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RESEARCH ARTICLE

ASSESSMENT OF JOB HAZARDS IMPEDING THE PERFORMANCE OF POLICE IN F.C.T, ABUJA

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Abstract

Organizations, whether public or private, frequently encounter environmental and job-related hazards that undermine employee performance. These job hazards, which often lead to increased vulnerability to illness, compromised health, and, in extreme cases, fatal outcomes, are particularly concerning for frontline workers. This study focuses on the job hazards affecting the performance of police officers in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Abuja. The study aims to objectively examine the physical hazards impeding effective policing in FCT, Abuja. Explored the causes and ways in which police officers experience these job hazards. The study is grounded in structural functionalist theory, which views organizations as integrated and interdependent systems working together to achieve specific goals. The methodology adopted is the social survey method; the study utilized questionnaires and interviews to gather data from respondents. Out of the distributed questionnaires, 210 were successfully retrieved, and six heads of police divisional units were interviewed. Findings reveal that police officers in Abuja face numerous hazards, including assaults, poor motivation, malfunctioning operational gadgets, and unfair directives from superiors, exacerbating their vulnerability to various hazards both in societal environments and the workplace. These factors contribute to decreased job performance and effectiveness, as they not only increase their susceptibility to assaults but also slow their response times to crime scenes. In conclusion, the study suggests several recommendations to address these issues: Provide comprehensive training programs to improve officers' knowledge and preparedness for dealing with various job hazards. Increase the recruitment of highly educated officers to strengthen the force and improve operational effectiveness. Invest in advanced operational tools, such as drones, to enhance surveillance and operational efficiency before engaging in any field operations.

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Introduction:-

The International Labour Organization (ILO) reported in 2016 that every 15 seconds, 153 workers worldwide experience work-related accidents. Additionally, each year, there are 6,300 deaths due to job accidents and 2.3 million deaths from job diseases, which often result in prolonged absences from work (ILO, 2016). Job hazards are

significant global issue that undermines job performance, reduces quality of life, and can even result in fatalities (Chan et al., 2017). These hazards often lead to a variety of health problems and contribute substantially to increased medical expenses and the loss of workdays, which have compounding effects on job performance. Job hazards are vulnerabilities associated with specific types of work environments and activities (Ojedokun, 2014). Recently, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of deaths reported globally due to job hazards. These hazards include environmental factors such as air pollution, weather conditions, and inhaled toxic chemicals, as well as accidents, reprisals, and severe work fatigue. All these factors negatively impact job productivity (Chan et al., 2017).

In the context of policing, the fundamental role of the police is to protect life and property. However, police officers face numerous challenges that make their work strenuous and sometimes ineffective. They are exposed to a range of work situations that require both physical and mental resilience to perform their duties effectively. The nature of police work includes patrols, investigations, traffic control, and crime prevention. Officers are expected to maintain high performance levels regardless of environmental conditions, such as working in slum areas, adverse weather, poor road networks, air pollution, and challenging terrains. These conditions often pose significant constraints on effective police patrol and overall job performance (Ojedokun, 2014).

Police officers in the Federal Capital Territory (F.C.T), Abuja, are increasingly falling victim to violent attacks and facing severe job hazards. Recent incidents vividly illustrate the dangers they encounter: bandits recently targeted officers conducting stop-and-search duties at the Galadimawa roundabout, resulting in the tragic death of seven officers. Shortly thereafter, gunmen murdered two officers at a checkpoint in Abaji and stole their weapons (Punch, 2018). Furthermore, 44 policemen assigned to election duties were involved in an auto accident in Abuja, suffering injuries ranging from fractures to head trauma (Sahara Reporters, 2019). These events highlight the extreme risks inherent in police work. These alarming statistics signifies the urgent need for comprehensive research into the job hazards faced by police officers, particularly in the suburban regions of the FCT.

The severity of these hazards not only impedes job performance but also threatens the security architecture of Abuja. Addressing these critical issues is essential to enhancing the safety and effectiveness of law enforcement officers and crucial not only for the well-being of individual officers but also for the broader security framework of Abuja.

