

Place of Residence and Public Perception of the Police and Policing in Cross River South Senatorial District, Nigeria

Onyekachi OGUNKA¹ and Etta Oyen ETTA²

¹Medical Social Welfare Department, Abia State University Teaching Hospital Aba, Abia State, NIGERIA

²Department of Criminology and Security Studies University of Calabar, Calabar NIGERIA

[0160] Abstract

This study examined public perception on how the place of residence affects public perception of police and policing in Cross River State, Nigeria. Cross-sectional survey study design, involving the use of qualitative and quantitative methods was adopted. The instrument of data collection was questionnaire which comprised open and closed-ended questions and unstructured oral interview. A simple percentage method of data analysis was employed for the analysis of the research question while the chi-square (χ^2) statistics tool was employed to test the research hypothesis. The study revealed that public positive views of police and policing relates to place of residence. Based on the discoveries of the enquiry, the following suggestion is proffered: There is urgent need for the Police leadership to adopt proactive communication, positive media coverage, proper implementation of community policing, regular town hall meetings and strict disciplinary measures that could assist to reposition the image of the Nigeria Police and improve police public relation so as to encourage the populace to have confidence in the police. The policy implication of the study is that police service commission should improve on the poor police public interaction via procedural justice.

Key words: Negative/ Positive Perceptions, Place of Residence, Police Public Relationship. Public Perception,

1. Introduction

The views that citizens have about the police are important and should enhance interest in building a synergy for sustainable police public relation *vis-à-vis* effective and efficient police public interaction that is geared towards promoting the image of the Nigerian police for sustainable crime control. These views can influence the degree and type of interaction people have with the police and the degree of support provided to the police (Cao & Dai, 2006). Without public support, modern policing is bedeviled with difficulties in their modes of operation (Islam & Ali, 2008). Positive views of the police by citizens can encourage and promote a positive relationship with the police, which can improve the effectiveness of the police (Brown & Benedict, 2002). Negative views can lead to resentment, which can impede on the ability of the police to be effective formal agents of law & order (Godsmith, 2005). Policing views are therefore, important to explore and understand (Nalla & Madan, 2011 as cited in Khondaker, et al. 2013). Public's confidence in private and government institutions has been eroding for several decades and this poses challenges for policymakers (Foster & Frieden, 2017; Gallup, 2021; Sherman, 2002). However, Nwagboso et al. (2024) observed that lately, public policy as a major political instrument has failed terribly in ensuring desirable internal security administration in Nigeria. Consequently, public institutions require the public's confidence and assurance to carry out their missions, little wonder Pfister (2019) observes that trust and legitimacy are interdependent.

The police system has failed to develop any independent ideology of its own to participate in an effective manner to achieve the cherished goals of legal and procedural justice. The preservation of

fundamental freedom and the basic human values demand an effective role of the police and the public in the Nigerian setting so that the police become an effective instrument of social changes as well as the foundation of justice and fair play.

The Police organization has come to do nothing to develop any self-sufficient doctrine of its own to engage in an effective way to accomplish the revered objectives of social fairness and procedural justice. The preservation of indispensable liberty and the fundamental humankind beliefs demand an effective responsibility of the Police Force in the Nigerian setting so that it can prove to be a functional instrument of social changes as well as the bedrock of impartiality and uprightness.

Max Weber's Social Action Theory is the conceptual anchorage adopted for this research work. The underlying rationale for using this theory is that sociology is an all-inclusive scientific discipline of the instinctive interpretation of the "understandable" considerations of human actor attached to intrinsic proceedings in their complementary orientation within distinct social as well as cultural background. The semblance of this theory is on how practices moral principles, beliefs and standards, inspire or dispirit individual action on emergent issues oriented in its course such as the public perception of police and policing.

The propositions of Weberian social action theory are that: (a) Social action may be swayed by an action of the past, present or upcoming. (b) Necessity of subjective meaning (c) Social action necessitated the presence of another person and some action by him. (d) Social action is accustomed in its plan. Weber focused on the mutual attitude of social actors and on the "understandable" reasons of their actions which was tethered in procedural consideration, which account for countless of the distinction of his point of view to sociology Social action may be influenced by the action of the old, present-day and upcoming. So, social action is an outcome or an adjustment of some action of other individual or individuals.

