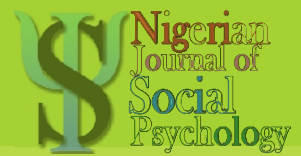


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Public Trust: A Tool for Building Democratic Policing in South-East Nigeria

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Abstract

Trust is one of the essential tools between the public and social institutions. The nature of police work suggests that the police ought to build a strong bridge of trust with the public so that there will be free flow of information. In Nigeria, there seem to be lack of trust between the police and the public which leads to seeming uncontrollable crime and criminal activities in the country. A previous study in Ghana suggested police reform as predictor of trustworthiness. However, no study has investigated public trust as a tool for building democratic policing in Nigeria. Thus, this study investigated Public Trust as a tool for Building Democratic Policing in South-East. Mixed method research design was adopted for the study. The general population of the study was 23,926,683. The target population of the study was 40480 from where a sample size of 873 was selected. Multi stage sampling technique was adopted for the study. The fishbowl method was used in selecting three out of the five states in South-East Nigeria. The local government areas in each of the selected states were stratified into urban and rural and in each of the strata, one local government area was selected. The same procedure was used in selecting the communities. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire and In-depth Interview (IDI) guide. The questionnaire data were processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and graphic illustrations were used for data analysis. The qualitative data were processed using QDA Miner software application. The stated hypothesis was tested using ANOVA It was found that there is no public trust on the police because the police easily expose their informants and use brutal force in the discharge of their duties. The study recommended that the police should be more accountable to the public and eschew brutal force to attract public respect as deterrents to criminal behaviours in the society.

Key words: Public, Trust, Building, Democratic, Policing, rights.

Introduction

Scholars in the field of police have noted that if one wants to know how democratic a country is, one should take a look at the relationship that exists between the police and the public. Essentially, what makes an effective policing is anchored on the information flow from the public to the police. Giving out information on crime and criminals no doubt endangers the informants who of course are the general public. It thus suggests that trust must be an essential peel both the police and public must take to achieve effective policing. Trust is said to be one of the essential factors in achieving democratic policing. Myhill and Quinton (2011) notes that trust and shared values were found to be the key aspect of legitimacy.. Trust suggests one of

the functional prerequisite in democratic process As noted in literature, the procedural justice system which ultimately builds democratic policing is encapsulated in four principles: police officers treating people with respect and dignity, making decisions fairly based on facts, giving people “voice” or chance to tell their own side of the story and acting in a way that encourages community members to believe that they will be treated with goodwill in the future. Apparently, when these principles are maintained, citizens will willingly submit their loyalty and cooperation to the police.

Umar in Odinkalu (2008) notes that the police in advanced democracies are concerned about the causes and effect of the poor perception of police and its performance on the part of the public, but the Nigeria Police seem to fuel it by their continued human rights abuses, and disrespect to the principles of democratic principles. This earned them the position of the worst violators of human rights in Nigeria as the police in Nigeria have not only been a source of danger to the ordinary citizen but an obvious risk to public safety and security. The seeming obvious relevance of democratic policing in a democratic society underscores the need to involve the people in social control network. The police ought to build a strong bridge of trust and cooperation with the public. Such trust is anchored in democratic policing processes and procedural justice system Trust is deeply embedded in social relationships. It involves tacit (or explicit) expectations that others will behave in predictable ways.

A key element of trust is the expectations that actors within relationship have for one another ranging from the general (that the behaviour of the other will serve to maintain and replicate the assumed natural and moral social order) to the specific (that the other will be technically competent in the roles assigned to them within the relationship and within the broader system it is part of, and that they will carry out their fiduciary obligations; that is, place the interest of ourselves above their own) (Jackson and Bradford, 2008). Public trust in police can enhance police effectiveness and improve on democratic policing processes (Iyons, 2002; Sunshine and Tyler, 2003; National Research Council, 2004). When the public views police as democratic, the judgment that the ordinary citizens make about the rightfulness, dedication and shared ethical framework upholds (Six, 2003). In a situation where the public views the police as trustworthy, public cooperation with police is more likely to occur. Yet, such trust cannot be taken for granted. Trust is fragile due to its highly contingent character in most social relations. Its extent and very existence depends upon a range of factors both within and outside police control (Goldsmith, 2005).