In that regard, this study is addressing the following research questions:-

1. Why are police officers vulnerable to job hazards in FCT, Abuja?
2. What are the physical factors exposing police officers to hazards in FCT, Abuja?
3. What are the strategies for mitigating job hazards among police officers in FCT, Abuja?

Conceptual Clarifications:-

Job hazards:-

Masum, William, and Mosharraf (2011) define job hazards as “potential risks to the health of a person emerging from an unhealthy environment or situation,” which is a significant public health issue. It can also be referred to as any activity, material, process, or situation that is likely to cause an accident or disease at the workplace. According to Ford and Tetrick (2011), job hazards are "aspects of a person's job-specific environment that increase one's likelihood to illness." These dangers refer to potential risks to people's health and safety while working outside the home. A dangerous and unhealthy work environment, which includes insufficient ventilation, inadequate lighting, and excessive noise, has a detrimental impact on employee performance. Job hazards are often caused by unsafe working circumstances and practices. According to Oketunji (2014), the lack of a workplace health and safety system exposes employees to these threats, lowering morale and productivity. According to the Job Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), these hazards fall into five main categories: physical safety hazards, chemical hazards, biological hazards, ergonomic hazards, and physical hazards. Related to this study is the physical hazards that is most experienced by police officers. Police officers in Nigeria face numerous physical hazards as part of their demanding duties. These hazards arise from the nature of their work and the challenging environments in which they operate. Here are some key physical hazards encountered by Nigerian police officers:

Police officers often find themselves exposed to violence. This includes physical confrontations with criminals, participation in riot control, and handling armed suspects. The nature of police work involves patrols, investigations, and traffic management, responding to accidents, handling crime scenes, and dealing with internal disturbances such as riots. The Nigeria Police Force Press (2019) has identified these roles as part of the external responsibilities of police officers. The external work environment can vary significantly from one location to another, as different areas may experience different types of crime.

One major source of job hazards in police work is associated with the unique nature of their duties. Surveys of law enforcement officers often highlight and rank these hazards, with the death of a partner or the need to take a life in the line of duty being among the top stressors. Other frequently mentioned hazards include making violent arrests and encountering horrific scenes. Violent and unpredictable incidents are commonly considered leading sources of both psychological and physical stress among law enforcement officers. Additional stressors include dealing with difficult individuals, such as drug addicts or intoxicated people, and the inherent dangers of the job (NPFP, 2019). In summary, job hazards associated with police performance include assaults, chemical hazards, biological hazards, psychosocial hazards, and environmental hazards.

Assaults/Ambushes: Physical attacks and impersonations are significant job hazards in the Nigerian police force (Ehindero, 2012). Civilian attitudes toward the police often lead to violence, particularly from certain groups who view the police as symbols of oppression. Researchers explain that members of minority groups and young people, in particular, may perceive the police as representatives of systemic injustice, making them more likely targets of aggression. In a notable case, operatives of the Rapid Response Squad (RRS) of the Lagos State Police Command arrested Gregory Anyasodo for impersonating the Nigerian Police Force and extorting people in Oshodi, Lagos. The 47-year-old suspect from Owerri North, Imo State, was apprehended after stealing N125, 000 from a trader in Oshodi. Also arrested were the graphic artist who designed the fake police identity card and the owner of the business center involved (Chiemelie, 2017).

The Nigeria Police Force Press (2019) reported an incident where the Acting Inspector General of Police, M.A. Adamu, ordered the immediate arrest and prosecution of those involved in a brutal attack on police officers in Cross River State. The attack, which occurred on April 17, 2019, in Ogoja Community, was carried out by Ikenga, a notorious receiver of stolen property, and his gang. Four officers from the IGP Intelligence Response Team (IRT) were severely wounded, suffering deep machete cuts on their heads and bodies (Chiemelie, 2017). In Zamfara, 36 policemen went missing, with 16 found dead and 20 recovered alive (Vanguard, 2018). On July 2, 2018, bandits killed seven police officers conducting stop-and-search duties at the Galadimawa Roundabout in Abuja. Approximately 24 hours earlier, gunmen had murdered two officers at a checkpoint in Abaji, Abuja, and stolen their weapons (Punch, 2018). Additional incidents include a fatal motor accident in Ogun, where a police officer died and four others were injured (Samuel, Punch, 2017), and a traffic control officer, Inspector OluwaseunSoyebo, who was killed in a motor accident in Lagos (Komolafe, 2019).

