



EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF COMMUNITY DISTRUST ON POLICE EFFECTIVENESS IN COMBATING CRIME IN KADUNA STATE NIGERIA

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Abstract

In addressing crime, the police was carved out as the ideal agency or institution to tackle this menace of crime in the society. This study examined the effects of community distrust on Police effectiveness in combating crime in Kaduna State Nigeria. The research adopted the Structural-functional Theory, the Conflict theory and the Differential Association theory, to elucidate police crime prevention and community distrust. The research applied the mixed method research technique. 370 samples from the 7 Police Area Commands in the state were utilized. The SPSS version 27 was applied, using Simple Linear Regression Technique to test hypothesis, corroborated by thematic analysis of interviews. It found the regression coefficients value of $\beta = -0.391$ denotes that, community distrust has a negative and significant effect on the ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes. Further explanation of the result indicates that, if community distrust increases by one unit, the ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes will decrease by 0.39 units. The test was found to be statistically significant in line with our theory of structural functional theory. The findings of the study among others reveal that; the study reveals that community trust is foundational to effective policing, with officers stressing that public cooperation is critical for crime detection and prevention. When trust is eroded, citizens are less likely to report crimes or provide vital intelligence. To restore public confidence, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) should institutionalize community policing frameworks that promote consistent dialogue with residents.

Keywords: Combating Crime; Community Distrust; Nigerian Police Force, Kaduna Nigeria

1.0. Introduction

In the face of escalating security challenges, the Nigerian Police Force stands as the primary institution tasked with maintaining law and order, ensuring public safety, and upholding the rule of law across the nation. Crime is a general and global phenomenon affecting every human society UNODC, (2024). In addressing crime, the police was carved out as the ideal agency or institution to tackle this menace of crime in the society. From time immemorial, every society from pre-literate to post-colonial states has evolved its police and policing. In spite these evolution, the institution still face lots of challenges. These challenges are not therefore immune to Africa alone as all societies face it though this may differ or vary in scope. The prevalence of organized crime in Nigeria and Kaduna State is driven by diverse and complex factors. Though their individual importance cannot be easily weighed, together they seem to constitute fertile ground for organized criminal groups. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, multidimensional poverty affects 63 percent of people living in Nigeria. Youth unemployment and underemployment also provide a large pool of potential recruits for criminal organizations (National Bureau of Statistics, Multidimensional Poverty Index Survey 2022).

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The crime situation in Kaduna State, since 2015, has taken a turn for the worst. Kaduna State has become a hot bed of killings and kidnappings by bandits and banditry activities. There are also cases of ambushing of travelers on the highways, abducting persons for ransom, rustling of cattle/livestock from pastoralists, imposing of fines and taxes in the form of “harvest fees” on the local farmers, rape and armed robbery. The attack on the Abuja/Kaduna train, an incident that took place in March 2022 by bandits and the kidnapping of passengers further gives a vivid picture of the situation. More so, on the 11th day of March 2021, thirty (30) students were kidnapped in Kaduna State, when gunmen attacked the Federal College of Forestry Mechanization. On 20th April 2021, another bloody raid by bandits on the students and staff of the Greenfield University led to the kidnapping of twenty-three students and killing of five of them. In 2020 a total of 1, 972 persons were kidnapped (Report by Kaduna State Ministry for Homeland Security, 2021). Despite all the approaches employed to combat crimes in the State, the problems have persisted. The people of Kaduna State have suffered material loss, psychological trauma, loss of lives and living in fear. For the government, there is the depletion of public confidence it has been enjoying. The instrument of government in ensuring internal security (the Nigeria Police Force) is not spared. The police have come under serious criticism of performing below expectation, the crime situation has persisted.

It is against this backdrop, that we study the effects of Community Distrust as one of the challenges faced by the Nigerian police on its effectiveness in Combating Crime in Kaduna State as a microcosm of Nigeria. The Study broadly seeks to examine the extent to which Community distrust affect the Nigeria Police Force in Combating Crimes in Kaduna State Nigeria, research questions were raised as: To what extent does Community distrust affect the Nigeria Police Force in Combating Crimes in Kaduna State Nigeria? The study formulated the following hypothesis in a null form: There is no significant relationship between community distrust and the ability of the Nigeria Police Force in combating crimes in Kaduna State Nigeria.