In Nigeria, the relationship between the police and the public is largely characterized by mutual distrust and hostility. The general causes of the negative opinion on police by the public include the repressive nature of enforcement under authoritarian colonial and post-colonial government generally inefficiently of the police due to inadequate facilities, corruption poor remuneration based on condition of service insensitivity and incivility towards the public by the police (Presidential Committee on Police Reform in Odinkalu, 2008)

Tyler’s work on procedural justice in the United States and recent studies in United Kingdom cited in Bradford and Jackson (2012) have found out that individuals who trust in the procedural fairness of the police tend to accord it high level of trust and are also more likely to cooperate with officers. Bradford and Jackson (2012) further note that cooperating with officers can be seen as a part of achieving democratic policing and legitimacy. When individuals trust the motives of an institution and its representatives; when they believe that it has their interest at heart, is on their side and share their own values, they are more likely to engage with it and assist it. By doing so, they reaffirm its role and place obligations on it that they expect to be

fulfilled. Individuals also assign themselves a role that comes with its own rules and responsibilities. The source further states that conversely, if people do not trust that the police have their interest at heart and believe there is a wide gap between the values of the two parties which could be evidenced by themselves or people, they know that they have been treated unfairly by officers in the past, they may withdraw from engagement and fail to offer assistance. They conclude that their action (or lack of action) generate a quite different set of role-relationship between police and public and serve to delegitimize the power relationship.

The nature and relationship between the police and public were not cordial just as the police use excessive force to assert their authority which makes the public to be contemptuous of the public (Dambazan, 2007). Jackson (2003) concurs to this position. The author states that, Police trust in developing countries tend to vary from what obtains in advance countries like the United States and the United Kingdom. Bradford et al (2014) note that societies with widespread social and economic inequality such as South Africa often have fewer resources and more substantial problems of criminality. Such orientation presents distrust and discordance between the police and the public. In Ghana, part of the reasons for the establishment of vigilante outfit is because of public distrust on the police. The same servo obtains in Nigeria where in literature it was found out that the Nigeria public has neither trust nor confidence in the Nigeria Police Force and alliteratively is to organize security outfit in various communities (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2004; Odinkalu, 2008; Ugwuoke, 2010; and Dambazau, 2007).

A study conducted by the Centre for Criminal Justice Research and Education cited in Alemika and Chukwuma (2004) indicated that 65% of those interviewed had little or no confidence in police because of the undemocratic approach the police adopt in dealing with the people. The principal reasons why trustworthy police are desirable lies in the simple fact that their position with respect to the ordinary citizens is one of power and control- their powers, mandate, training and traditions make them inherently offensive (Gianakis and Davis in Goldsmith, 2005) Nooteboom (2003) asserts that in turn, the failure of police to be answerable to their acts and to act responsively to the concerns of the community at large- the two key elements of police accountability- is disastrous for public trust in police. It engenders distrust in them and establishes a lasting legacy of being untrustworthy.

Tyler (2011) affirmed that trust and legitimacy are vital for the maintenance of democratic policing. Trust will influence decision to summon the police to a specific situation, how the action of officers are real and understood and what implications are drawn from them. The perceived legitimacy of the police might also have an impact on public readiness to comply with instruction or, again whether the police are involved as the proper body to deal with a specific issue. By engaging in such actions, individuals are not only acting on their trust in the police and reproducing its legitimacy. They are also engaged in acts of social control that bridge the gap between formal and informal mechanism (Carr, 2003).

Mclean and Worden (2014) carried out a study entitled “Assessing Police Performance in Citizens Encounters: Police Legitimacy and Management Accountability in Schenectady”. The study made use of 1800 respondents as the sample size. The survey adopted items identical with those used in the previous survey research. The study found that in Schenectady and Syracuse, two-thirds to three-quarters of the sampled population were in agreement with the statement that the police can be trusted to make good decisions, that they have confidence in the police and that they are proud with their police. Similarly, a study conducted by the Centre

for Criminal Justice Research and Education cited in Alemika and Chukwuma (2004) indicated that 65% of those interviewed had little or no confidence in police.