Chemical Hazards: These refer to chemical substances that can be harmful to health. They are major causes of occupational skin diseases. For police officers, key chemical hazards include, but are not limited to, carbon monoxide, lead, mist, fumes, dust, and sterilizing agents. Officers are often exposed to these hazards while directing traffic, processing or lifting fingerprints, or working at the firing range. Air pollution is widely recognized as a health hazard, with outdoor workers, including traffic police, experiencing high exposure to airborne pollutants (Masum et al., 2011).

Biological Hazards: Police officers are at high risk of exposure to communicable diseases such as AIDS or hepatitis. Research indicates that police officers are among the high-risk occupations for encountering infectious diseases. While the risk of contracting a disease from civilians or offenders is relatively low, the associated fear and stress are significant, making precautionary measures essential (Jennifer, 2014). Ejibunu (2012) notes that police officers face serious biological hazards from contact with infected individuals. They are at increased risk of contracting contagious diseases such as HIV, tuberculosis, hepatitis A and B, rabies, and cholera. These risks arise while assisting infected accident victims, administering first aid, or dealing with bites from humans or animals during arrests or searches.

Psychosocial Hazards: Stress is identified as a major psychosocial hazard associated with policing in Nigeria. Officers frequently cite the police organization itself as a stressor. The need to make on-the-spot decisions, which are often scrutinized by the public, media, and senior officers, leads many officers to feel constantly under pressure, even for routine activities. Tensions between community expectations and the nature of police work, which often involves service-oriented tasks like managing domestic disputes, can exacerbate these stresses. Such tensions can worsen police-community relations, increase officer alienation from the community, and create role conflict (Jennifer, 2014). Additionally, intra-organizational stressors include the physical dangers of the job, shift work, and organizational structure.

Job Performance:-

Job performance is the effectiveness with which an individual carries out their job responsibilities and achieves the objectives set by their role. It includes a variety of factors, such as the quality and quantity of work produced, adherence to job requirements, and the successful attainment of performance goals. This concept is crucial for assessing how well employees contribute to organizational success, encompassing both the outcomes of their work and the processes they employ to achieve these outcomes (Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller, 2019). Components of job performance are typically assessed through metrics like productivity, accuracy, timeliness, and consistency. Productivity measures how much work is completed within a given period, while accuracy evaluates the correctness of work outputs. Timeliness reflects the ability to meet deadlines and manage time efficiently, and consistency pertains to the reliability of performance over time. These metrics are used to evaluate performance through tools such as performance appraisals, output statistics, and feedback from supervisors (Sonnentag & Frese, 2020).

Influencing factors of job performance include individual attributes, the work environment, and organizational practices. Personal factors such as skills, experience, and motivation significantly impact job performance. Additionally, the work environment, including physical conditions and workplace culture, can either enhance or detract from an employee's performance. Effective management practices, including clear communication, goal setting, and feedback, play a crucial role in supporting high job performance by ensuring that employees understand their roles and expectations (De Lange et al., 2021; Bakker & Demerouti, 2023).

Empirical Reviews:-

Bash (2009) conducted a study on job health hazards among police officers at the Maitama Police Divisional Headquarters in the Abuja Municipal Area Council. The study highlighted that Nigerian workers, including police officers, have become increasingly vulnerable to accidents, ranging from minor injuries to fatal incidents. Many officers have lost their lives or suffered severe injuries while on duty, leading to permanent incapacitation. Despite the critical importance of workplace safety and health, these issues are often treated with negligence by employers. To address these job hazards, Bash administered 70 questionnaires, of which 60 were returned from a total population of 400 officers at the Maitama Police Divisional Headquarters. The study adopted social action theory and offered several recommendations: increased awareness and empowerment, encouragement of regular exercise, victim support services, and improved hazard reporting mechanisms.