2.0. Literature Review

In the Nigeria Police Force, three things that are important in combating crimes by police officers are physical fitness, mental alertness and knowledge on the use of emerging technologies. Mental alertness is the ability to make accurate split-second decisions that may be ethically and legally complex and may call for advanced tactics and coordination (Ayegun and Ayinde, 2018). One other factor that is important but yet, downplayed is the issue of community police relations, the only reason this relationship exist is the level of trust the community people have in the Nigerian police, to believe in them and their ability to safeguard their lives and properties, as well as trusting them to give relevant information about activities going on within their locality.

Many of the populace views police officers with contempt, mistrust, and suspicion. They view them as enemies on the side of criminals rather than as friends and allies in the fight against crime. Because of this, they are afraid to help or work with the police in any way. The Nigeria Police Force used the catchphrase "the cops are your friends" in one of its public relations jingles. Another amusing one advises calling in a "thug" the next time you are in trouble if the police are not your pals. A bold illustration of a thug with clean-cut hair wearing dark sunglasses, a heavy club or iron bar, and smoking what appears to be pot or marijuana is placed on top of this cynical counsel (Edime and Abdulkadri 2022).

Community distrust in the Nigeria Police Force is a significant issue. Community distrust is because of colonial heritage, corruption, arbitrary arrests, torture and lack of accountability. A person reporting a

crime is required to finance the investigation process. The lack of trust by the community people brings about hindrance in effectively combating crimes. In Kaduna State, the state of security necessitates the NPF work with the public to ensure effective prevention, detection, apprehension, protection and due enforcement of all laws and regulations. Thus, there is the need for synergy between the public and the police to ensure effectiveness in the fight against crimes. However, a survey conducted by Afrobarometer in 2022 shows that 73 per cent of the public do not trust the police while only 26 per cent trust the police (Kweitsu, 2023). This has affected the flow of information about criminals from members of the public which is vital in combating crime by the NPF.

Combating crime is a collective responsibility. The police cannot do it alone. But many Nigerians do not believe in the saying that 'police is you friend'. In his study, Ugwulebo, (2011) notes that the police force has been criticized for aiding and abetting kidnappers, resulting in the public being unwilling to report incidence of the crime to the police. Rather, they prefer to pay to the kidnappers so that their relations or friends can regain their freedom. The reasons for this lack of cordial relationships include lack of trust, corruption, human rights violations and perversion of justice among others. Community members would not report crime to the police because police would give the criminals all the details about the informants; one may equally become a detained suspect because he came to lay a complaint or give information to the police. Regrettably, the public, according to Dambazau (2007) has therefore becomes unwilling to cooperate with the police in combating crime: (a) by refusing to provide or share information and expose criminal activities; (b) by avoiding getting involved in identifying criminals by declining to report the incidence of crime in order to avoid being witness; (c) sometimes acting against the efforts of the police, and (d) by taking the laws into their own hands (jungle justice).

However, the individual citizen fails to appreciate that he is equally responsible for law enforcement and that he has powers and obligations under the law to accomplish this task. The law imposes a duty on members of the community to assist the police in their crime prevention function by virtue of the provision of section 34(b) of the Criminal Procedure Act: "Every person is bound to assist a ... police officer reasonably demanding his aid in the prevention or suppression of a breach of the peace". It is an offence to omit, without reasonable excuse, to assist a police officer in preserving the peace. Members of the community are also expected to assist a police officer in the course of his duty. The law provides that if any person is called upon to aid and assist a police officer, who is, while in the execution of his duty, assaulted or resisted, or in danger of being assaulted or resisted and such person refuses or neglected to aid and assist accordingly, he shall be guilty of an offence. The fulcrum of the foregoing is that members of the public are expected to help the police officer in the course of his duty of combating crime.