Again Tankabe (2010) undertook a study entitled Testing the effect of Public Experience of Corruption in Ghana. Respondents for the study were chosen using a multistage sampling technique which selected a sample of 450 households across different census enumeration areas. One of the relationships tested in the study: effect of corruption on perception of police trustworthiness, the study revealed police reform effort as the strongest predictor of the level of trustworthiness. Thus, the experiences of corrupt practices involving other citizens lessened the likelihood that the police would be judged trustworthy. The findings suggests that the seemingly unaccepted police practice has created wave of discordance and distrust to a point where the public ask for police reforms

The researcher's choice of South-East as the area of study is dictated by the Human Rights Report that Nigeria in 2015 ranked 10th as the world worst human right offenders (Benjo 2015). Affirming the report, Avocate Sans Frontiledes; a non-governmental organization based in France has identified Anambra and Enugu States Commands of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) as possessing the highest record of human right abuse in Nigeria. The organization notes that out of 50 cases of torture and human rights abuses, 40 had to do with gunshot wounds. It was further reported by the organization that such cases were perpetuated by officers and men of Special Anti-Robbery Squad Unit (SARS) (Ossai, 2017). The researcher felt that since the states within the South-East Nigeria are contiguously related, whatever affects one state may likely affect the other states within the geopolitical zone. It is against this backdrop that this study investigated public trust as a tool for building democratic policing in south-East Nigeria. The study was guided by the following specific objectives to: investigate how public trust in police influence democratic policing in South-East Nigeria, identify reasons why the public have mistrust in the police in South-East Nigeria, investigate how socioeconomic status of the people influence public trust on the police in South-East Nigeria, and indicate how public trust on the police can be improved in South-East Nigeria

Method

The study adopted mixed method of research. This is the type of research design whereby qualitative and quantitative data are collected and analysed for a particular study or series of studies. Mixed methods research represents research that involves collecting, analyzing, and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or in series of studies that investigate the same underlying phenomenon (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2008). The study area was South-East geopolitical zone, Nigeria. The zone is comprised of five states. The choice of the zone was predicated on the report that among the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria, the Police in the South-East are the worst in human right violation index. The general population of the study was 23,926,683. The target population of the study was 40480 from where a sample size of 873 was selected using Taro Yamen formula for sample determination. Multiple stage sampling procedure was adopted for the study. The fishbowl method of simple random sampling technique was adopted in selecting three out of five states in the geopolitical zone. The local government areas in each of the selected states were stratified into urban and rural and in each of the strata, one local government area was selected. In each of the local government areas selected, the fishbowl method was again adopted in selecting the communities. The instruments for data collection were questionnaire and In-depth Interview (IDI) guide. The questionnaire data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and graphic illustrations. The qualitative data were processed using

QDA Miner software application. The stated hypothesis was tested using chi-square test of significance.

Findings:

Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents:

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in table1.

Table1: **Socio-demographic characteristic of the respondents**

Response	Frequency	Percent
STATE		
<i>Anambra state</i>	294	33.7
<i>Ebonyi</i>	341	39.1
<i>Enugu</i>	251	28.8
<i>Total</i>	873	100.0
GENDER		
<i>Male</i>	540	61.9
<i>Female</i>	333	38.1
<i>Total</i>	873	100.0
AGE		
<i>18 – 27</i>	512	58.6
<i>28 – 37</i>	179	20.5
<i>38 – 47</i>	80	9.2
<i>48 – 57</i>	24	2.7
<i>58 years and above</i>	78	8.9
<i>Total</i>	873	100.0
MARITAL STATUS		
<i>Single</i>	617	70.7
<i>Married</i>	208	23.8
<i>Widowed</i>	14	1.6
<i>Divorced</i>	8	.9
<i>Separated</i>	26	3
<i>Total</i>	873	100.0
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT		
<i>Did not attend school</i>	27	3.1
<i>First school leaving certificate</i>	93	10.7
<i>West African School Certificate</i>	271	31.0
<i>OND/NCE</i>	261	29.9
<i>First Degree/HND</i>	135	15.5
<i>Higher Degree</i>	86	9.9
<i>Total</i>	873	100.0
OCCUPATION		
<i>Civil servant</i>	23	2.6
<i>Undergraduate</i>	197	22.6
<i>Town Union Officials</i>	16	1.8
<i>Keke riders</i>	61	7.0
<i>Youth out of school</i>	308	35.3
<i>Motor cycle rider</i>	92	10.5
<i>Secondary school students</i>	70	8.0
<i>Members of Nigeria Police Force</i>	23	2.6
<i>Motor Transport workers</i>	63	7.2
<i>Lawyer</i>	14	1.6
<i>Vigilante member</i>	6	.7
<i>Total</i>	873	100.0
PLACE OF RESIDENCE		
<i>Urban</i>	596	68.3
<i>Rural</i>	277	32
<i>Total</i>	873	100.0