Ahmed (2009) investigated job stress among Nigerian police personnel, discovering that over 90% of officers suffer from psychological issues due to stress. This stress is exacerbated by the government's neglect of police welfare, insufficient annual leave, and low pay, all contributing to poor job performance. The phenomenological study, based on Karasek's demand-control model, aimed to explore the impact of job stress on officers in a Nigerian metropolitan police agency. Semi-structured interviews with 15 senior officers, each with at least 20 years of experience, revealed several stress factors: inadequate personnel, limited resources, family-work conflict, unclear job roles, insufficient counseling and training, job demand conflicts, extended hours, and low salaries. The study suggests that enhancing awareness and addressing these stress factors could lead to improved work-life balance, health, and professionalism among police officers.

Viktor, Jozef, Andrej, and David (2021) conducted a study on job safety among municipal police officers, focusing on the risks and vulnerabilities associated with their profession. The study analyzed the safety of municipal police officers in the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic from 2004 to 2019. Using a risk matrix and probability calculations for attacks and injuries, the researchers assessed the job safety of municipal officers. The Pearson correlation coefficient determined the relationship between various risk factors, while the determination coefficient assessed the reliability of these relationships. The main outcome was the categorization of the riskiness of municipal police work, based on statistical indicators and risk matrix evaluations. The findings are intended to support legislative changes aimed at enhancing job health protection for municipal police officers. Previous studies have focused on job and structural problems influencing job hazards. This current study, however, examines the social environment and vulnerability to job hazards, as well as the attitudes of police officers that may increase their exposure to such hazards.

Theoretical Framework (Structural-Functionalism):-

Emile Durkheim (1858–1917), Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), and Robert Merton (1910–2003) are the principal theorists associated with the structural-functionalist perspective. This theoretical approach focuses on two primary concerns. Firstly, it examines the organization of society by exploring the relationships between its various

components. Secondly, it investigates how the effective functioning of each component contributes to the overall stability and survival of society (Bothamley, 2004, in Sophy, 2014).

Anthony Giddens elaborates on structural theory by highlighting the connection between personal actions and social structures. According to Giddens, social structures influence individual attitudes and behaviors, guiding them toward conformist or non-conformist actions. Sophy (2014) reinforces this idea by stating that "structure is both the medium and the outcome of human activities, which it recursively organizes." This perspective implies that the continuous actions of individuals within institutions and large-scale societies shape and are shaped by these structures, influencing their daily activities and behaviors.

Applying the structural-functional framework to police officers' job hazards in Nigeria reveals how societal and organizational structures contribute to these risks. For example, Nigerian perceptions of police work as "dirty" negatively impact officers' morale and the maintenance of their operational vehicles, increasing their exposure to job hazards. Similarly, a lack of motivation to address environmental threats, such as poor waste management and air pollution, exacerbates these risks. The faulty recruitment process, which favors junior officers with secondary school certificates over educated people, creates gaps in hazard management. Additionally, the proximity of police cells to offices, coupled with poor sanitation, exposes officers to harmful conditions. These issues reflect a failure in the organizational structure of the police force, affecting its effectiveness and officers' safety.

Methodology:-

The social survey method is utilized in this study to investigate job hazards among police officers in the FCT Police Command in Abuja. This research employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a comprehensive analysis. The study focused majorly in Suburban areas of FCT, Abuja. The suburban areas in FCT, Abuja is characterized by high population densities and residential settings distinct from the main master plan. Notable suburbs in Abuja include Jikwoyi, Karu, Kubwa, Nyanya, and Gwagwalada (Britannica, 2023). The map below illustrates the FCT, highlighting these suburban regions.