The public perception of the police in Nigeria and lack of co-operation due to distrust has greatly affected the level of support given to the police in combating crime. As a result of this, many refrain from giving valuable information which could have helped to check crimes. Public cooperation and participation are very important in assisting the police to achieve its objective. Interestingly, without the needed information and cooperation of the public, the police cannot do much in the maintenance of security (Obarisiagbon and Omagie, 2018).

Empirical Review

Several studies on combating crimes and challenges faced by the NPF in fighting crimes have been conducted over the years by scholars; some of these studies as it relates community distrust are discussed below:

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Muhammed, Liman & Zamani (2023) in their study examined assessment of the role of police community relations in crime prevention in the Federal Capital Territory, 2009-2020. Community and police relationship stand as a paradigm shift that seeks to focus on constructive engagement with people who are the end users of the police service and renegotiate the contract between the people and the police thereby making the community co-producers of justice and a quality police service. The research is an assessment of police community relations in crime prevention in the FCT. The spate of insecurity in the FCT is alarming. The study reviewed relevant theoretical framework and empirical review. Descriptive research design was adopted in this study, and the population of study is 2,271 staff. To determine the sample size, Taro Yamane formula was adopted, and questionnaires were administered to respondents across all staff of Force Headquarters in Abuja and FCT Police Command. Non-probability sampling technique was used in this study and therefore, simple percentages were used in allocating questionnaires to the sampling units to reflect their population weights. Primary and secondary sources of data were used in this study. The rationale for this is to ensure that adequate data is generated for the study. Quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis were adopted in this study.

Majority of respondents are optimistic that if the police continue to relate and keep boosting the confidence of the community, they will continuously get assistance in crime prevention. The Nigeria police are granted enormous powers by law and the constitution to take preventive measures against the commission of all crimes in Nigeria. In this sense, the law allows them to use such reasonable force as may be necessary for the prevention of crimes. In the exercise of this authority, they have malevolently violated the rights of members of the public with impunity. This practice has earned the Nigeria police different derogatory names, hatred and constant collision with the members of the public to whom they sworn an oath to protect. The study recommended that Government should direct effort at dealing with the cause of crime, that is, correction of the conditions that make crime a valuable alternative to law abiding behaviour. Government should also ensure jobs are made available for the teeming population of school leavers of all categories to forestall the probability of some of them joining criminal gangs.

Arisukwu, Adebisi, Igbolekwu & Asamu (2021) in their work the tagged "Police Treatment of the Public in Police stations: Evidence from Zaria, Nigeria" observed that the nature of police relationship with the people and the manner in which the public were handled at the station and on the street daily within the community affect the way the people perceive them and the level of cooperation they get from the people in curbing crime in the society. The study took place in Zaria, Kaduna State, Northern Nigeria. The study population is the Police in Zaria. Three Police Stations (Zaria city, Sabon Gari and Samaru Police Stations) were purposively selected reflecting the socio-cultural and demographic background of Zaria residence and population. Using in depth interviews, observational methods and police records, it was discovered that socio economic status of suspects affected how they were treated by the police stations studied. Also, the environment a suspect resides affected how they were treated too by the police. The paper recommended that the police make the rule of law their guide in the handling of suspects in the police stations irrespective of socio demographic variable or area of habitation of the suspects. Police brutality and violations of citizens' rights should be checked by senior police officers while community policing style should be implemented across communities in Nigeria. The population of study and the number of officers interviewed were not mentioned.

Nyam, (2020) did a study on "A Critical Analysis of the Public Perception of the Nigeria Police Force". The research critically analyzed the public perception of the Nigeria Police Force within the context of procedural justice. A total number of 216 respondents comprising 165 males, 46 females and 5

preferred not to say participated in the study. Questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents via Bristol Online surveys using various social media platforms. Findings reveal the following: Trustworthiness; the public in the research sample lack trust and confidence in the Nigeria Police; Procedural Justice: the public in the research sample think that policing in Nigeria is not within the confines of the law and also not in line with the international best practices; lastly, effectiveness: the public in the research sample think the police performance is poor and has negative views on the nature of security and safety in Nigeria. Findings further reveal that gender and literacy have no effect on the public perception of the NPF, while the result on ethnicity shows there are significant differences in the public perception of the police. The study recommended the following: For optimum output and craving good image of the police, officers should be trained in proper codes of conduct and communication skills; the police should be urged to involve the public in crime participation and decision making, also the police should be urged to live an exemplary life for the citizens in a way of obeying the law, harsh punishment should be given to any police officer found wanting; and the police should be urged to be fair in their judgment in case an issue arises.