DURATION IN THE RESIDENCE		
<i>1 – 10</i>	281	32.2
<i>11 – 20</i>	278	31.8
<i>21 – 30</i>	171	19.6
<i>31 – 40</i>	28	3.2
<i>41 – 50</i>	9	1.0
<i>51 – 60</i>	8	.9
<i>61 years and above</i>	98	1.2
<i>Total</i>	873	100.0
ANNUAL INCOME		
NO INCOME	29	3.3
<i>Less than #120,000</i>	400	45.8
<i>#121,000-#240,000</i>	147	16.8
<i>#241,000-#480,000</i>	191	22
<i>#481,000-#600,000</i>	31	3.5
<i>#6001,000-#1,000,000</i>	9	1.0
<i>#1,000,000 and above</i>	66	7.6
<i>Total</i>	873	100.0

Table 1 shows that in the distribution of the respondents by state 294(33.7%) are from Anambra State. It could also be seen from the table that 341 (39.1%) are from Ebonyi State, The table further shows that 251 (28.8%) are from Enugu State. The reason for recording the highest in the population distribution in Ebonyi State is attributable to the barn of commercial motorcycle operation in Anambra and Enugu States whereas in Ebonyi State commercial motorcycling as means of transportation was quite predominant at the time of this study. The distribution of respondents by gender shows that 540 (61.9%) are males while 333(38.1%) are females. The reason for having more males population than the females is attributed to the fact that most of the occupation in the population category were male dominated. The respondents have a mean age of 27.63, a standard error of mean of .293, a median age of 25.00 and a modal age of 20. The distribution also has a standard deviation of 8.284, a minimum age of 18 years and a maximum age of 62years.The distribution of respondents by marital status shows that 617(70.7%) are single, while 208(23.8%) are married, 14(1.6%) are widowed, 08(.9%) are divorced, 26(3%) are separated. The reason for having more of the single in the distribution was because of the involvement of students in the population category.

Again, the unemployment problem seems to have caused more young males to engage in transportation and allied businesses for immediate survival. On the distribution of the respondents by educational attainment, 27(3.1%) did not attend school, 93(10.7%) are holders of First School Leaving Certificate 271(31.0%) are holders of West African School Certificate, 261(29.8) are holders of NCE/OND certificate,135(15.5%) hold first degree/HND certificate,86(9.9%) hold higher degree, . The reason for having more population from those who were holders of First School Leaving Certificate and West African School Certificate was because of the involvement of secondary school students whose highest educational qualification was First School Leaving Certificate Again, in Nigeria, the West African School Certificate is regarded as the basic qualification for several economic activities.

The distribution of the respondents by occupation shows that 23(2.6%) are civil servants, 197(22.6%) are under graduates, 16(1.8) are town union officials,61(7.0%) are tricycle riders, 308(35.3%) are youths out of school, 92(10.5%) are commercial motorcycle riders, 70(8.0%) are secondary school students,23(2.6%) are members of the Nigeria Police Force,63(7.2%) are motor transport workers, 14(1.6%) are lawyers, while 6(.7%) are vigilante members. The reason for having more under graduates in the population distribution was because some major

public tertiary institutions fall within the areas of the study. The table further shows the distribution of the respondents by place of residents, 596(68.3%) reside in the urban area while 277(32.9%) reside in the rural area. . The reason for having relative higher population in the urban area was because most of the occupations of those in the population categories are concentrated in the urban areas. On the distribution of respondents by the duration in the place of resident, 281(32.2%) have lived between 1-10 years in a place, 278(31.8%) have lived in a place between 11-20 years, 171(19.6%) are residents in a place between 21-30 years, 28(3.2%) are residents in a place between 31-40 years, 9(1.0%) have lived in their place of residence between 41-50 years,8(.9%) of the respondents have lived in their place of residence between 51-60 years, whereas 98(11.2%) has lived up to 61 years and above. . On the distribution of the respondents by annual income, 29(3.3%) do not earn income, 400(45.8%) earn less than #120,000 annually as income, 191(22%) earn between #121,000-240,000 annually, 147(16.8%) earn between #241,000-480,000, 31(3.6%) earn between #481,000-600,000 annually, 31(3.5%) earn between #600,000-1000,000 annually, 09(1.0%) earn #1000,000 and above.