Source

The FCT Police Command is the principal law enforcement agency in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. It is one of the seven zones of the Nigerian Police Force. Located in the North Central Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria, it includes the Northern Kaduna and Niger states as part of its jurisdiction. The FCT Abuja Police Command is headed by Bala Ciroma, the Commissioner of Police for FCT Abuja (The Nation, 2018). According to the 2006 census figures, the FCT Command Zone has a combined police strength of 22,515 officers (<https://www.npf.gov.ng/npf>). Environmental factors in the FCT Command Zones make the occupation hazardous. These factors include deep forests, which serve as hideouts for kidnappers; slum areas inhabited by hoodlums; poor waste management; and air pollution. Furthermore, as the capital city, Abuja requires police officers to work with intense vigilance, often exceeding regular working hours, to ensure a safe environment through activities such as stop-and-search operations.

The general population for this study includes all police officers (both senior and junior) present at the time of the study in each of the police divisional units across the six area councils of FCT Abuja. For convenience and effective data utilization, the study selected a proportionate sample size of 240. Both probability (systematic and random) and non-probability (purposive) sampling procedures were employed. In determining the appropriate sample size, the study utilized the total number of six area councils in FCT Abuja. From each of these area councils, one police divisional unit was randomly selected, resulting in six police divisions being involved in the study. The total sample size of 240 was then evenly distributed across these six divisional units ($240 / 6 = 40$). Consequently, the opinions of forty police officers from each divisional unit are considered representative of the entire unit. Additionally, a purposive sampling procedure was adopted to specifically gather insights from knowledgeable officers within the ranks of division heads in each police divisional unit. This method was chosen to ensure that the views of experienced and senior officers, who have a comprehensive understanding of the divisions, were included in the study.

The study employed two primary data collection methods: questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaires, designed in both closed and open-ended formats, targeted responses from all police officers, including both junior and senior ranks. Interviews, on the other hand, were conducted exclusively with the Divisional Police Officers (DPOs) in charge of each divisional unit. A total of 240 questionnaires were distributed across the six divisional units: Area 1 Division (AMAC), Gwagwalada, Kuje, Kwali, Abaji, and Bwari Divisional Units. Each unit received 40 questionnaires. Data collection was conducted during the afternoon hours, typically around lunchtime, when most officers were back from their early patrols. To ensure fair representation and avoid bias, the researcher administered the questionnaires to every 6th officer after a head count. This approach was intended to prevent any skewing of results and to distribute the questionnaires evenly across the population. Interviews were conducted in the DPOs' offices to gather in-depth insights. To facilitate the data collection process and ensure comprehensive responses, the study enlisted one police officer as a research assistant in each unit. Descriptive statistics, including simple percentages, were used to analyze the quantitative data collected from the general police officers. The qualitative data from the interviews with the DPOs were summarized and analyzed based on the consistency of their responses. It is important to note that a total of 240 questionnaires were distributed, and 210 of these were returned. Additionally, interviews were conducted with six Divisional Police Officers (DPOs). The remaining 30 questionnaires were not retrieved because the respondents did not return them as expected. The collected responses were analyzed objectively as follows.

Data Analysis and Discussions:-

Table 1 Biographic Data Distribution of Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	183	87.1
Female	27	12.9
Total	210	100
Age (years)		
20-29	45	21.4
30-39	65	30.9
40-49	85	40.4
50 & above	15	7.1
Total	210	100
Marital status		
Married	135	64.3
Single	75	35.7
Others	0	0
Total	210	100
39.0	82	Cadre status
60.9	128	Senior officer
		Junior officer
Total	210	100

Educational Status		
Secondary	49	23.3
Diploma/NCE	123	58.5
Degree/HND	29	13.8
Master's Degree	9	4.2
Total	210	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 1, illustrates the bio-data and social characteristics of the respondents. It shows that the majority of respondents are male (87.1%), with females comprising 12%. The age distribution indicates that participants are predominantly in the 30-39 (30.9%) and 40-49 (40%) age ranges, which are considered prime working ages. These age groups are significant due to their extensive years of service (OECD, 2020). The data also reveals that 64.3% of police officers are married, while 35.7% are single. This highlights the need for enhanced safety measures, as married officers might face challenges related to family structure and societal impact if they become widowed. Additionally, the table indicates that 39.0% of respondents are senior cadre officers, while 60.9% are junior cadre officers. The educational qualifications show that most respondents hold diplomas or NCEs, suggesting that they are generally junior officers and, therefore, potentially more vulnerable to hazards.