Farhat, Sajjad, Hamid and Zia (2016), study titled "Factors influencing Police image in public", explores university students' perception regarding police image in the light of their own experiences, knowledge and observations. University Students of final year from Faculty of Social Sciences of Kohat University of Science and Technology, Pakistan, were selected as respondents of the study. Total population of the above-mentioned groups of respondents was 213, out of whom a sample size of 138 was selected. A well-structured questionnaire was used to elicit data from the above sample group. Sample group includes both male and female respondents and proportional allocation was made through stratified random sampling. It was found that most of the respondents regarded police as corrupt and considered police personnel as partial. Inadequate use of advanced technology was considered as a hurdle in police performance. The study concluded that police image in the public has been painted negatively due to their inefficiency, culture of corruption, lack of accountability, lack of training and low salaries.

Onwuama, Asadu, Eke and Egbuche (2019) in their work, "An assessment of Public Perception of Police Response to Crime and Criminality in Anambra state of Nigeria, focuses on the perception of the public on police response to crime cases in Anambra state of Nigeria. This study also focuses on the feelings and views of the public in Anambra state of Nigeria concerning the police performance in their statutory function of maintenance of law and order, particularly crime control. Cross sectional survey research design was adopted for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select four communities in the state. Purposive sampling technique was also used to select 624 respondents aged 18 years and above while structured questionnaire became the instrument of data collection. The study identified public cooperation and information interflow as a veritable instrument towards actualizing a secure society. Empirical evidence from the study also indicates that negligence, corruption, inadequacy of equipment, lack of incentives and motivation among other things are the major risk factors contributing to the ineffectiveness, inefficiency and non-performance of the police in their statutory duty of crime control. Findings from the study show that educational attainment of respondents affected their rating of police effort in crime control; place of residence (urban/rural) affected people's perception on the promptness of the police to emergency cases. Further, sex of respondents was found not to be statistically significant with their perception on police-public partnership in crime control. The study, therefore, recommended formulation and implementation of policies to restructure and reposition the Police Force to respond adequately to crime. Their study did not state the research questions and theoretical framework.

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Victor (2019) did research on "Crime is Inevitable, but Police is not friendly: Exploring the public perception of Police on Crime Prevention and Management in Lagos state, Nigeria". The study was carried out in Oshodi/Isolo and Ijeshatedo/Itire Local Government Areas, Lagos state. Fourteen (14) participants were selected to study. The study explored the factors responsible for the perception of the public about police, on Crime Prevention and Management in Nigeria. It also examined the level of trust members of the public have on the effectiveness of the police and assess the government efforts towards police-public friendly relationship in Nigeria. Social constructivism and Karl Marx conflict theories were employed for the study. The study used in-depth interviews to gather information from respondents. Purposive and Snowball sampling techniques were used to select participants for the study. The study concluded that police system should be completely independent, and not under the direct control of the executive to manage crime efficiently, and to discharge their constitutional duties of securing lives and properties of the people effectively without violation of the fundamental right of the people in the country.

Ukwayi and Igwe-Okomiso (2018) study titled "Public Perception of Factors Affecting the Operational Performance of Security Agencies in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State Nigeria", examined public perception of factors affecting the operational performance of security agencies in Calabar, Cross River state. The study adopted the survey design. 400 samples were selected using the simple random sampling technique. Data used for the study was primary and secondary data. The structured questionnaire was the main instrument of data collection. Findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between corruption and the operational performance of security agencies in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria and there is a significant relationship between lack of policing equipment and the operational performance of security agencies in Calabar, Cross Rivers State, Nigeria. The study thereby recommended among others that security agents must be motivated through regular promotion, good salary and decent accommodation. The study did not mention the population of study which gave the sample size of 400.