Research Objective 1: To find out how public trust in police influence democratic policing in South-East Nigeria?

First, the respondents were asked whether the Nigeria public has trust in police. Findings are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Respondents on whether the public has trust in the police

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	43	4.9
No	830	95.1
Total	873	100.0

Source: Field survey 2019

Table 2 shows that majority 830 (95.1%) of the respondents said n that they do not have trust on the Nigeria Police while 43 (4. 9%) said yes that they have trust on the Nigeria Police

Respondents are further asked which of the ways do the police exhibit attitude of distrust. Responses were presented figure1.

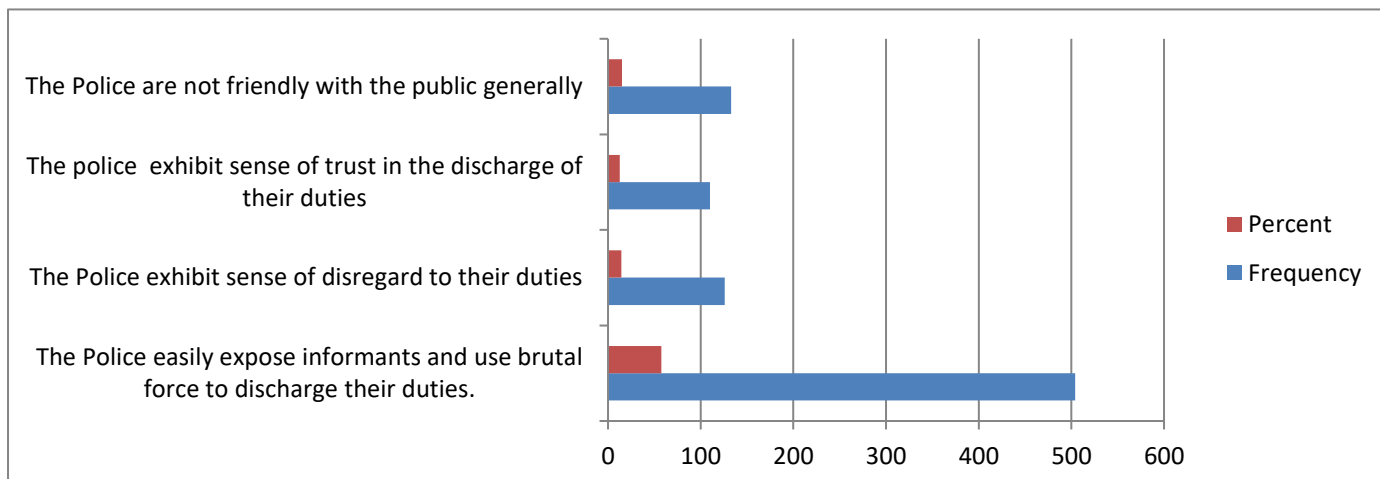


Fig. 1: The Way Police Exhibit Attitude of Distrust

Source: Field survey 2019

Table 3 shows that a majority 504 (57.7%) opined that the police easily expose their informants and use brutal force in the discharge of their duties as a way the police exhibit attitude that results to distrust by the public, while 110 (15.2%) opined that the police not friendly with the public is a police attitude that results in public distrust The finding is in tandem with data from the In-depth interview. One of the respondents said:

When you give information concerning a particular crime, before you know what is happening, information will come to you saying that he has heard all that you said about him to the police and this and that. The person will begin to threaten you. Some will even set trap for you or paid assassins to come for you. All because of the fact that you gave out information.(Male 64, Years, Retired civil servantEnugu).