Survey Assessment Questions on Job Hazards among Police Officers:-

Tables 2, Responses onthe Physical Hazards Police Officers Experience in FCT, Abuja

Percentage (%)	Frequency	Option
50.9	107	Assaults
13.3	28	Communicable/Body fluids disease
30	63	Harsh weather
5.7	12	Ambush
100	210	Total

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 2 presents respondents' views on the hazards frequently encountered by police officers. The data reveals a range of significant risks: 50.9% of respondents identified assaults as the primary hazard faced by police officers. This high percentage underscores the severe and frequent nature of physical attacks on officers while performing their duties. These assaults often occur during routine operations, confrontations with suspects, or high-stress situations, making them a critical concern for law enforcement agencies. 13.3% of respondents cited communicable diseases and exposure to body fluids as significant hazards. Police officers frequently come into contact with individuals who may have infectious diseases, particularly during arrests, medical emergencies, or accidents. This exposure can lead to the transmission of diseases, posing serious health risks to officers. 30.0% of respondents highlighted harsh weather conditions as a notable concern. Officers often work outdoors in various weather conditions, including extreme heat, cold, rain, and storms. Such environmental factors can adversely affect their health and job performance, leading to physical discomfort, an increased risk of illness, and potential safety hazards during operations. 5.7% of respondents reported ambushes as a significant hazard. Ambushes involve surprise attacks from criminals or hostile individuals, which can occur during routine patrols, traffic stops, or other police activities. These unexpected attacks can be highly dangerous and lead to serious injuries. Interviews submissions: Six participants shared the view that assaults are a major threat in police work. Additionally, two participants noted that, during incidents of assault, police officers are sometimes distracted or preoccupied, which can contribute to their vulnerability and make them more susceptible to being overpowered by attackers. This suggests that the effectiveness of police officers in handling assaults might be compromised by situational factors and distractions that occur during such encounters. The participants expressed a consensus that assaults are the predominant threat faced in police work. They emphasized that physical attacks on officers are a significant and ongoing concern. In addition, two participants highlighted that assaults often occur when officers are distracted or preoccupied with other tasks. This distraction can reduce their vigilance and situational awareness, making them more vulnerable to being overpowered by assailants. These participants noted that such distractions might include focusing on unrelated

incidents, communication breakdowns, or unforeseen complications during their duties. This further underscores the need for enhanced training and strategies to maintain officer alertness and effectiveness during high-risk situations.

Table 3, Responses on Why Police Officers are Vulnerable to Job Hazards in FCT, Abuja

Percentage (%)	Frequency	Option
19.1	40	Unfair and arbitrary commands from senior officers
40.9	86	Shortage of manpower and operational equipment's
26.7	56	Poor literate level of officers
13.3	28	Poor motivation
100	210	Total

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 3 presents respondents' views on the causes of job hazards faced by police officers. The data indicates that 19.1% of respondents attributed job hazards to unfair or arbitrary commands from senior officers. A substantial 40.9% cited the shortage of manpower and equipment as the primary cause of job hazards. Additionally, 26.7% of respondents pointed to the poor literacy levels of officers as a contributing factor, while 13.3% identified poor motivation as a cause. The findings suggest that the shortage of police personnel and operational equipment are the most significant contributors to job hazards. This shortage can lead to increased workloads, reduced effectiveness, and higher risk during operations. The table also highlights that a notable proportion of respondents believe that low literacy levels among officers contribute to job hazards. Poor literacy can affect officers' ability to perform their duties effectively, understand and implement procedures, and respond to various situations competently. Additionally, issues such as unfair commands and low motivation further exacerbate the challenges faced by police officers, indicating a need for improvements in leadership, resources, and overall support for officers. Interviews submissions:

The participants shared similar views, stating that some police officers lack adequate awareness of their surroundings. They argued that this lack of environmental consciousness contributes significantly to job hazards. Without a clear understanding of the environment and potential threats, officers may be more susceptible to dangerous situations and accidents.

