



Public Confidence in the Police and Crime Reporting Practices of Victims in Lagos, Nigeria: A Mixed Methods Study

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Abstract

Public confidence in the police is usually influenced by multilayer factors. These factors have not been comprehensively studied in Nigeria. Therefore, this study examines the influence of public confidence in the police on victims' reporting practices in Lagos, Nigeria. Using Weberian social action as theoretical framework, survey research design, involving the use of qualitative and quantitative methods was adopted. It covered the three senatorial districts in Lagos with data obtained from 948 respondents selected through multistage sampling procedure. Six In-Depth and 12 Key Informant Interviews with 10 Case Studies were conducted for qualitative data which analysis involved the use of simple percentages, chi square and content analysis. The findings indicated that 69.7% of respondents had no confidence in the police but rural respondents had more confidence than their semi-urban and urban counterparts in the study area. However, chi-square analysis showed that public confidence in the police is not significantly related to crime reporting (χ^2 p value > 0.05). The study concluded that public confidence in the police is central to the provision of local intelligence through effective reporting by respondents. Since poverty does not breed confidence, it suggests that government should eliminate poverty to make the police engage confidence-building activities to enhance public approval of its services.

Keywords: Police, Crime Reporting, Confidence Building Activity, Public Confidence, Public Safety.

Introduction

From our traditional society era to the modern times, various role players and actors have been involved in law enforcement and public order services in our communities. In traditional epoch, there was a highly developed 'age grade system' and 'masquerade cults' in Igbo societies; secret societies such as *Ogboni*, *Oro* cults and *Egungun* Masquerade cult

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performed crime control functions in Yoruba communities and so did *Ekpe* cult groups among the Effiks and Ibibios (Ibidapo-Obe, 2004). These institutions, which were all recognized in the traditional era, ensured that crimes were controlled and social order maintained (Chukwuma, 2011). The history of community police relation in Nigeria has been described as cold as the idea of policing imposed on the country by the colonial masters was calculated to foster an antagonism between the policed and the police (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2000; Onoja, 2007; Tamuno, 1970).

In modern era, state institutions such as the police leading in crime control and public order services have been accepted. Simultaneously, there are very active non state actors such as private security companies and Informal Policing Structures (IPS) popularly called vigilantes. However, when it comes to support for reforms and improving the services of the actors, only state institutions are focused leaving out the non-state ones. Forgetting that without the complement of the non-state actors, they would not be very effective and efficient in improving safety and security in our communities (Chukwuma, 2011). It is in this context that the question of trust in the police has been addressed by many researchers (Sharp & Johnson, 2009; Tyler, 2005; Stoutland, 2001; Hurst & Frank, 2000; Goldsmith, 2005; Macdonald & Stokes, 2006). Trust in the police is significant because without public trust in police, policing would be without consent and legitimacy, which is difficult or impossible (Goldsmith, 2005).

Police services to an ordered society are so fundamental that a substantial literature evaluating these services has emerged. An important branch of this literature uses survey data to identify variables associated with citizen satisfaction with police. Satisfaction surveys attempt to measure perceptions of actual performance against expectations about what performance should be (Cronin & Taylor, 1992). To the extent that satisfaction is likely to be high only when expectations and perceptions align (Roch & Poister, 2006); members of the public in the study site are not likely to favour the police with their confidence, except policing agencies turn a new leaf. Measures of public satisfaction with police are also important because perceptions of police affect the nature of citizen cooperation (Weitzer, 1999).

Research also suggests that victims of crime have less confidence in the police than non-victims (Cao et al., 1996; Maxson et al., 2003; Allen et al., 2006). The way that the police behave generally towards citizens may also be a factor. Studies have shown that people are more likely to express confidence if, during specific encounters, the police were perceived to have acted fairly and justly (Maxson et al., 2003; Skogan, 2005; Tyler, 2005; Skogan, 2006). This might explain that in spite of the unorthodox methods of handling suspected criminals, the OPC is said to be preferred to Nigerian Police by the general public, particularly in the south-west (Oyeduntan, 2003). In addition, Ogaga (2003) added that one of the leading obstacles against the Nigeria police is the growing hostility by the public in favour of an increased public invitation now being extended to the primordial groups especially the OPC in the south-west Nigeria for security services.

For example, in an explanation to the Speaker of the Lagos State House of Assembly, Ikuforiji and other members of the house were told how the police often put vigilantes at serious risk in the fight to rid Lagos of armed robbery and other criminal activities. The police released criminal suspects handed over to them by the vigilante group of Nigeria who in turn go after members, killing some and maiming others (Olawale, 2013). In another development, operatives at the Special Fraud Unit arm of the department of the Nigerian police force arrested three police officers from Mowe Divisional Police Station

for allegedly aiding the forceful taking over of a large parcel of land at Orimerunmu village in Mowe area of the state. One of the arrested police officers was even clad in army camouflage. In a rather tragic drama, the arrested police suspects escaped from the Special Fraud Unit operatives on the way to the Onikan Headquarters of Zone 2 Police Command (Nigeria Police Watch, 2013). Illegal activities involving the police as major perpetrators such as a few provided above cannot provoke the confidence of the people in the police. It is for these reasons that the relationships between the Nigerian police and citizens are largely characterized by suspicion, prejudice, mutual disrespect, conflict and violence (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2000). The deepening gap between the Nigerian people and the police which has resulted into crime reporting apathy might have taken its origin from this background.