Another participant, a head vigilante presented the police brutality on the public this way:

Police deal with the poor wickedly because they neither have anyone to speak for them nor have the money to call lawyer. Police will be on operation on the road, their targets will not be checking vehicles that are passing but rather to be collecting illegal money from drivers. When they see drivers or okada or keke, the police will them park or I park you...Once you have the green plated number and your vehicle is new, the police will salute you. Can the police stop a lawyer or the very educated ones? They can't try that because they easily write to certain people and the police will lose their job. So the police are bias in handling issues of the poor and non-literate members of the society (Male.45years vigilante Anambra)

Another respondent captured it in the following words:

...every time extorting, every time brutalization, roping of innocent people into matters that they know nothing about just to make out money from them. If the public obeys the police, it is because they are helpless; if they are loyal to the police it is because of the punishment that awaits them when they do the contrary Male 56 years Contractor, Enugu).

Respondents were further asked the public's reaction to show distrust on policing process in South-East, Nigeria. Findings are presented in table 4

Table 3: Public Reaction to Show Distrust on Policing System

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Public withdrawal of information to the police	629	72
Refusal to give evidence	108	12.4
The public hide criminals	89	10.2

The public still show commitment on the policing process	47	5.4
Total	873	100.0

Source: Field survey 2019

Table 4 shows that a majority 629 (72%) of the respondents opined that the public withdraws information from the police as a reaction to police distrust, 47 (5.4%) viewed that the public still show commitment and trust on the Nigeria Police Force policing process.

The finding corroborates with data collected from in-depth interview. One of the respondents said:

In fact the police do everything the way they like not minding what the position of the public would be. If you as a member of Nigeria public want to intervene they will tell you 'are you teaching me my job? How can you interrupt the officer of the law? IN fact, come to the station. No more, before you come out from that simple act you will spend heavily. In fact, when you get to the station, the matter will change; the police will twist the whole story to rob the person (Male 65 years Contractor, Anambra).

One of the respondents also said:

Police ought to be our friend whom you relate with in matters you personally can't help. You know what it means to be your friend. It is that person you can discuss with. You cannot discuss ordinarily with anybody. In Nigeria, it is not like that. The police whom you assume to be your friend will be the first to attack you in the issue you disclosed to them. This is betrayal Male, 82 years Traditional ruler Enugu).

Research Objective 2: To investigate why the public have distrust in the police in South-East Nigeria. Respondents were asked reasons for public distrust on the police. Findings are presented in table 4.

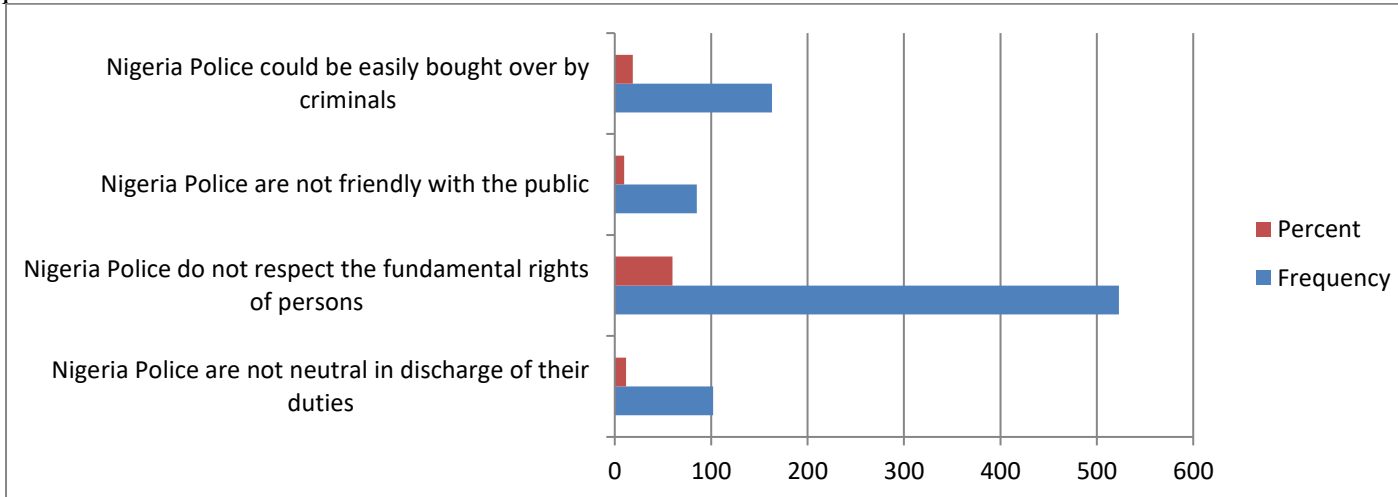


Fig.2: Reasons for public Distrust on the Police

Table 4 shows that a majority 523(60%) of the respondents have distrust on the police because they do not respect the fundamental rights of persons, 85 (9,7%) of the respondents opined that Nigeria Police are not friendly with the public.