One participant distinctly highlighted that arbitrary commands from senior officers can significantly increase job hazards for junior officers. When senior officers issue directives without considering the ground realities or the safety of their subordinates, junior officers may find themselves in unnecessarily perilous situations. For instance, if a senior officer orders a high-risk operation without ensuring adequate support or safety measures, junior officers could face severe dangers, such as armed confrontations or risky interventions, without proper preparation or protection. Commands that disregard tactical planning or risk assessment can result in poorly executed operations, exposing officers to heightened risks due to inadequate strategic foresight or resources.

Three participants echoed a sentiment that aligns with 26.2% of the respondents' views, as seen in Table 3, regarding the impact of a lack of motivation on job performance. They emphasized that inadequate motivation can lead to a loss of focus, making officers more vulnerable to errors and accidents. The participants stressed that when officers lose focus, they become more susceptible to harm and have reduced productivity, which can result in work-related injuries and diminished effectiveness.

Additionally, three participants expressed concerns about the government's inadequate provision of welfare for police officers. They pointed out that officers are not adequately compensated, which sometimes leads to officers accepting small bribes from the public while on duty. This behavior not only undermines the officers' concentration and effectiveness but also makes them more vulnerable to assaults and erodes public trust. In a related view, two other participants added that the lack of punitive measures against those who assault or insult police officers is discouraging. This absence of consequences contributes to a decline in officers' morale and dedication to their work.

Table 4. Responses on how Job Hazards can be mitigated among Police Officers FCT, Abuja

Percentage (%)	Frequency	Option
42.8%	90	Adequate compensation and payments
28.5%	60	Recruitment of more police officers
18.0%	38	Rest and holidays

10.4%	22	Provision of sophisticated equipment's
100	210	Total

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4 presents respondents' views on how job hazards can be effectively controlled. According to the data: 42.8% of respondents believe that adequate compensation and timely payments are crucial for controlling job hazards. They argue that fair and competitive remuneration not only helps to retain skilled officers but also ensures that they are motivated and focused on their duties. Proper compensation can also reduce financial stress, which may otherwise distract officers from their responsibilities and increase their vulnerability to hazards. 28.5% of respondents suggested that recruiting additional police officers would help mitigate job hazards. Increasing the number of personnel can alleviate the burden on existing officers, allowing for better distribution of workloads and reducing the pressure on individuals. More officers would also enable more comprehensive coverage and quicker response times during incidents, thereby decreasing the likelihood of hazardous situations arising. 18.0% of respondents highlighted the importance of providing rest and holidays as a means to control job hazards. Adequate rest and time off are essential for maintaining officers' physical and mental well-being. Regular breaks help prevent burnout, reduce stress, and enhance overall performance. Ensuring that officers have sufficient downtime can improve their alertness and decision-making abilities, thereby reducing their susceptibility to accidents and hazards. 10.4% of respondents emphasized the need for the provision of sophisticated equipment for operations. Advanced equipment and technology can enhance the effectiveness and safety of police work. For instance, modern communication tools, protective gear, and surveillance systems can help officers perform their duties more efficiently and securely. Investment in such equipment can also improve operational readiness and minimize risks in high-stress situations. Interview submissions:

The participants expressed a unified perspective, asserting that the government should prioritize the welfare of police officers. They emphasized that this prioritization must include several key components to effectively enhance officer safety and performance: The participants highlighted the necessity of equipping police officers with modern safety gear and technology. This includes high-quality protective vests, helmets, non-lethal weapons, and advanced communication devices. Such equipment not only safeguards officers during potentially dangerous encounters but also enhances their ability to perform their duties efficiently and safely. Adequate protective gear is essential for mitigating risks and ensuring that officers can handle threats with greater confidence and security.