Weber proposed that Sociology as a comprehensive science of the subjective meanings of the “understandable” motives of human actors attach to their actions in their mutual orientations within specific social-cultural contexts. Therefore, any behaviour outside of this web, Weber insists falls outside the purview of Sociology. Secher (1962) credited Weber with the conviction that an action is ‘social’ if the acting individual takes account of the behaviour of others and is thereby oriented in its course. The emphasis of this theory is on how customs, values, norms of particular socio cultural environment encourage or frustrate individual action on emergent issues such as crime reporting. Social Action Theory of Weber tries to explain how actors and society interact. Worried about the factors that predispose residents of Lagos to a high level of criminal victimisation with a disproportionate level of crime reporting, analysts have, pointed to a weak criminal justice system (Yishau, 2005) and corrupt socio-economic and political institutions (Olonishakin, 2008). Ologun (2010) reported that Onovo, a former Inspector General of Nigerian Police, acknowledged the fact that some policemen were working with criminals. All these do not explain the influence of public confidence in the police on crime reporting of victims in Lagos, Nigeria. It is against this background that this study provided answers to the following questions: (i) How does public confidence in the police affect crime reporting? (ii). What are the activities of the police that cause members of the public to lose confidence in their efficiency? (iii). How can members of the public be stimulated to report their experiences of crime to the police?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was formulated to help in the realisation of the research objectives:

Public confidence in police has a significant relationship with victims’ crime reporting.

Methods

The study was conducted in Lagos State in the South-West geopolitical zone of Nigeria. CLEEN Foundation (2013) found that the general public believed that crime rate in Lagos increased from 12.0% to 21.0% between 2011 and 2012. These statistics confirm that crime rate in Lagos is high enough to justify the choice of the state for this inquiry. The study was based on quantitative and qualitative data. The survey method administered copies of a structured questionnaire on 948 respondents selected through a multi-stage sampling procedure from the urban, semi-urban and rural communities of Lagos. In all, copies of a questionnaire were administered on each of the 1040 household heads. Using purposive sampling strategy, in-depth interviews were conducted with 3 traditional rulers

and 3 religious leaders selected equally from each of the three Senatorial Districts and 12 key informant interviews with 3 Crime Police Officers, 3 Chairmen of Landlord Associations and 6 Members of Victims' Family. Ten case studies were conducted with victims of serious crimes to elicit qualitative data.

Quantitative data analysis involved univariate tools (simple percentages), bivariate technique (cross tabulation with chi square test) and multivariate technique using logistic regression. All these were processed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0 Version). For qualitative data, raw data from in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and case studies were transcribed, sorted and reorganised to form a body of seamless whole. Ethnographic summaries were used to enrich quantitative data and verbatim quotations were inserted to illustrate qualitative evidence. In all, both quantitative and qualitative analysis complemented each other.

Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 provides the selected socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. The sample included 66.1 percent of males and 33.9 percent of females. The proportion of male to female has implication for the nature of crime that will take place in the study site and the kind of response by reporting. More commonly, male adults are more culturally assumed to qualify for crime reporting than females. In some important ways, age affects exposure to, avoidance and report of victimisation. In this study, a 10-year age grouping was used. The age patterns of respondents indicated that only 1.9% of respondents were aged less than 20 years; about 44.6% of the respondents is between ages 21 – 30 years. However, respondents between the age group of 21-30 and 31-40 years account for 72.4% of the total study population. Individuals within this age group are frequently more powerful than those younger and older. Their strength makes them more able to acquire easily stolen items. They also possess more vigorous power of expression and determination which may make these respondents pursue the reporting of crimes in the study area more passionately.

The data indicate that only 8.1% of the respondents did not have the advantage of formal education at all while 61.2% had tertiary education. Data on the marital status of respondents revealed that 46.5% of respondents are single; 44.6% were married, and 8.9% of the respondents were either separated, divorced or widowed. Moreover, 68.7% of the respondents are Yoruba, 20.6% were Ibo and 10.8% were other ethnic groups. Religious affiliation of the respondents showed that Christians constituted 56.3%, 42.7% of the respondents were Muslims and 0.9% of the respondents belonged to traditional religion. On the place of residence of respondents, 54.4% lived in the semi urban, 38.6% of the respondents lived in the urban and 7.0% of the respondents lived in the rural communities of Lagos. The income distribution of the respondents showed that 53.0% of respondents earned N10, 000,001 and above and 3.2% of the respondents earned between N4, 100,001:00-N6, 000,001:00. The distribution of occupation showed that respondents engaged in various occupational activities as 61.7% of them did businesses, 19.6% were students, 11.1% of the respondents were civil servants and 7.6% of them were others.