Social action necessitated the presence of other individual and some action by him. This means that there can be no social action in severance. Thus social action is possible if there is another individual whose action or behaviour is persuading the giving individual to act in a particular way. In a social act, it is imperative that it should have an inner interpretation. An incomprehensive simulation devoid of any comprehension of the nature of act being copied is not social action. Max Weber's principal spotlights were on the intrinsic interpretation that human beings attach to their actions in their mutual attitude within specific social as well as historical contexts. Any way of action depleted of such understanding falls farther the sphere of competence of sociology. "Action is social" Weber says. According to Weber, it is action when humans give a certain interpretation to his conduct and the action is social when, by the explanation he gives it, it connects the way of acting of other person and is aligned towards their conduct.

For Weber, human action is social in so far as "the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it". Mere conduct metamorphoses into action when it obtains dealings with others and when it is purposeful, that is conformed in its course. The bare necessity is that the actor is conscious of what he or she is doing which can be examined in terms of their purpose, rationales and sensitivities on how they are practiced.

The justification or the applicability of this theory to the study is as follows. (a) That the public perception of police work and policing as negative or positive may be swayed by the police action of the old, present-day and the upcoming. (b) That the public perception of policing and police work as positive or negative necessitated the actuality of other person and some activity by him i.e. the activity of police and police authorities. This means that public perception of policing and police work cannot be done in isolation, it presupposes the action(s) of others. (c) That the public should attach a subjective meaning to the perception of policing and police work. This is because behaviour bereft of such meanings falls beyond the scope of sociology. Action is

social, Weber says it is action when man assigns a certain meaning to his conduct and action is social when by the meaning he gives it. (d) Another applicability of this theory to this study is on how customs, values, beliefs, and norms inspire or dispirit individual action on emergent issues oriented in its course such as in the variable raised in the study of policing and police work.

There is an issue of policing and police work view assessment between the urban, semi-metropolitan and rural residence and their opinion of policing and police work. Earlier research such as (Wu, 2010; Olong and Agbonika, 2013; Cao and Zhao, 2005; and Alemika, 1988) among others suggest that public opinion of policing and police work is rooted in many factors, relatively little is known about how place of residence influence policing and police work. Although, there exist a great deal of information on the masses perception of law enforcement and police work on variables such as civility, trust, confidence, and corruption in Nigeria as a whole and Cross River State to be precise, but none has been carried out on the public perception of how the place of residence affect public perception of policing and police work in Cross River State of Nigeria. This is the knowledge gap this work set out to fill.

Police research personnel's have observed that dwellers from dissimilar culture environment have different values, disposition, and convictions regarding the appropriateness of Police proceedings, vis-à-vis policing and this research will be important for detecting these cultural differences for wide reaching reforms. Generally, the findings made are expected to broaden our literature and enlarge upon our current understanding of police and policing in Nigeria with deep rooted efforts in improving the poor police public relationship. Thus the general research public shall benefit from the analysis which the study shall generate. Hence, this study will be of tremendous importance in that, it shall contribute to extant information on the subject of Police and policing with specificity on improving police public interaction *via* procedural justice in Cross River State in particular and Nigeria at large. The question is does people's place of residence affect public perception of the police? It is on this background that this study sought to examine how the place of residence relates to public perceptions of police and policing in Cross River South Senatorial District, Nigeria. The study hypothesized that Public negative views of police and policing does not relate to place of residence. This paper is organized into five sections. The first section is the introduction, followed by literature review, which is the second section. The methodology is described in the third section, while data analysis are reported in the fourth section. The discussion of the findings and concluding remarks are presented in the fifth section. (Opara, et al, 2023).

2. Review of Related Literature

There have been a lot of studies based on the global crime victimization study, this study among other things sought to know whether an individual felt the Police Force in their state performed effectively in managing infractions of the law. Van Kesteren, Mayhew, and Nieuwveerta (2000) observed that discernment of the Police Force performing an excellent work in controlling criminal act was greater in Canada and the U.S. when compared with other European nation countries. In a follow up study, Van Dijk *et al.* (2008) also revealed that they believed that the Police Force were performing an excellent work in managing criminality differs across the 30 countries observed in European states. Relatedly, Malone and Dammert (2021) observed that trust in policing was lowest in countries where the police were perceived to be ineffective and very corrupt

Empirical review of police and policing work show that in Africa specifically Nigeria; scholars such as Ezikeudu *et al.* (2024a), in their study titled "Views of Police and Policing: An examination of public views of patrol method of crime prevention in Southern Senatorial District Cross River State, Nigeria". The research discovered that there is a strong significant relationship between public positive views of police patrol technique of policing for crime prevention and police activity. The analysis showed the

correlation coefficient of 0.492 indicating the existence of relationships between public positive views of police patrol technique of crime prevention are likely to enhance policing and police activity.