The opinion of the respondents corroborates with data collected from in-depth interview Some of the typical ways the respondents describe the scenario can be seen from this view:

No public will be willing to give information to the police unless you are ready especially financially to follow it up. The public is tired and confused. A rat that was given fish to keep has turned to eat up the fish That is the situation; nobody is willing to give information to the police (Male 65 years contractor, Anambra)

Another respondent sees it this way:

The manner with which the police handle the public in Nigeria particularly the poor makes people; I mean the commoners believe that the police are dangerous and must be avoided at all cost. Sometimes one gives information to the police, if the person is of a rich background, the information may not be used for anything, even if that person commits grievous offence. In fact, names, titles, authority ring bell in the ears of police before decision is taken. Some people are therefore treated separately with carefulness, whereas others who of course are in the majority are treated with disrespect. (Male 45 years Politician Enugu).

Another respondent lucidly said:

The relationship between the police and the public I can say is not good. The police use to intimidate and beat the people because government gave that right. The work of the police is not to intimidate and harass people but to seek for their welfare so that whatever information they want to give to the people, will send it without fear of anybody (Head of vigilante 56 years)

One of the respondents took a historical comparison of the situation and said:

Previously, the Nigeria police respect and regard the public. Today, it is not so. Much respect is given to the political class than the ordinary people (Retired civil servant/traditional, 82 years).

Further to this, another respondent said:

If you have trust in them, you can give information or assist the police in discharging their duties. The ways police treat the public makes them to withdraw trust they ought to have on them. How can you give information now, in the next minute, you receive a phone call that the information that you have given to the police has leaked to the culprit. This is too dangerous to the informant. Male 45 year (Politician, Enugu).

Research Objective 3: To find out how the socio-economic status of the people influence public trust on police in South-East, Nigeria.

Lineal regression analysis was used to determine the effect of socio-economic status of the people on police trust and presented in table5

Table :4 Lineal Regression predicting the influence of Socio Demographic Variables on public trust in the police

Coefficients

Model		None Standardized Coefficients		Standardized	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients Beta		
1	(Constant)	26.896	1.398		19.237	.000
	Occupation2 What is your present occupation?	.080	.090	.040	.890	.374
	Sex What is your sex?	.253	.437	.027	.579	.563
	Age2 What is your age? (Binned)	-.589	.296	-.117	-1.994	.047
	Marital What is your marital status?	.014	.330	.002	.043	.966
	Education What is your highest educational level?	.298	.175	.079	1.697	.090
	Residence What is your place of residence?	-.954	.463	-.096	-2.060	.040
	Duration2 For how long have you been residing in the area? (Binned)	.452	.209	.102	2.163	.031
	Income What is your annual income range?	-.085	.201	-.021	-.425	.671

Field Survey, 2019

Three variables are found to be significant (age, place of residence and length of time a person stayed in a community)It implies that age is a good predictor of public trust in the police in South-East Nigeria. Place of residence was observed to have a strong influence on public trust in the police. Finally, length of time a person stays in the community was observed to be a good predictor of public trust in the police.

Research Objective 4: To find how public trust in the Police can be improve

Respondents were further how public trust in police can be improved. Findings are presented in table in table 5.

Table 5: Improvement of Public Trust in Police

Responses	Frequency	Percent
The Police should be open and integrate the public in the security processes and treat them as partners in crime fighting	526	60.3
The Police should be very mindful of the fundamental rights of persons and respect such	126	14.4
The police should discard the attitude of betrayal on the public	133	15.2
The Police should be neutral in the discharge of their duties	88	10.1
Total	873	100.0

Source: Field survey 2019

Table 5 shows that majority 526(60.3%) of the respondents opined that police should be open and integrate the public in the security process and treat the public as partners in crime fighting, 88(10.1%) of the respondents opined that the police should be neutral in the discharge of their duties. It implies therefore that for the police to earn public trust, the police should be open to the public, integrate them in the security process and treat the public as partners in crime fighting

Hypothesis:

People with higher levels of education will differ significantly from their counterparts with lower levels of education on their perception of the police as being trustworthy in South-East Nigeria.