Table 1. Socio Economic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	N	%
Sex		
Male	627	66.1
Female	321	33.9
Total	948	100
Age		
Less than 20 years	18	1.9
21 – 30	423	33.2
31 – 40	264	27.8
41 – 50	135	14.2
51 and above	108	11.4
Total	948	100
Education		
No Formal Education	77	8.1
Primary Education	99	10.4
Secondary Education	192	20.3
Tertiary Education	580	61.2
Total	948	100
Marital Status		
Single	441	46.5
Married	423	44.6
Separated/Divorced/Widowed	84	8.9
Total	948	100
Ethnicity		
Ibo	195	20.6
Yoruba	651	68.7
Others	102	10.8
Total	948	100
Religion		
Christianity	534	56.3
Islam	405	42.7
Traditional/Others	9	.9
Total	948	100
Residence		
Urban	366	38.6
Semi urban	516	54.4
Rural	66	7.0
Total	948	100
Occupation		
Civil Servant	105	11.1
Business Person	585	61.7
Students	186	19.6
Others	72	7.6
Total	948	100
Annual Income In Naira		
Less than N 2,000,000:00	219	23.1
N 2,000,001 – N 4,000,000:00	69	7.3
N 4,000,001 – N 6,000,000:00	30	3.2
N 6,000,001 – N 8,000,000:00	74	7.8
N 8,000,001 – N 10,000,000:00	54	5.7
N 10,000,001 and above	502	53.0
Total	948	100

Results

1. Respondents' level of Victimization

This section discusses the victimisation experiences of community people in the study site as a necessary antecedent that will elicit a better appraisal of public confidence in police performance. Also, this is expected to give credible insight into the common bases which residents explore before they take their crime reporting decisions. Therefore, a deliberate attempt is made here to make the extent of victimisation precede the need for victims to report crimes in the study sites.

Statistical evidences in table 2 in respect of victimisation show that 91.4% of male respondents and 33.3% of female respondents were victimised in the study site. Data confirm that 87.5% of the respondents within the age group of 21-30 were the least victimised in the study site. Victimization across marital statuses was high as 96.4% of separated/divorced/widowed respondents were most affected, 90.1% of married and 90.0% of single. Data revealed that 90.5% of the respondents from the least of the various religious denominations that were victimised came from Christianity. Also, the ethnic group that experienced the least victimisation was 82.4% of Hausa respondents. Data confirm that 87.7% of respondents who earned less than N2,000,000; 87.0% who earned between N2,000,001–N4,000,000:00; 91.9% who earned between N6,000,001–N8,000,000:00; N8,000,001–N10,000,000:00 and 92.1% who earned N10,000,001 and above respectively acknowledged that they were victimised in the past. While the category of occupation that experienced the least victimisation involved 91.4% of the business people respondents were the least victimised and in terms of education, 90.0% of the respondents without formal education were also victimised.

2. Respondents' level of Public confidence in the Police and Crime reporting

This section discusses the phenomenon of public confidence in the police as an inevitable prelude to the need to consider whether or not victims will report their victimisation experiences. The level of public confidence in the police was found so potent to the extent that it alone could enable or disable crime reporting in the study site. If the public has confidence in the police, partnering with policing agencies will be a matter of course but if the reverse is the case, crime reporting becomes a burdensome enterprise. This section goes about this by using both qualitative and quantitative evidences, in a mutually complementary manner to access how the level of public confidence in the police could either encourage or discourage crime reporting in the study site.

Statistical evidences in table 3 in respect of crime reporting show that 50.2% of male respondents and 43.0% of female respondents reported their victimisation in the study site. Data also confirm that 57.8% of the respondents within the age bracket of 41-50 reported more victimisation in the study site. Crime reporting across marital statuses was low. However, 53.6% of separated /divorced/widowed respondents reported the most crimes, next were 50.4% of the married respondents and 44.2% of single respondents.

Table 2. Distribution of Socio Demographic Characteristics of Respondents and State of Being Victimized