Amongst the foremost account of Police and Policing work was Bittner's (1974) assessment of policing research incorporating that of Reiss (1971) and Niederhoffer (1967), in the United States that engendered the viewpoint that "when an individual come across at what (sic) policeman really accomplish (sic) individual uncovers that criminal law enforcement is rather what the majority of them do with the rate of recurrence situated someplace involving practically never and extremely infrequently (Bittner, 1974). Banton (1964) observed that the "British Police Force are somewhat inconsequential in the enforcement of rule "additionally the police use up more occasion executing a great variety of philanthropic responsibilities. Though not significantly useful to individuals looking forward to understanding what policing reasonably is? The remark of Bittner (1974) adequately exemplifies the extensiveness and extent of the police task? No individual predicament subsists, or that you can think of, about which it is safe to say with conclusiveness that this undoubtedly could not turn out to be the appropriate dealing of the Police Force.

Brown and Hobbs (2023) noted that individual and group experiences of the police can affect people's trust in the police. In the same vein, Brown and Hobbs (2023) also observed that there are multiple barriers to trust and confidence in the police, which include negative public perceptions of the police, misconduct and police performance and negative media coverage of the police, police Procedural justice. Cao *et al.* (2006) observed that public perception of locale disorganisation as well as discourteousness, have a considerable relationship in explaining resident opinion of Police Force. More so, Cao *et al.* (2006) also observed that interconnected circumstances inside urban and rural localities are significant towards the articulation of the extent of person's contentment with the Police Force.

Brown and Benedict (2002) observed that a number of enquiries revealed that rural populace has less positive outlook of the Police Force than inhabitants of urban and semi-urban areas. However, Ayodele and Aderinto's (2014) study found that rural inhabitants have a more favourable disposition of the Police Force than do their urban counterparts. Additionally, the author's findings also indicated that despite the fact that moderately fewer unlawful acts take place in the rural regions, but however residence of rural areas reported the highest number of crimes than do their urban counterparts.

Vigne *et al.*, (2017) observed that regions with high incidence of unlawful act as well as suspicion have a propensity to be individuals who are profoundly policed, where police employed strategy such as stop-and - search that damaged their association with the populace they are tasked constitutionally to protect. Empirical review of stop and search in Africa specifically Nigeria; scholars such Ezikeudu et al (2024b), in their study titled "Perception of Police and Policing: An Investigation of People's Perception of Police Stop and Search Method of Crime Prevention in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between public positive views of police stop-and-search method of crime prevention and police and policing work. The study concluded that, virtually all the examinees generally supported the use of stop-and-searches as a method of policing and police work *vis a vis* crime prevention, while reiterating that the manner, and attitude of the officers must change and that there should be reason given for every stop-and-search if it has to be an effective method of policing. Additionally, the findings of Vigne *et al.* (2014) noted that the result of the above can be extensive thus: mistrust of the penal proceedings, disinclination to collaborate with the Police Force (which is a *sine qua non* in police public relationship-emphasis mine), and a cynical view of law that can predispose people to crime and victimization.

3. Research Methodology

The study adopted cross sectional survey designed. This designed is considered appropriate for this study because it has the capacity to accurately gather necessary information within a limited time frame. The designed is economical and focuses on studying large and small populations with emphasis on relative

incidence, distribution, and interrelation of sociological and psychological variable (Isangedeghi, Joshua, Asim & Ekuri, 2014 cited in Ezikeudu, et al, 2024c).

This study took place in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State. The choice of this area is as a result of the appalling and exacerbating state of poor police public interaction in the area and the researcher's familiarity and proximity to the area. The population of the study comprises of all the adult residents in seven (7) Local Government Areas in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State. This specifically is made up of male and female who are 18 years and above by age. Using the 2023 projected population of Cross River State, the population of the seven Local Government Areas that makes up Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State is 1,270,420. Thus, the target population of the study is put at 1,270,420. The study did not possibly cover all the people in Cross River Southern Senatorial Region, against this backdrop, the researcher decided to pick out a sample through which data were collected. Therefore, a sample size of 840 respondents which included 420 men and 420 women were purposively selected from five (5) Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Southern Senatorial Region of Cross River State. The choice of this area is as a result of the appalling and exacerbating state of poor police public interaction in the study area and the researcher's familiarity and proximity to the area.