The researches above examined community people's perception as it affects the Nigerian police in combating crimes, majority of the studies are of the opinion that some of the personnel are corrupt, which makes it difficult for people to trust the Nigerian police with relevant information in certain instances.

2.1. Theoretical Framework

The research is anchored on the premise of structural-functional Theory, The Conflict Theory and The Differential Association Theory, propounded by Auguste Comte (1798–1857) and Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), Karl Marx (1818-1883) cited in (Hayes, 2022), as well as Edwin H. Sutherland (1883-1950). The Structural Functionalist theory views society as an organic whole comprising of different parts each functioning to maintain the entire systems and subsystems of the society such as the family, politics, economy, education, religious institutions, while the conflict theory alternative dispute resolution methods, peace building theory are built upon the elements contained in conflict theory (Faleti, 2006; Best, 2006). According to Joseph (2022), Social theory is a contemporary strand for understanding and explaining social conflict in modern society. Understanding of ethnic conflicts, religious wars, terrorists' activities, and how to manage and resolve them. While the theory of differential association an individual becomes delinquent if he accepts values that support the violation of law, and not the values of conventional culture. The process of learning delinquent behavior involves all the mechanisms that are important for learning in general. First, regarding the effect of factors that influence criminal behavior, by acting on the creation of the individual's certain life experience

historical or genetic explanation of criminal behavior, and secondly, about the factors of criminal behavior acting at the time of its occurrence and which constitute the complex in the personality situation relation.

Application of Theory to the Study

Conflict dynamics leading to corruption and lack of accountability; Social learning processes leading to normalization of misconduct. Public distrust leading to reduced cooperation, which ultimately leads to poor crime prevention, ineffective investigation and prosecution, rising insecurity. The performance of the Nigerian Police in combating crime is best understood through a multi-theoretical framework of the Structural differential theory, which highlights systemic resource and capacity gaps; the Conflict theory explaining corruption, inequality, and legitimacy failure. Differential association theory accounts for the internal reproduction of misconduct. Together, they demonstrate how Community Distrust affects Police effectiveness in Combating Crime in Kaduna State Nigeria.

3.0. Methodology

The survey research design was adopted for this study. This is because the nature of the topic has to do with the assessment of the variable. It allowed the views of the respondents to be collected from a sample of a large population. This was done using questionnaire and interview technique, which gives room for the researcher to collect data from different groups in order to make inferences and generalizations on the entire population of the study. The study comprises Kaduna State Police command. It is made up of Seven Area Commands namely: Metropolitan Area Command, Kakuri Area Command, Zaria Area command, Birnin Gwari Area command, Saminaka Area Command, Kafanchan Area Command and Jere Area command. The Kaduna State Police Command is further divided into sixty-one (61) Divisions. In addition to the three Police Mobile Force Squadrons namely: No. 1 PMF, Kaduna, No. 47 PMF, Zaria and No. 62 PMF Kafanchan. All these formations are charged with the duty of combating crimes; maintenance of law and order as well providing security. The study population basically comprised of officers and men of the Nigeria Police Force serving in Kaduna State command that are responsible for combating crimes in Kaduna State. The State Police Command currently has a population of ten thousand, nine hundred and thirteen (10,913) personnel, comprising officers and men of the Force. That is a total of one thousand eight hundred and eleven (1,811) senior officers, five thousand, five hundred and eighty-nine (5,589) Inspectors and three thousand, five hundred and thirteen (3,513) rank and files (non-commissioned officers). The above as well as the community members randomly selected per zone across the LGAs of the State constitute the population of the study.

The study employed multi-stage sampling procedures to select the respondents from the police personnel. It first adopted stratified sampling procedure which is a type of **sampling** that involves dividing the population into groups or ranks: Senior Police Officers (SPOs), Inspectors, and Rank and Files. The choice of this sample technique was chosen to afford beneficiaries equal chance of inclusion in the sample size. The purposive random technique was then adopted to administer the questionnaires. Personnel that have knowledge of challenges of combating crime in Kaduna State were purposefully sampled for research. To get a sample size for the categories of respondents that make-up the entire officers and men of Kaduna State command, Taro Yamane's formula was adopted to determine the sample size for this study. According to Yamane, for a 95% confidence level and $p = 0.5$, size of the sample should be calculated in the following formula.