Respondents' Sex	Respondents' State of Having Being Victimized				Total	
	Yes		No		N	%
	N	%	N	%		
Male	(573)	91.4	(54)	8.6	(627)	100
Female	(286)	33.3	(35)	10.9	(321)	100
	$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} < 0.05)$					
Respondents' Age						
Less than 20 years	(18)	100.0	(0)	0.0	(18)	100
21 – 30	(370)	87.5	(53)	12.5	(423)	100
31 – 40	(246)	93.2	(18)	6.8	(264)	100
41 – 50	(129)	95.6	(6)	4.4	(135)	100
51 and above	(96)	88.9	(12)	11.1	(108)	100
	$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} < 0.05)$					
Respondents' Marital Status						
Single	(397)	90.0	(44)	10.0	(441)	100
Married	(381)	90.1	(42)	9.9	(423)	100
Separated/Divorced/ Widowed	(81)	96.4	(3)	3.6	(84)	100
	$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} > 0.05)$					
Respondents' Religion						
Christianity	(483)	90.4	(51)	9.6	(534)	100
Islam	(367)	90.6	(38)	9.4	(405)	100
Others	(9)	100.0	(0)	0.0	(9)	100
	$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} > 0.05)$					
Respondents' Place of Residence						
Urban	(330)	90.2	(36)	9.8	(366)	100
Semi Urban	(471)	91.3	(45)	8.7	(516)	100
Rural	(58)	87.9	(8)	12.1	(66)	100
	$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} > 0.05)$					
Respondents' Ethnicity						
Ibo	(171)	87.7	(24)	12.3	(195)	100
Yoruba	(604)	92.8	(47)	7.2	(651)	100
Others	(84)	82.4	(18)	17.6	(102)	100
	$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} < 0.05)$					
Annual Income In Naira						
Less than N 2,000,000:00	(192)	87.7	(27)	12.3	(219)	100
N 2,000,001 – N 4,000,000:00	(60)	87.0	(9)	13.0	(69)	100
N 4,000,001 – N 6,000,000:00	(27)	90.0	(3)	10.0	(30)	100
N 6,000,001 – N 8,000,000:00	(68)	91.9	(6)	8.1	(74)	100
N 8,000,001 – N 10,000,000:00	(49)	90.7	(5)	9.3	(54)	100
N 10,000,001 and above	(463)	92.2	(39)	7.8	(502)	100
Total	(859)	90.6	(89)	9.4	(948)	100
	$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} > 0.05)$					
Occupation						
Civil Servant	(96)	91.4	(9)	8.6	(105)	100
Business People	(541)	92.5	(44)	7.5	(585)	100
Students	(162)	87.1	(24)	12.9	(186)	100
Others	(60)	83.3	(12)	16.7	(72)	100
Total	(859)	90.6	(89)	9.4	(948)	100
	$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} < 0.05)$					
Education						
No Formal Education	(68)	88.3	(9)	11.7	(77)	100
Primary Education	(96)	97.0	(3)	3.0	(99)	100
Secondary Education	(183)	95.3	(9)	4.7	(192)	100
Tertiary Education	(512)	88.3	(68)	11.7	(580)	100
	$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} > 0.05)$					

Table 3. Distribution of Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents and State of having Reported Crime

Variables	Respondents' Report Of The Incident Of Crime					
	Yes		No		Total	
Respondents' Sex	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	(315)	50.2	(312)	49.8	(627)	100
Female	(138)	43.0	(183)	57.0	(321)	100
$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} < 0.05)$						
Respondents' Age						
Less than 20 years	(9)	50.0	(9)	50.0	(18)	100
21 – 30	(189)	44.7	(234)	55.3	(423)	100
31 – 40	(117)	44.3	(147)	55.7	(264)	100
41 – 50	(78)	57.8	(57)	42.2	(135)	100
51 and above	(60)	55.6	(48)	44.4	(108)	100
$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} < 0.05)$						
Respondents' Marital Status						
Single	(195)	44.2	(246)	55.8	(441)	100
Married	(213)	50.4	(210)	49.6	(423)	100
Separated / Divorced/ Widowed	(45)	53.6	(39)	46.4	(84)	100
Total	(453)	47.8	(495)	52.2	(948)	100
$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} > 0.05)$						
Respondents' Education						
No Formal Education	(27)	60.0	(18)	40.0	(45)	100
Primary Education	(36)	36.4	(63)	63.6	(99)	100
Secondary Education	(96)	50.0	(96)	50.0	(192)	100
Tertiary Education	(294)	48.0	(316)	52.0	(612)	100
Total	(453)	47.8	(495)	52.2	(948)	100
$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} < 0.05)$						
Respondents' Religion						
Christianity	(243)	45.5	(291)	54.5	(534)	100
Islam	(207)	51.1	(198)	48.9	(405)	100
Others	(3)	33.3	(6)	66.7	(9)	100
Total	(453)	47.8	(495)	52.2	(948)	100
$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} > 0.05)$						
Respondents' Residence						
Urban	(171)	46.7	(195)	53.3	(366)	100
Semi Urban	(243)	47.1	(273)	52.9	(516)	100
Rural	(39)	59.1	(27)	40.9	(66)	100
Total	(453)	47.8	(495)	52.2	(948)	100
$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} > 0.05)$						
Ethnic Group						
Ibo	(90)	46.2	(105)	53.8	(195)	100
Yoruba	(324)	49.8	(327)	50.2	(651)	100
Others	(39)	38.2	(63)	61.8	(102)	100
Total	(324)	49.8	(327)	50.2	(651)	100
$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} > 0.05)$						
Occupation						
Civil Servant	(39)	37.1	(66)	62.9	(105)	100
Business People	(303)	51.8	(282)	48.2	(585)	100
Students	(84)	45.2	(102)	54.8	(186)	100
Others	(27)	37.5	(45)	62.5	(72)	100
Total	(453)	47.8	(495)	52.2	(948)	100
$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} < 0.05)$						
Annual Income In Naira						
Less than N 2,000,000:00	(87)	39.7	(132)	60.3	(219)	100
N 2,000,001 – N 4,000,000:00	(35)	50.7	(34)	49.3	(69)	100
N 4,000,001 – N 6,000,000:00	(14)	46.7	(16)	53.3	(30)	100
N 6,000,001 – N 8,000,000:00	(29)	39.2	(45)	60.8	(74)	100
N 8,000,001 – N 10,000,000:00	(21)	38.9	(33)	61.1	(54)	100
N 10,000,001 and above	(267)	53.2	(235)	46.8	(502)	100
Total	(453)	47.8	(495)	52.2	(948)	100
$(\chi^2 p \text{ value} > 0.05)$						