The study adopted multi-stage probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The purposive sampling technique was used to select five (5) Local Government Areas (LGAs), and random sampling technique were used to select the political wards studied, and accidental/convenience sampling technique were used to hand-pick the individual respondents. The purposive sampling technique was used because it gives the researcher the opportunity of interacting with the respondents in other to ensure that such respondents are intelligent enough to provide firsthand information which is needed to enhance the study. Consequently, the random sampling technique was chosen because of its capacity to provide a proportional representation of subjects from the different units or department of the population.

As stated earlier, Cross River South Senatorial District is made up of seven local government areas from which five local government areas were purposively selected. Thus: Calabar Municipal, Calabar South, Akpabuyo, Bakassi, and Biase were selected. Three wards were purposively selected Local Government Areas were selected using hat and draw simple random sampling technique. The researchers picked and not return from the hat, A total of fifteen (15) respondents were selected in each of the three randomly selected wards in the five selected Local Government Area. Thus: bringing the total number of examinees to Eight Hundred and Forty. Accidental/convenience sampling technique was used to choose the individual respondents. Since the study was a qualitative and quantitative research, the primary and secondary sources were used for data gathering. Primary source provide raw information and first-hand evidence while Secondary sources provide second-hand information and commentary from other researchers.

This academic work was restricted to examining the public perception of Police and Policing in Southern Senatorial Region of Cross River State. A sample size of 840 respondents which included 420 men and 420 women purposively selected from (5) local Government Areas of Southern Senatorial Region of Cross River State was used. The research subjects comprise persons from 18 years and above residing in Cross River South Senatorial District. This investigation focused on intelligible men and women, the married, unmarried, widow/widowed. The conducting of the questionnaire and unstructured oral interview was carried out on week days and it lasted for a period of five (5) weeks.

The tool for the gathering of data for this inquiry was primarily structured and unstructured questionnaire and unstructured oral interview guide. The rationale for this is that the research made use of mixed method, that is, the investigator Incorporated components of qualitative and quantitative perspective for the purpose of comprehensive discernment and authentication of the variable studied. Before the real administration of questionnaire, pretest of questionnaire was carried out. This helped to test the design for the study and also give the researcher the opportunity to know the peoples attitude toward the survey as well as their several sensitivity to some of the questions. The pretest was carried out

on a sample of 30 respondents outside the study population in order to establish accuracy of content and to ensure that the interviewees and investigator had the similar understanding of the issues under study.

To establish validity for the study, questions in the unstructured oral interview and questionnaire guide were pre-tested on 30 respondents outside the research population. Evaluation is done by checking whether the questions are clear, and unambiguous before it was administered on the sample research population. Face validity were validated by utilizing resource persons in estimate and assessment in the school of education and the supervisor. The resource person and supervisor endorsed that, the apparatus is face valid and consequently be employed for the inquiry. The survey research followed all the required ethical procedures in social sciences as regards the gathering of information and communication of the research findings. The researcher obtained informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and data protection by attaching a formal letter to the questionnaire schedule and also the questions raised by the researcher in both questionnaire and oral unstructured interview schedule were the questions that only addressed the variable raised by the researcher in order to address the topic under study as this is aimed at avoiding deceptive practices. Consequently the researcher remained objective and impartial in all aspects and phases of the study to promote the principle of objectivity. The researcher did not introduce his subjective feelings and biases to bear into the research design, selection of respondents, communication of the results and findings, and writing and as well as asking questions.

The tool for the gathering of data for this inquiry is primarily structured and unstructured questionnaire and unstructured oral interview guide. The data from the unstructured oral interview was categorized into themes in order to make meaning from the interview conducted. In view of this, each of the themes was discussed and illustrative quote identified and pulled out to support and elucidate the qualitative data. Data from the closed ended questions from the questionnaire were tabulated which offered the bases for the hypothesis set to be tested. Thus, both qualitative and quantitative analyses employed complemented each other. This study utilized simple percentage for transforming and summarizing the raw data from the field into a form that enabled straightforward elucidation. Chi-square analysis was also adopted for determining the degree of statistical significance of the place of residence and public perceptions of police and policing in Cross River South Senatorial District of Nigeria. (Opara, et al, 2024)

4. Data presentation, analysis and discussion of the findings

Test of Hypothesis. In this section, efforts were made to test the hypotheses stated at the introduction section with a significance level of 0.05 and the following decision rule was made: 1: the null hypothesis should be rejected if the calculated chi-square value is greater than the critical (table) value. 2: the null hypothesis should be accepted if calculated chi-square value is less than the critical (table) value

H₀: Public negative views of policing and police work do not relate to place of residence.