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$$n = \frac{N}{(1+N(e)^2)}$$

Where:

n = signifies the sample size

N = signifies the population under stud

e = allowable error or level of significance, which is 5% i.e. 0.05

Let this formula to be used for our population, of 10,913, in which:

$$n = \frac{10,913}{(1+10,913(0.05)^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{10,913}{(1+10,913(0.0025))}$$

$$n = 385.85$$

$$n = 386$$

The 386 number is shared proportionately to sum up the number of the sample size of 386 as suggested by the Taro Yamani formula of determining sample sizes. This is done for equal representation and sharing of questionnaire amongst the respondents of the Nigeria Police Force of Kaduna Area Commands. This is done by distributing the total ranks across the 7 area commands. It clearly shows that every member in each division was randomly selected to represent the total number of the respondents in all the divisions across the State. The reason for the choice of proportional representation is because all the commands have the same features and characteristics so random selection of a miniature of them will give the relevant information required for the study. The total responses from the questionnaire at 386, the Key Informants Interviews (KIIs) at 7 and FGD at 24, making a total of 411 respondents for the study. In the long-run 370 questionnaires were duly filled and returned.

The SPSS version 27 was used in the analysis of the variables. For this study, the following model is used:

$$NPFCC = a_0 + \beta_1 + e_1 CD + \mu \dots$$

Where: NPFCC = Nigeria Police Force Combating Crime (Dependent variable)

CD = Community Distrust (Independent variables)

a_0 = Constant term

β_1 = Coefficient of the independent variable

e_1 = Variables of the regression equation

μ = is the error term

The instrument used for the study adopted questionnaire and interview which drafted to reflect the title of the research. The questionnaire was divided into two (2) sections. Section "A" demanded data on demographic characteristic of the respondents while section "B" requested for information on the effect of inadequate manpower on the ability of Nigerian Police to combat crimes. Where the mean score is less than 3.0, such response considered negative. The 3.0 is arrived at, from the rating points of the instrument. The interview adopted structured and unstructured questions where the need arises. The Cronbach's alpha test was performed to examine the reliability of the instrument. The questionnaire recorded a value of 0.703. This implies that there is a high level of internal consistency and accuracy for the scale with this specific sample, and this was used to generate accurate, reliable, and valid data that was used to measure each of the study variables.

The responses obtained from the questionnaire were tallied, analyzed and presented using descriptive and inferential statistics. In the descriptive statistics, frequency counts, percentages and means were used to enhance the understanding of issues raised in the research questions. Frequency and

percentages were used to describe the bio-data of respondents and research questions. The decision rule for the mean of each response was 3.00 and above for acceptance. The use of simple linear regression was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance of the relationship between the IV and the DV; this is because of the sets of respondents in the NPF across Kaduna State 7 police commands.

4.0 Results and Discussion

In providing answers to the research questions presented for the study two (2) research questions were answered, using frequency distributions, simple percentages and mean score given as;

Where; $\bar{X}$ is the average and the 5-Likert scale average for decision making = 3.0, the decision rule is given as;

- Reject H_0 if P-value is less than or equal the level of significant = 0.05.
- Accept H_0 if P-value is greater than the level of significant = 0.05

The hypothesis tested in this study is concerned with investigating if there is a significant effect between Community distrust and the ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes in Kaduna State Nigeria. The responses of interest were subjected to a regression test, using the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis:

H_0 : Community distrust does not significantly affect the ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes in Kaduna State Nigeria;

Dependent Variable: Ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes

Independent variable: Community distrust

To what extent does Community distrust affect the Nigeria Police Force in combating crimes in Kaduna State Nigeria?