Table 6: Descriptive table for mean scores of level of education and public trust in the police

Public trust in the police

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Did not attend school	27	22.04	4.137	.796	20.40	23.67	8	28
First school leaving certificate	99	22.09	4.250	.427	21.24	22.94	8	31
West African School Certificate	279	22.97	3.706	.222	22.53	23.40	13	33
OND/NCE	265	23.40	4.225	.260	22.89	23.91	12	38
First Degree/HND	136	22.52	3.828	.328	21.87	23.17	11	33
Higher Degree	67	23.63	4.007	.490	22.65	24.60	12	34
Total	873	22.95	4.005	.136	22.69	23.22	8	38

Field Survey, 2019

Table 7: One Way ANOVA showing the mean scores between levels of educational attainment and public trust in the police

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	204.919	5	40.984	2.578	.025
Within Groups	13783.060	867	15.897		
Total	13987.979	872			

Field Survey, 2019

A significant difference was found between educational qualification and public trust in the police in South-East Nigeria at P=0.025. However, the mean scores of the independent variables were compared using the Scheffe test and a no significant difference was observed. It then implies that people with higher levels of education will not differ significantly from their counterparts in the other levels of educational attainment on their trust in the police in South-East Nigeria. One can then infer that levels of educational attainment have no influence on perception on the trustworthiness of the police in Nigeria.

Discussion

The study investigated public trust as tool for building democratic policing in South-East Nigeria. It was found that there is no public trust on the police because police easily expose their informants and use brutal force in the discharge of their duties. Consequently, the public has no other alternative order than to withdraw their trust on the police. Ultimately, this discordance has negative implication on democratic policing. The finding corroborates with the empirical literature which maintained that unacceptable police practice generate distrust on the police.

The study also found that the reason for public distrust on the police was because the police do not respect the fundamental human rights of persons. This also has negative implication on democratic policing hence such type of policing do not give the people maximum protection within the context of the law. Furthermore, it was found that the police expose their informants. This leads to public withdrawal of trust to the police. This not only put the informant on danger but equally deters people from cooperating with the police in crime fighting, a situation that will jeopardizes democratic policing.

The study equally found that socio-demographic variables like age, place of residence and length of time a person stayed in a community have significant influence on police trust. It was also found that there is significant difference on level of education and police trustworthiness but in terms of perception, there was no significant difference. The findings are in tandem with Alemika and Chukwuma (2008) who stressed that in Nigeria, the police are state officials charged with responsibility for law enforcement and order maintenance in society. In order to discharge these twin responsibilities the police are empowered to use force or violence. Using place of residence to test for public trust in police, the tested hypothesis supports the findings when it stated that urban dwellers have more trust in the police than their rural counterparts in Southeast, Nigeria. Implicitly, police contact and action are more in the urban areas where economic and social activities take place more and the urban public understands the tenets of police duties. The Marxian conflict theory by Karl Marx lends credence to the findings when the theory postulated that the police are used as instruments of oppression by the state against the public particularly the poor who find it difficult to cope with the harsh realities of capitalism as it is in Nigeria and other capitalist countries.

Conclusion

Trust is one of the essential tools for building democratic policing system. It is a willful and without being coarse process that helps both the public and police to open up for one another in the course of discharging police duties. In Nigeria, there is lack of public trust on the police which not only aggravate undemocratic attitude but equally create discordance between the police and the public.

Recommendation

1. The study recommended that government should consistently organize reorientation and refresher programmes for the Nigeria Police Force on the operations of democratic policing as it is very fundamental for the realization of public trust and achieving the central objective of policing
2. The police should be open to the public and should drop the idea of applying brutal force to attract public respect and as a deterrent to criminal behaviours
3. The police should be mindful of the fundamental right of persons, without which the whole efforts in democratic policing will be in futility

4. Nigeria Police Force should be more of investigative, proactive and tactical rather than the application of intimidation and brutal force to elicit information from suspects.

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