Data also revealed that while 53.2% of the respondents in the category of no formal education reported crime and the category that reported crimes the least was that with primary education. Among the religious denominations, data revealed that 51.1% of Muslim respondents reported the most crimes, 45.5% of Christians and 33.3% of traditional religion. Data revealed that 49.8% of the Yoruba respondents reported more crimes than other ethnic groups. While 46.2% of Ibo respondents reported crimes, 38.2% of Hausa respondents reported their victimisations. Furthermore, 51.8% of the respondents by occupation who reported the most crimes were business people while 51.8% of the respondents who earned N10,000,000:00 income reported the most crimes.

Statistical evidences in table 4 in respect of public confidence in the police show that 50.5% of the respondents had confident in the police, 47.7% had no confidence while 43.2% of the respondents were indifferent to the police. Findings also show that respondents have reasons for their either not having confidence in the police or being indifferent to the institution. Among the array of factors reported by 51.4% of the respondents that were associated with police practices are bribery and extortion, 49.1% of the respondents suggested ineffectiveness of the police and 48.1% of the respondents pointed at the direction of police corruption. Other concerns are police complicity in crime 40.0%, 33.3% of the respondents said it was police nonchalance and 47.4% said police lack of integrity.

Table 4. Public Confidence in the Police

Police Practices that Influence Reporting Chi sq. p v = > .05	Respondents' Report of The Incident of Crime					
	Yes		No		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Bribery/Extortion	51.4	(162)	48.6	(153)	100	(315)
Ineffectiveness	49.1	(81)	50.9	(84)	100	(165)
Corruption	48.1	(111)	51.9	(120)	100	(231)
Nonchalance	33.3	(30)	66.7	(60)	100	(90)
Lack of Integrity	47.4	(54)	52.6	(60)	100	(114)
Police Complicity in Crime	40.0	(6)	60.0	(9)	100	(15)
Others	50.0	(9)	50.0	(9)	100	(18)
Total	47.8	(453)	52.2	(495)	100	(948)
Respondents' Confidence in Local Police	Chi sq. p v = > .05					
Not Confident	47.7	(316)	52.3	(347)	100	(663)
Confident	50.5	(96)	49.5	(94)	100	(190)
Indifferent	43.2	(41)	56.8	(54)	100	(95)
Total	47.8	(453)	52.2	(495)	100	(948)

Table 5 shows the percentage distribution of respondents by public confidence in the Police and crime reporting practices among respondents in Lagos State. In urban, semi urban and rural communities of Lagos, 69.8% of male respondents and 69.6% of female respondents had no confidence in the police across Lagos communities. Similarly, the rate of public confidence by gender disaggregation follows the above pattern as 21.6% male respondents acknowledged that they had confidence in the police. However, the 8.6% rate of indifference of male respondents to the police and 10.1% rate of indifference of female respondents were rather low compared with widespread assumptions about the level of public indifference to the police in the study site.

Table 5. Distribution of Respondents by Public Confidence in the Police and Crime Reporting Practices among Respondents in Lagos State

Confidence of Respondents In The Local Police	Respondents by Public Confidence in the Police		Total
	Yes	No	
Male			
Not Confident	69.8% (220)	70.2% (219)	70.0% (439)
Confident	21.6% (68)	17.6% (55)	19.6% (123)
Indifferent	(8.6%) 27	12.2% (38)	10.4% (65)
Total	100.0% (315)	100.0% (312)	100.0% (627)
Female			
Not Confident	69.6% (96)	69.9% (128)	69.8% (224)
Confident	20.3% (28)	21.3% (39)	20.9% (67)
Indifferent	10.1% (14)	8.7% (16)	9.3% (30)
Total	100.0% (138)	100.0% (183)	100.0% (321)
	Chi-square p value > 0.05		

Furthermore, data in table 5 indicate that while male and female were confident or lacked confidence in the police as the case may be at approximately the same rate; male respondents were more indifferent to the police than female respondents in the study setting. However, the chi square analysis indicates the non-existence of a significant relationship between public confidence in the police and crime reporting. Therefore, the hypothesis that public confidence is significantly associated with crime reporting is rejected and its alternative accepted. In other words, public confidence in the police is not significantly associated with crime reporting in the study site is accepted.