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of the Impact of Community Distrust on the Nigeria Police's Ability to Combat Crimes

Statements about Community distrust	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	Mean	Decision
To what extent do you agree with the statement: "Police Community Relations is a significant barrier for the Nigeria Police in effectively combating crimes in Kaduna State and the country?"	242 (65%)	87 (24%)	8 (2%)	12 (3%)	21 (6%)	4.40	Agree
How confident are you that rebuilding trust between the community and the Nigeria Police would significantly improve their ability to prevent and address criminal activities?	186 (50%)	151 (41%)	16 (4%)	17 (5%)	0 (0%)	4.37	Highly confident
In your opinion, to what degree does Police Community relation impact the willingness of individuals to cooperate with the police in reporting crimes and providing information?	90 (24%)	210 (57%)	45 (12%)	0 (0%)	25 (7%)	3.92	To a Large extent
To what extent do you believe that addressing the issue of community distrust should be a top priority in the efforts to enhance the Nigeria Police's effectiveness in combating crimes?	211 (57%)	122 (33%)	20 (5%)	17 (5%)	0 (0%)	4.42	High priority
How satisfied are you with the current initiatives and strategies employed by the Nigeria Police to build trust within the community and improve community -police relations?	69 (19%)	135 (37%)	54 (15%)	83 (22%)	29 (7%)	3.36	Satisfied
Sectional Mean						4.09	

Source: Field survey, 2025

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Table 1: above presents the item by item's descriptive analysis of Nigeria Police Force perspective to the statements on the impact of Community distrust on the Nigeria Police's ability to combat crimes, confidence in rebuilding trust, perceived impacts on cooperation, prioritization of trust-building efforts, and satisfaction with current initiatives. Interpreting the item one by one, item one shows that respondents agreed that community distrust is a significant barrier for the Nigeria Police in effectively combating crimes in Kaduna State and the country. The mean score of 4.40 supports this finding. Similarly, the second item shows that respondents are very confident that rebuilding trust between the community and the Nigeria Police would significantly improve their ability to prevent and address criminal activities; this is demonstrated by the mean score of 4.37. Item three on Table 5.10 also indicated that respondents believed that community relations impact to a large extent on the willingness of individuals to cooperate with the police in reporting crimes and providing information. The mean score is 3.92 confirmed this decision by respondents.

The fourth item shows that respondents believe that addressing the issue of Police community relations should be a top priority in the efforts to enhance the Nigeria Police's effectiveness in combating crimes. The mean score of 4.42 demonstrate this. Lastly, item five proved that personnel of NPF are satisfied with the current initiatives and strategies employed by the Nigeria Police to build trust within the community and improve community-police relation. This is confirmed with the mean score of 3.36.

The analysis above also confirmed that the mean score of all the items and the sectional mean score of 4.09 was greater than the 5-Likert scale average of 3.0. It is therefore inferred that, personnel of NPF were affirmative about their opinion regarding the impact of community distrust on the Nigeria Police's ability to combat crimes, confidence in rebuilding trust, perceived impacts on cooperation, prioritization of trust-building efforts, and satisfaction with current initiatives.

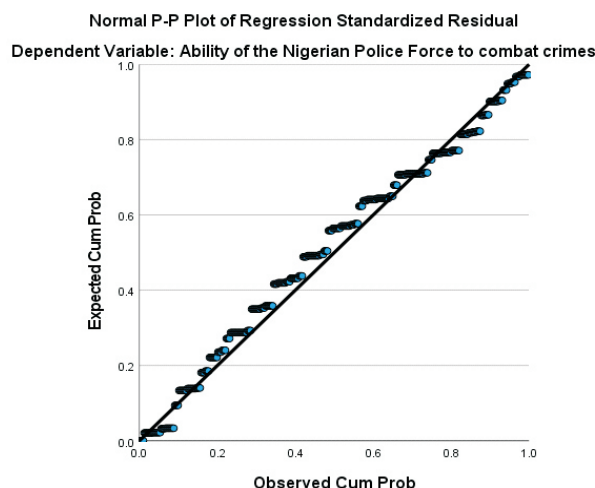
Table 2: Linear Regression Result of Community distrust and Ability to Combat Crimes