H₁: Public positive views of policing and police work relate to place of residence

Table 1(a): RESPONDENTS' VIEWS ON PLACE OF RESIDENCE AND ITS EFFECT ON POLICE WORK

Views	Male (n=420)	Female (n=420)	Total (n=840)
Agreed	322	340	662
Disagree	86	66	152
Don' t know	12	14	26
	420	420	840

Source: Authors fieldwork (2024).

Table 1(b): SUMMARY OF CHI-SQUARE ON PUBLIC POSITIVE VIEWS POLICING AND POLICE WORK AND PLACE OF RESIDENCE

Value	df	Value	Sign.
Pearson Chi-squares	620.684 ^a	4	.774
Likelihood Ratio	378.827	4	
Linear-by-Linear Association	346.213	1	

a. 3 cells (33.3%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 0.60

The computed value is higher than the codified value, as far as the hypothesis is concerned hence H_0 is rejected and H_1 accepted. The findings show that inhabitants of the rural area held favourable views of policing and police work than their urban and semi-urban counterparts. The findings further revealed that the factor associated with this is that most of those living in the rural areas had no formal police contact (i.e. contact initiated by the police or by the public) compared with their urban or semi-urban counterparts.

Analysis of the Research Questions

Table 2 RESPONDENTS' VIEWS ON PLACE OF RESIDENCE AND ITS EFFECTS ON POLICE AND POLICING WORK

Views	Male (n=420)	%	Female n=420	%	Total (n=840)	%
Agree	286	68.1	272	64.8	558	66.4
Disagree	100	23.8	107	25.5	207	24.6
Don' t know	34	8.1	41	9.8	75	8.9
Reasons adduced						
No formal police initiated contact	161	38.3	178	42.4	339	40.4
No formal public initiated contact	125	29.8	94	22.4	219	26.1

Source: Authors fieldwork (2024).

Field data from Table 2 in respect of respondents' views on whether place of residence affects public perception of Police and policing work were computed using unstructured oral interview guide and questionnaire item members was administered to 840 respondents. Among the total respondents, (66.48%) were of the view that place of residence affects public perception of Police and policing work. Furthermore, (24.6%) of the total population disagreed that the place of residence does not affect public perception of police, while (8.9%) of the total population reported don't know.

The reasons adduced by the respondents who were of the view that place of residence affects public perception of the Police are, (40.4%) of the entire examinees stated no formal police initiated contact, while (26.1%) of the entire examinees stated no formal public initiated contact. The emerging implication is that those residents in urban and semi-urban areas had more police and public initiated contact with the police than those living in the rural areas and at the end were totally dissatisfied with the outcome of the contact which more or less affected their perception of policing and police work. The policy implication of this finding is that single, short-term interactions with officers can influence public attitudes towards the police. Consequently, police authorities should design programmes and policies that will lay much emphasis on ensuring that officers interact more with members of the public in a “procedurally just” way as this is likely to increase trust and positive perception of the police. Male oral interview respondent drove home the point thus:

When I was in the village, before I gain admission into university, I have not had any contact with the police; in fact rarely will you see a police officer in the village. So I am not in the position to judge whether they are good or bad because I have had nothing to do with them (a male interview respondent, personal communication, February 20, 2020).

The implication of the above is that individuals who have had contact with the police whether the police or the public initiated contact and are dissatisfied would be more hesitant to cooperate with the Police. Invariably, this worsens the already poor police public relationship.

Discussion of Findings

There exist lofty community awareness in the level of policing and police work as evidenced in the data collected. This may not be unconnected to the police as an agency that is duty bound to control, uncovering and preclusion of crimes, the enforcement of laws and command, the safety of life and belongings and range of crime act and rules with which they superintend. Furthermore, if the populace does not accept as true that the Police Force are reasonable, efficient, trustworthy among others, the Police Force drop authenticity and masses connection among the police force and other institutions of policing be continually battered.