3. Qualitative Analysis: case study, in-depth and key informant interviews

Additional evidences from case study, in-depth and key informant interviews indicate that respondents had no confidence in the police. Reporting incidents of crime to the police by respondents in the study site is an effort taken, even in the face of the most intense fatality, to fulfil all formal righteousness. It is the consensus that the respondents did not expect any miraculous crime unravelling outcomes from the police. However, 46.7% of urban, 47.1% of semi-urban and 59.1% of rural respondents reported their victimisation experiences to the authorities.

A female key informant interview participant noted:

It is not that women who reported are more educated, highly placed or courageous. Marriage, in a way, implores all married actors to do certain things with caution. Crime reporting is one of the few areas a responsible married woman requires the approval of her husband before she goes ahead. The reason for this in Yoruba land is that 'ibere ija lamo, enikan o mo opin re' (meaning that initiating a fight is often clearly defined; no one can predict the end of it.)

An in-depth interview respondent observed:

Those who reported their victimisation experiences did so in order to meet formal expectations that are part of conditions imposed on them by their workplaces, insurance companies or medical norms, in case of assault that involves medical attention. If there is no formal victim compensation programme in Nigeria and the police are these unpredictable, what will the situation look like if that resource becomes part of Nigeria's structured way of dealing with victims? The police may become even more vicious in their interaction with victims and crime witnesses.

A key informant interview respondent said:

Someone who looks at the police from a distance will not appreciate the level of police unsympathetic character. They injured my husband through a stray bullet; we took him to the hospital where the doctors demanded for police report. We went back to the same police station from which my husband's assailants came. We were denied the report. Without this document, the hospital refused to treat my husband. He bled profusely until I went to cause commotion in the station before the DPO ordered that the document be issued to me. Throughout his ordeal in the hospital, no police officer came to pay him any visit. With this experience, I will never have anything to do with the police. They work as if the milk of human kindness in them evaporated with the end of the Nigerian civil war. It is horrid being at the receiving end!

Another key informant interview respondent, male noted:

Most of the time, it is the bribery character of the police which members of the public emphasise that covers up the institutional ineffectiveness of the police. Representatives of our community went to report the invasion of our community by armed robbers. At the counter, the police were asking us money for stationery to document our complaints and also money to fuel their vehicles before they could come to the crime scene to do preliminary investigations. The collective nonchalance which officers on duty displayed convinced us that the fight against criminals may not succeed if the police are at the arrowhead of such effort. I am scared of the police more than I am of a criminal. Half the time you deal with a policeman, you are dealing with a uniformed criminal. Whereas, you are sure that any individual who exhibits criminality in mufti is a criminal. There could be no doubt about that. Except government deals with impunity, unethical practice of the police, corruption is the next war that will consume Nigeria, God forbids a bad thing!

A female in-depth interview respondent added:

Any witness or crime victim who approaches the police without bearing in mind their lack of integrity and possible complicity in crime may end up becoming the criminal. The police doubt everything about you, including the names you have voluntarily supplied. It is preposterous of the police to expect community people to report crime to it with this kind of unhealthy suspicion. The police need to be

reformed to adopt modern techniques of crime investigation and partnering with community residents to uncover crime events using local intelligence.

A male in-depth interview respondent reasoned differently:

Members of the public are treating the police as if it is not a reflection of the larger society. What is it that the police manifest that is absent in the larger society? Is it corruption, nepotism, bribery and the integrity deficit? It is high time Nigerians stopped passing the bulk. Society gets the police it deserves. If Nigerians want a reliable police, they must come together to ensure the social responsibility of the police. Where do you go in Nigeria that corruption does not stare you continually in the face? Is it the banks, schools, ministries, stadium, hospitals, families, even churches and mosques? Corruption is everywhere present in Nigeria. Though nothing works in Nigeria, I know something that works in Nigeria than everywhere in the world. It is corruption. Confirmed!

