of fundamental human rights in the conduct of their duties. Allegations on human rights abuses such as extortion, rape, forced disappearances, brutality and in some cases extra judicial killings by the personnel of the Nigeria Police are rampant. Thus, knowledge of public feelings, opinions and general perceptions on police human rights protection will provide insight on how the personnel of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) observe the code of conduct designed for them. This study examined the public perceptions on human rights protection among the cadres of the NPF. The target group for the study is adult male and female residents of Kano metropolis, with the sample size of 350 respondents. Multistage cluster sampling technique was used in selecting the respondents, structured questionnaires were administered to 344 respondents; and in-depth interviews were conducted with 3 police personnel, 1 Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps personnel, 1 human rights advocate, and 1 academic that were selected using purposive sampling technique. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics specifically frequencies and percentages. The study discovered that rather than being perceived as the protectors of human rights the police are generally perceived by the public as violators of these rights; that personnel in the senior cadre are perceived to be more prominent than their junior counterparts in protecting these rights; and that the perception was mainly influenced by the people's experience in the hands of the police. The study recommends that the duration and standard of police training should be reviewed and human rights education be prioritized and that mechanisms for investigating human rights abuses by the personnel of the NPF be provided. Similarly emphasis on human rights protection should be prioritized in the course of training the police, especially in training the rank and files.

Key words: police, police cadre, junior cadre, senior cadre, promotion of human rights