This study shows that 66.4% of the total respondents were of the view that place of residence affects public perception of policing and police work. This study shows that those living in rural areas held more constructive perception of the policing and police work put side by side to their urban and semi-urban counterparts. This corroborates the findings of Ayodele and Aderinto (2014) who observed that rural residents view and perceive police more favourable than their urban counterparts. The factor associated with this as revealed by the study in Table 2 is that, most of those living in the rural areas had no formal police contact (i.e. contact initiated by the police or by the public) than their urban or semi-urban counterparts who had more police contacts and at the end were dissatisfied with the outcome of the contact which more or less affected their perception of policing and police work. The implication of these findings is that those who distrust, fear, or are dissatisfied with the level policing and police work would be more hesitant to cooperate with the police. Additionally, people who expect not to receive efficient and effective service from the police might not contact the police. Public distrust of policing and police work invariably reduces the capability of the Police Force to manage crime. This is because populaces who are discontented by the Police Force are improbable to contact them or even assist policeman with evidence concerning unlawful behavior in their neighbourhood. It is believed that sharing of information between the public and police is an indispensable precondition towards effectual policing and police work. One can adduce that unconstructive discernment of policing and law enforcement work plays a part towards reduction of Police Force competence in addition to efficiency. The policy implication of these findings is that the police authorities should as a compelling issue evaluates the police code of ethics in addition to

enforcing same to increase police effectiveness, as a formal agent of law and order. The policy implication of this finding is that single, short-term interactions with officers can influence public attitudes towards the police. Consequently, police authorities should design programmes and policies that will lay much emphasis on ensuring that officers interact more with members of the public in an efficient and effective procedural manner as this is likely to increase trust and positive perception of the police. This effective procedural manner could be achieved *via* giving people the opportunity to express their own side of the story and not shot them down while communicating, treating individuals fairly and with dignity because everybody has worth and integrity; making rational and impartial assessments; and always demonstrate that the objectives and actions of the police and policing work are associated with community values, as well as being approachable and friendly in all dealings with the public. Through this, the police will earn the confidence of the people which will trigger “good” public police relations which is a *sine qua non* to policing and police work. Furthermore, police have to be worried as regards to how much they are perceived *via* the community to enable the authority put up a very strong programme and services for change.

5. Conclusion/Recommendations

The enquiry was organised to examine the people’s perception of policing and police work in Southern Senatorial Region of Cross River State as well as to test if there was a significant relationship in the hypotheses set. A total of 840 respondents which included 420 males and 420 females were surveyed. The manner in which the community views the Police Force is extremely vital. Positive perception of policing and Police Officer’s work is essential for effective as well as efficient police public relation *vis-à-vis* crime prevention.

The study also shows that place of residence affects public perception of policing and police work. This is evidenced in table in Table 2. This study shows that residents of rural region held more encouraging perception of policing in addition to police work than do their urban and semi-urban counterparts. The factor associated with this as was revealed in the study in table 3 is that most of those living in the rural areas had no formal police contact.

Finally, this study concludes that place of residence affects public perception of policing and police work. Persons living in rural areas hold more positive perception of policing and police work than do their urban and semi-urban counterparts. The factor associated with this as revealed in the study is that most of those living in the rural areas had no formal police contact than their urban or semi-urban residents.

Based on the discoveries of the enquiry, the following suggestion is proffered: There is urgent need for the Police Service Commission to adopt policies and programmes that could assist to reform and reposition the image of the Nigeria Police and improve police public relation so as to encourage the populace to have confidence and trust in the police to ensure the protection of lives and property. This can be achieved by designing programmes and policies quarterly that will lay much emphasis on ensuring that officers interact more with members of the public in a “procedurally just” way as this is likely to increase trust and positive perception of the police. This effective procedural justice could be achieved *via* giving people the opportunity to express their own side of the story and not shot them down while communicating, treating individuals fairly and with dignity because everybody has worth and integrity; making rational and impartial assessments; and always demonstrate that the objectives and actions of the police and policing work are associated with community values, as well as being approachable and friendly in all dealings with the public

However, as with other research studies, this study is not without its limitations. This academic work was undertaken in Cross River State; however, information obtained only relies on information gotten from the residents of the Southern Senatorial Region of the State. Hence, precaution should be applied in mainstreaming conclusions to inhabitants of other territories in the nation (Creswell, 2009; Lanier and