Data from the following case study (Box 1) reveal some of the reasons most crime victims develop aversion for the police:

Box 1

I am 32 years old, a Muslim, bachelor, West African school certificate holder, and driver from Yoruba part of Nigeria. It was on a Saturday afternoon when the police embarked on their undue arrest and torture. I cannot recall the exact amount on me which they collected but they inflicted serious injuries on me. The police arrested me for no just reason, detained and charged me to court. The criminals in this instance are the police. Who is empowered to arrest them? The crime was reported to a civil rights lawyer. The lawyer created for me a public awareness that I was being detained for a crime I did not commit. Subsequently, I was granted bail. The event affected my economic and psychological stability. Since the crime was committed by the police, it further deepened my lack of trust in them. My previous experience of dealing with the police was worst. How the type of crime influenced my decision to report initially threw me into confusion. The relationship of the police with me as their victim was really agonizing. My experience with the police was negative. The quantum of information made available was insignificant. The level of sympathy which the police demonstrated in my case was very poor. As it were, these combined to further dampen my enthusiasm to develop any confidence in the police. To me, the police do not have the nerve to solve crime in my neighbourhood because the level of police operation is ridiculously low. The case got to court and I was present. The police were never punished. My court experiences were partially positive. My experience would have been fulfilling if the court had told the police its limitations and indicted its erring members. As a result of the performance of the formal criminal justice system in my case, I think public policy should consider the use of informal crime control alternatives to solve crime in future. I did not get any support at all how much more of being inadequate. I would, no doubt, have loved a system for getting support that did not involve the police in my community. Nobody provided any form of support for me. I paid the lawyer myself. I learnt someone wanted to support me, but the divisional police officer declined. Victims of crime should be enabled to access traditional support from their people, it is useful at least, it will provide victims with the sense of belonging to a community if the government will not offer to support. However, the family is still useful but the level of support in the family is not encouraging.

The data in the case study (Box 2) show some of the police conduct that lead some victims and members of their family to develop an unhealthy relationship with the law enforcement agency.

Box 2

I am 59 years old, civil servant, Christian, married with children. I hailed from Osun State with primary school certificate. In the night of December 23 last year, armed robbers came to my house at about 1:45am and left 3:40am. The gun shots that indicated their arrival destabilised me. It was like a battle. Immediately, I switched off my lights. The moonlight enabled me to see the robbers but they couldn't see the inside because it was dark. The robbers attempted to come in through the front door but they couldn't because of the protector that was in place. They also tried to come in through the children's room, they also couldn't. As they tried to break the wall, the children all ran into my room. I took my cutlass in defence of my life and that of my children. I stood at the point they expected to enter waiting for the first to come in. Being very dark, no one attempted to enter. When this situation continued for some time; I tried to call other neighbours to assist me. One of the robbers shot in the direction to which the alarm came. The bullet tore my mouth into pieces. Immediately, I collapsed.

When they heard my groans, they left. They were all male and about 15 in number and were all below 18 years. I did not report the case because I immediately became immobile. However, members of my family reported to the police. They reported expecting the robbers might be apprehended. The police came requesting me to mention a suspect. Since I couldn't suspect innocent people, the police lost interest in my case. Therefore, no arrest was made and so, no one got punished. I quite honestly suspected my lifestyle might have provided the criminals the attraction to come and victimise me. I am convinced that if the police were offered some money, they would have fished out my assailants. I did not have any prior dealings with the police. My interaction with the police in the aftermath of my victimisation does not inspire me to report future crime to them. The police could have arrested the criminals if they wished. I know that because my people had no money to motivate the police, they didn't do as much as they could have done were their palms greased. The experience was a completely negative one. The police did not come to me with sufficient practical evidence of having investigated the crime. The police also did not show sympathy for my condition. Therefore, I have no confidence in their service.

The police, using their professional expertise, ought to have combed the entire environment to pick up suspects by themselves. From the conduct of the police in my particular instance, I am convinced that they could not solve crime. If the police continue to distant themselves from the pains of victims, unfortunate members of the society will continue to see the police more as foes than friends they are always presumed to be. The event did not result in any court case since there were no suspects. The money my family could have wasted for the police was spent at the general hospital to manage the operation of my mouth. The amount of support I received during the event showed to me that my neighbours were only rich in the spirits. No substantial amount came from any of my neighbours. However, I received significant moral and financial support from my labour union. It was the kind of support I expected because I was handicapped. The support took care of my hospital bills and fed my family. Nevertheless, I would prefer to find in my society a kind of system for making support available to victims which would not involve the police in any way. A victim needs financial, material, informational as well as emotional support to recover from his/her trauma. It is essential that friends and family friends visit the victims in the hospital to accelerate their recovery. Government did not offer any form of support at all. This is regrettable! Except the police begin to keep victims' secrets very confidential, the police may not get any clues from victims and witnesses, how much more of report crimes. There is need for the involvement of traditional conflict resolution structures to keep crime off communities. Thus, government should consider community policing and evolve more enduring ways by which victims of crimes could be assisted to get control of their lives after victimization.

Discussion

There have been numerous studies of survey data regarding citizen attitudes towards police. The factors examined include a plethora of demographic variables and other individual attitudes, context specific characteristics including measures of citizen's perceptions of police performance. More of older citizens who were respondents in this study reported more crimes. This finding was corroborated by studies conducted by Sampson and Bartusch (1998), Kusow, Wilson and Martin (1997) and Correia and Lourich (1996) which indicate that older persons view police more favourably than younger persons. However, a few other studies including Cao, Frank and Cullen (1996) did not find age to be important. The present study found males reporting crimes more than females. While some researchers, including Correia, Reisig and Lourich (1996) corroborated the above finding, Cao, Frank and Cullen (1996) found females to be more positively disposed toward the police compared to males.