Among the participants, three of them also stressed the importance of providing comprehensive training on the use of modern weaponry. This includes not only firearms but also less-lethal options and tactical equipment. Regular and updated training ensures that officers are proficient in handling new technology and are prepared for a range of scenarios. Proper training helps reduce accidents and improves response effectiveness, which is crucial for maintaining safety during high-risk operations. Keeping police officers informed about the latest trends in criminal activity is vital for effective law enforcement. The participants suggested that ongoing education and briefings on emerging threats, criminal methods, and sophisticated tactics used by offenders are necessary. By staying current with these trends, officers can anticipate potential threats, adapt their strategies, and employ more effective countermeasures.

Summary/Conclusion:-

The study reveals that assault is a major job hazard faced by police officers. Additionally, a significant proportion of respondents identified communicable diseases and exposure to body fluids as another critical hazard. These findings are consistent with reports from previous studies and official sources. For instance, according to the Nigeria Police Force Press (2019), Chiemelie (2017), and Komolafe (2019), police officers have suffered severe injuries due to violent incidents. Notably, four officers from the IGP Intelligence Response Team (IRT) were gravely wounded with deep cuts on their heads and bodies. Furthermore, on July 2, bandits attacked and killed seven officers engaged in stop-and-search duties at Galadimawa Roundabout, Abuja. This attack followed an earlier incident where gunmen murdered two officers at a checkpoint in Abaji, Abuja, and stole their weapons.

The study also identifies a shortage of police manpower and operational equipment as major causes of job hazards. The data shows that a considerable percentage of respondents believe low literacy levels among officers contribute to these hazards. This finding aligns with the broader concern about workforce shortages in the Nigerian police force. Gift, Moses, and Charles (2019) using qualitative methods, highlight that police officers face various physical hazards, including dealing with victims, exposure to violence, adverse weather conditions, threats, and unpredictable

shift timings. They noted, however, that improvements in certain areas could mitigate these hazards. Participants in the study pointed out that inadequate knowledge or a lack of environmental awareness contributes significantly to these risks. Without a clear understanding of their surroundings, officers are more susceptible to danger.

The inadequacies within the police organizational and structural systems, coupled with the government's failure to meet expectations, such as recruiting well-educated officers, providing frequent training, and ensuring adequate compensation, have exacerbated the exposure of police officers to various environmental and job hazards. These shortcomings have negatively impacted the police force's ability to respond effectively to patrols and perform duties efficiently.

The current organizational framework of the police force often falls short in addressing the evolving challenges faced by officers. The lack of structural reforms and updates in response to contemporary policing demands has left officers ill-equipped to handle complex situations. Inadequate recruitment processes, which do not prioritize educational qualifications and relevant skills, contribute to a workforce that may lack the necessary expertise and critical thinking abilities required for modern policing. Therefore, failure to recruit educated officers with higher educational backgrounds and specialized skills has resulted in a workforce that may not be fully prepared to handle advanced technological tools and contemporary crime trends, thereby increasing their vulnerability to job hazards.

Based on the forgoing findings the study recommends the following:-

1. Assaults are caused by various factors; therefore, adequate training should be provided to police officers to expand their knowledge and address different job hazards effectively.
2. The recruitment of more educated personnel into the police force is necessary to address the shortage of officers and enhance the overall effectiveness of the force.
3. The provision and use of modern operational gadgets, such as drones for surveillance, should be implemented before embarking on operations to improve effectiveness and safety.
4. Adequate motivation increases courage, which is crucial for a rapid response to crime scenes. Therefore, the police service commission and the government should ensure that all police bonuses and allowances are paid promptly.
5. Conduct regular sensitization programs to educate officers on mitigating the impact of environmental hazards and improving their overall safety and performance.

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