Briggs, 2014). Also data collected was on perceptual level from the study participants. It is recommended that future research should address Socio-economic status of rural/ urban residence and people's perception of police work. Additionally, it is recommended that further research to address more objective data collecting techniques to foster accuracy, precision and to minimise the avoidance of bias. Also, future research should examine how police agencies should ameliorate the poor police public relationship. However, despite this limitation, the findings made have provided more penetration into police public relationship and are expected to broaden our literature and enlarge upon our current understanding of police and policing in Nigeria. , it shall contribute to extant information on the subject of Police and policing in Cross River State exceptionally and Nigeria at large.

References

- Alemika, E. (1988). Policing and perceptions of police in Nigeria. *Police studies*, 11: 161-176.
- Ayodale, J. O and Aderinto, A. A. (2014). Public confidence in the police and crime reporting practices of victims in Lagos, Nigeria: A mixed methods study. *International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences*, 9(1): 46-63.
- Banton, M. (1964). *The policeman in the community*. Tavistock, London, 239p.
- Bittner, D. H. (1974). Florence Nightingale in pursuit of Wille Sutton: A theory of the police. In: X. Jacob editor, the potential from reform of criminal justice, 3:233-268. Beverly Hills, Sage, California, 235p.
- Brown, B. and Benedict, W. (2002). Perception of the police: Past findings, methodological issues, conceptual, issues, and policy implications. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*, 25: 543-580.
- [Brown, R., & Hobbs, A. \(2023\). Trust in the police. UK parliament post. Postnote 693](#)
- Cao, L. and Dai, M. (2006). Confidence in the police: where does Taiwan rank in the world? *Asian Criminology*, 1: 71-84.
- Cao, L. and Zhao, J. (2005). Confidence in the police in Latin America. *Journal of Criminal justice*, 33: 403-412.
- Cao, L., Frank, J and Cullen, F. T. (1996). Race, community context and confidence in police: *American Journal of Police*, 15, 3-22.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods*. 3rd edition. SAGE Publication, Inc., Thousand Oaks, California, 115p.
- Foster, C., & Frieden, J. (2017). Crisis of trust: Socio-economic determinants of European's confidence in government. *European Union Politics*, 18(4), 511–535. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116517723499>
- Ezikeudu, C.C., Opara, I. J., Okorie, C., Edet, F. F., Eja, T. R., Onyema, O. A., Akwaji, F. N., Njoku, R. A., Abunimye, S. B., Bassey, U.S., Odinka, G. E., & Isokon, B. (2024a). Views of police and policing: An examination of public views of patrol method of crime prevention in Southern Senatorial District Cross River State, Nigeria. *Journal of Ecohumanism*, 3(5), 1235-1248.
- Ezikeudu, C. C., Opara, I. J., Eteng, F. O., Isokon, B., Uquetan, U. I., Ayamba, I. A., , Okorie, C., Ebegbulem, J. C., Edet, F. F., Bassey, U. S., Odinka, G. E., & Onyema, O. A. (2024b). Perception of police and policing: An investigation of people's perception of police stop and search method of crime prevention in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria. *Journal of Ecohumanism*, 3(5), 1215-1234.
- Ezikeudu, C. C., Opara, I. J., Ariche, C. K., Okorie, C., Amalu, N. S., Isokon, B., Iwara, I. E., Onyema, O. A., Ekpoudo, A., Odigbo, B. E., Njoku, R. A., Iwuanyanwu, E. C., & Ukandu, N. E. (2024c). Amnesty policy inconsistency and the re- emergence of militant groups in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. *Pakistan Journal of Life & Social Sciences*. 22(1),
- Gallup. (2021). Confidence in institutions. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/poll/1597/ConfidenceInstitutions.aspx>
- Godsmith, A. (2005). Police reform and the problem or trust. *Theoretical Criminology*, 9(4): 443-470. Igbinovia, P. E. (1982). The police in trouble: administrative and organizational problems in the Nigerian police force. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, 28(2): 334-372.
- Isangedighi, A. J., Joshua, M. T; Asim, A. E. and Ekari, E. E. (2004). *Fundamentals of Research and Statistics in Education and Social Services*. University of Calabar Press, Calabar, 32p.
- Islam, N, & Ali, M. (2008). A study on service quality of the Bangladesh police. *Global Journal of Business Excellence*, 1(1): 1-8.
- Kelling, G., Pate, A., Dieckman, D. and Brown, C. (1974). The Kansas City preventive patrol experiment: technical report. Police Foundation, Washington DC, 65p.