The finding that a bulk of male and female respondents had no confidence in the police across Lagos communities contradicts previous research which has consistently shown that typically most people have positive opinions about the police (Merry, Power, McManus, & Alison, 2012). As such, the majority of people have favourable opinions regarding engagement with police when the need arises, for instance, when reporting a crime (Mastrofski et al., 1999). However, the willingness of residents to report crime varies depending on the type and severity of the crime (Kääriäinen & Sirén, 2011) and contextual factors (such as culture) that may influence crime reporting (Schaible & Hughes, 2012) favourably or otherwise. Judging by previous studies of the relationship between citizens' socio-economic status and satisfaction with police, findings on socioeconomic variables have been unclear. For example, several researchers, including, Hagan and Albonetti (1982) concluded that people with lower incomes rate police less favourably than those with higher incomes.

Brown and Benedict (2002) observed that some studies have found that rural residents view police less favourably than residents of urban areas. In spite of the foregoing, findings of the present study confirmed the reverse. In rural communities of Lagos, crime reporting taboos and stereotypes exist in abundance. In the face of pronounced high level of violent crimes involving all the communities of Lagos less incidents are reported to the police. That respondents reported their victimisation at fairly an average of half is in agreement with findings elsewhere as of the estimated 4.3 million violent crimes committed against U.S. residents in 2009; about half were reported to police (Truman & Rand, 2010). Data also show that rural dwellers view the police more favourably than the urban residents. Results indicate that though relatively fewer crimes were in the rural areas, rural residents reported the highest number of crimes. The extent of police related pathologies, normally experienced by residents in their neighbourhood, is another potential determinant of satisfaction with police. Cao, Frank and Cullen (1996) found that perceptions of neighbourhood disorder and incivility have significant ability to explain citizen satisfaction with police. This finding suggests that citizen perception of police related conditions in their neighbourhoods will be critical in the formulation of an individual's satisfaction level.

The current study therefore broadens our understanding of the factors that influence victim's decision to notify police when a crime occurs at different levels of community involvement in crime control in the study area. Specifically, within the social action theoretical framework, the current study investigated the effects of social networks of individuals on a victim's decision to report crime to police. Using social action theoretical

framework of Weber the present study demonstrated the significant influence of individual interactions on the dynamics of reporting decisions among the victims in the study site. Current findings established that the social network in which victims decide whether or not to notify the police about their victimisation is complex. For example, contemporary American society is dominated by the norms of minding one's own business (Batson, Duncan, Ackerman, Buckley, & Birch, 1981; Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce, & Neuberg, 1997; Stürmer, Snyder, & Omoto, 2005) which is rapidly displacing Africans' normative belief in being one another's keepers. This normative explanation has been used to understand and explain actions related to a variety of crime contexts, such as bystander intervention (Hart & Miethe, 2008; Luckenbill, 1997; Miethe & Deibert, 2007; Miethe & Regoeczi, 2004). Following this theoretical explanation, semi-urban and urban witnesses and victims might have played passive roles in crime reporting either because of the manifestation of the influence of organic solidarity that has imposed blasé lifestyle on them or because they felt that nothing will accrue to them from reporting. Rather, they chose to mind their businesses and leave victims to report their victimisation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The level of confidence of community dwellers in the efficiency of the police to solve problem has some role to play in the people's willingness of victims to report crimes to police authorities. Prior to this study, anecdotal evidence that was widely believed held that urban residents reported crimes to the police more than their rural counterparts. After data analysis, it was found that the reverse is the case. Crime reporting declines as one moves from rural through semi-urban to urban communities of Lagos. In the rural communities of Lagos, the proverb that *agbefoba kii jebi* (meaning the mouth piece of government never transgresses) is everywhere accepted as the norm. This makes potential crime reporter even wearier of reporting crimes to the police. Though there is no significant association between public confidence and crime reporting, the declining public confidence in the police results from the failure of the regulatory body to enforce professional ethics among personnel. This negligence has caused the reluctance of citizens to engage with the police to tackle crimes by making local intelligence available through crime reporting.

In order for policing agencies to design and implement crime reducing policies, police must reform their public image to make members of the Nigerian public engage with them to ensure public safety through crime reporting for crime management. The results of this study strongly support previous research that the police have to attract public confidence more by performance. Public relations gimmick will not be effective. Therefore, findings reinforce an existing challenge to policymakers by establishing that police conduct informs citizen perceptions of performance which in turn gains expression in the reporting practices of the people. As a panacea, the study suggests that the police commission should enforce police code of ethics and retool the police to earn public approval of their services by credible performance because without the police, crime reporting is not conceivable. With the police whose conduct does not provoke public confidence, crime reporting will be futile.

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