Variable	Coef.	t _{cal}	Sig.	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	F(d.f.)	ANOVA
(Constant)	2.44	32.2	.000	.75	.555	.554	458.6 (1, 368)	.000
Comm. Distrust	-.391	21.42	.000					

Dependent Variable: Ability of the Nigerian Police Force to combat crimes

Predictor: (Constant), Community distrust

Figure 1 : Normal P -P Plot of Community distrust and Ability to Combat Crime in Kaduna State Nigeria



The result presented in Table 2 provides the simple linear regression result of the impact of community distrust on the ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes in Kaduna State Nigeria. Figure 1 shows that the community distrust and ability to combat crimes in Kaduna State are normally distributed. The result revealed that community distrust with the parameters ($\beta = -0.391$, $t_{cal} = 21.42$, $R = 0.75$, $R^2 = 0.56$, $Adj. R^2 = 0.54$, $F_{cal} = 458.6$, $P = 0.00 < 0.05$) has a negative and significant impact on the ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes in Kaduna State Nigeria. The regression coefficient value of $\beta = -0.391$ implies that, community distrust has a negative and significant effect on the ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes in Kaduna State Nigeria. Further explanation of the result indicates that, if community distrust increases by one unit, the ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes will decrease by 0.39 units. The correlation coefficient (R) = -0.75 affirms that, there exist a strong negative relationship between community distrust and the ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The implication of this result is that, if community distrust increases, the ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes will decrease by 75%.

The regression coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.56$) indicates that community distrust has accounted for 56 percent of the negative effect associated with the ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes in Kaduna State. By implication, other challenges not included in this model may have accounted for the remaining 44% of challenges. The p – value = 0.00, means that the null hypothesis which states that, there is no significant relationship between community distrust and the ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes in Kaduna State Nigeria is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis which states that, there is a significant relationship between community distrust and the ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes in Kaduna State Nigeria. The suggested Simple Linear Regression (SLR) model is given as;

$y = 2.44 - 0.391X$ Where; y = ability of the Nigeria Police Force to combat crimes in Kaduna State Nigeria and x = community distrust.

The above quantitative analysis is corroborated by responses from interviews that:

“Community trust was described as fundamental to effective policing. Officers noted that without public cooperation, crime prevention and detection efforts are severely limited. R6 and R4 both emphasized the need for the Nigeria Police to rebuild trust with local communities by ensuring transparency, engaging in regular dialogue, and demonstrating respect for citizens' rights. Strategies such as public town hall meetings and collaborative efforts with local leaders were proposed as ways to foster trust and cooperation. Community-based policing is seen as vital to improving crime reporting, intelligence sharing, and public safety in the State”.

These clearly show that the level of trust the people have on the police determined the intelligence gathering. The police should give the community people more reasons to trust and believe them to feed them with relevant information to carry out their duties of safeguarding lives and properties effectively. Criminals caught should be dealt with decisively, not releasing them to return them into the community they terrorize.

Summary of Findings

The study reveals that community trust is foundational to effective policing, with officers stressing that public cooperation is critical for crime detection and prevention. When trust is eroded, citizens are less likely to report crimes or provide vital intelligence. The data from Table 5.8 supports this claim, with a high sectional mean of 4.09 and regression results ($\beta = -0.391$, $R = -0.75$, $R^2 = 0.56$) indicating a strong, negative, and significant relationship between community distrust and the police's crime-fighting

ability. Officers recommended proactive trust-building strategies such as public dialogue, transparency, and community-based policing initiatives.

5.0. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study therefore found out that community distrust of the Nigerian Police Force is a crucial factor in addressing and combating crimes in Kaduna State and Nigeria as a whole. The research therefore recommends restoring public confidence; the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) should institutionalize community policing frameworks that promote consistent dialogue with residents. Regular town hall meetings, collaboration with community leaders, and public sensitization on citizen rights and police responsibilities should be prioritized. Transparency in police operations and swift accountability for misconduct will further reinforce public trust and cooperation in crime reporting and intelligence sharing.

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