- Khondaker, I., Lambert, G., & Wu, Y. (2013). Perception of the police in two nations: An exploratory study of policing views among Bangladeshi and U.S. College students. *Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1 (2): 33-58.
- Lanier, M. M., and Briggs, L. T. (2014). *Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology*. Oxford University Press, New York, 109p.
- Malone, M.F.T., & Dammert, L. (2021). The police and the public: Poling practices and public trust in Latin America. *Policing and Society*, 31(4), 418-433. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2020.1744600>
- Niederhoffer, A. (1967). *Behind the shield: The Police in Urban Society*. Doubleday, New York, 34p.
- Nwagboso, C. I., Ezikeudu, C. C., Nwagboso, N. S., Agbor, U. I., Ebegbulem, J. C., Okorie, C., Adams, J. A., Akah, A. U., Bassey, U. S., Obi, N. N., Ekpo, S.-O., Onyema, O. A., & Egba, V. J. (2024). Public policy and internal security sector governance challenges: a situational study of some economic development indicators. *Journal of Governance and Regulation*. 13(2),
- Olong, M. A. and Agbonika, J. A. (2013). Reawakening the state police controversy in Nigeria: need for rethinking. *International Journal of Asia Social Sciences*, 3(11): 2307-2314.
- Opara, I. J., Ezikeudu, C.C., Eteng, F. O., Okorie, C., Nzewi, B. N., Akwaji, F. N Uzomba, C. I., Eja, T. R., Uquetan, U. I., Edet, F. F., Isokon, B., & Iwuchukwu, G. N. (2024). Multinational Corporations and the Development of Oil-Bearing Communities in Imo State, Nigeria: Addax Petroleum Development Nigeria Ltd. In Perspective. *Journal of Ecohumanism*, 3(5), 1267-1285. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62754/joe.v3i5.3968>
- Opara, I. J., Eteng, F.O., Ezikeudu, C. C., Okorie, C., Uzomba, C. I., AGBOR, U. I., Emeka J (2023). Poor healthcare delivery amidst petroleum wealth: The pathetic situation of oil-bearing communities in Imo State, Nigeria. *Res Militaris (social science journal)*. Resmilitaris.net 13(3), 1592 - 1606
- Pfister, S. (2019). The influence of public corruption and human values on trust in the police: An European cross-national perspective. *Kyiv-Mohyla Law and Politics Journal*, 5(1), 119-140. <https://doi.org/10.18523/kmlpj189993.2019-5.119-140>
- Reiss, A. (1971). *The police and the public*. Yale University Press, New Haven, 44p.
- Sherman, L. W. (2002). Trust and confidence in criminal justice. *National Institute of Justice Journal*, 248, 22–31. [ojp.g/pdffiles1/jr000248e.pdf](http://pdffiles1/jr000248e.pdf)
- Van Dijk, J., Vanketeren, J., and Smit, P. (2008). *Criminal victimization in international perspective: key findings from the 2004-2005 ICVS and EU ICS*. The Hague, Boom legal Publishers, Netherlands, 65p.
- Van Kesteren, J., Mayhew, P., & Nieubeerta, P. (2000). *Criminal victimization in seventeen industrialized countries: key findings from the 2000 international crime victims' survey*. The Hague, Netherlands: Ministry of Justice, 61p.
- Wigne, N. L; Fountaine, J. and Dwivedi, A. (2017). How do people in high-crime, low-income communities view the police? Retrieved from www.urban.org. on 26th September, 2018.
- Wu, Y. (2010). College students evaluation of policing performance: A comparison of Chinese and Americans. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 38: 773-780.

Biographical Note

Onyekachi OGUNKA, is Chief Medical Social Welfare Officer in the Medical Social Welfare Department, Abia State University Teaching Hospital, Aba, Abia State, NIGERIA. The author's area of specialization is Criminal Justice System and Social Medical Welfare Services. E-mail:ogunkakachi@gmail.com

Etta Oyen ETTA, Ph. D., is a Lecturer in the Department of Criminology and Security Studies, University of Calabar, Calabar NIGERIA. The author's area of specialization is Policing and Criminology Email: Etta4018@gmail.com