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Crime Prevention and Control: Analysis of Police and Public Perception

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Abstract

Crime is a global concern. In Nigeria, crime has brought a disconcerting problem to the populace. The police are tasked with the duties of securing lives and properties as well maintaining peace, order and tranquility. The recent surge of crime reported in literature provides enough impetus to compare police and public perception of crime, prevention and control in Anyigba Metropolis. The study adopted cross sectional survey design, and used primary method of data collection via two separate validated questionnaires. Non-parametric sampling method (purposively sample) was used to select 196 participants comprising of 128 adult residents of Anyigba town and 68 police officers from the Anyigba Divisional Police Headquarters. The study includes 152 males and 44 females with mean age of 46.51 and standard Deviation of 16.31. The Hypothesis analysed by t-test of independent sample revealed a significant difference between police and public perception of crime, prevention and control. The study recommends that police should improve on their strategies for crime prevention and control, publicize these strategies by continuous media talk show while the general public should see crime prevention and control as a collective responsibility. The current study have implications for criminologists, criminal justice practitioners, researchers, policy makers and administrators seeking to understand police as agents of law maintenance and to improve police efficiency in preventing and controlling crimes.

Keywords: Control; crime; prevention; public; perception.

Introduction

Security is one of the most vital requirements for development and societal growth, both in the physical and economic sense as well as psychological wellbeing. Security engenders peace; consequently, a mind that is at peace can rationally address the issues of procreation, economic development and societal growth. Insecurity leads to a disturbed mind and therefore brings about restless and distraught personality. The task of law enforcement agencies in ensuring security and the maintenance of peace and order is a high calling and should be handled with utmost diligence. Bearing in mind that every man by nature is self-centred (Hobbes, 1994), the presence of the state institution of law enforcement agencies that would make man act right and just is in high demand.

Literature is awash with reports of rise in armed robbery, banditry, reckless abuse of human rights including torture and extrajudicial killings (Jungle justice), embezzlement of public funds, road checkpoints extortion, heinous politically motivated murders to name but few (Karimu & Osunyikanmi, 2012; Karimu, 2014; Agbiboa, 2015; Akinlabi, 2017; EJSS, Volume 4, Issue 1, 2019

FundaUngo, 2017; Baba, Babajo & Namahe, 2017). These aforementioned crimes are common in the present day Nigeria irrespective of the high presence of law enforcement agencies whose main duties are to safeguard internal security, protect lives and properties as well as detect, prevent and control crimes in civil societies. Due to the rampant crimes, law enforcement agencies seemed to be perceived as corrupt and inefficient institution with penchant for human rights abuse (Ajayi & Longe, 2015).

In Nigeria, the police are officials of government and society, responsible for the detection, prevention and control, apprehension and prosecution of crimes and violence in the country (Alemika, 2013). As such, there is probably no other security control organisation that has an intimate dealing with the large segment of the Nigerian populace as the police. They must be available in case of crime, perceived injustice and right infringements or any of such related need and demonstrate absolute commitment at all times to render the best possible services to the public. Conversely however, there is a reverse perception from the populace aided by the seemingly policing styles of intimidation, brutality, extortion and high-handedness (Ajayi & Longe, 2015). Though Alemika (2013) observed that a combination of structural political, socio-economic and cultural factors as well as institutional inadequacies prevented the Nigerian Police Force from adequately performing their duties satisfactorily and in compliance with the rule of law at all time, personnel's personality factors of perhaps greed and lackadaisical attitudes seem to be responsible for the deepening crime rate in Nigeria. The above perceived malady in the presence of well established bodies of law enforcement agencies in Nigeria calls for scientific inquiry; thus, this study compares the police and public perceived efficacy of crime prevention and control in Anyigba, Dekina Local Government, Kogi State-Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

Presently, Nigeria is suffering from a growing crime-problem, which is progressively threatening its sovereignty, security and development (Alemika, 2012). Despite the constitutional powers granted the police to maintain general security, public safety and peace, the quality of security provided by them has nothing to be proud of, as there has been manifestation of unabated crimes in loss of lives and properties as well as oppression, harassment, extortions and intimidations not only perceived to be perpetuated by the influential/ruling class but also aided by the police officers who were supposed to curb this social vices. The Nigerian police force has a very serious image problem in the eyes of the

public; it hopes to protect and serve, having been perceived as harbinger of corruption, instrument in the hand of the ruling class, terror inducers and late or non comers to crime scenes (Dalhatu, 2013). The perceived nonchalance, ineptitude, inefficiency and ineffectiveness of police officer, endangers the citizens and blots the institutional reputation of the police that they represent. Given the foregoing malady, this empirical study therefore aims to analyse police and public perception on crime, crime prevention and control in Anyigba Metropolis, Kogi State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Concept of crime

In criminal law, crime is an act of omission which attracts sanctions such as fines, imprisonment or even death (Scott & Marshall, 2009). A normative definition views crime as a deviant behaviour that violates prevailing norms, cultural standards prescribing how human beings ought to behave normally. The conflict orientation sees crime in the perspective of the ruling class. Society consists of competing interest groups which are in conflict with each other, due to unequal distribution of wealth which results in inequality in economic and social powers. According to Quinney (1980) “dominant class creates laws that will protect their own interests, and that lower class crime is as a function of miserable life condition and conflict with the interest of the dominant class; and that the dominant class constructs beliefs about crime which makes the dominant class look good and the powerless look bad.” For Mathews (1993) crimes are the outcome of social changes, which is brought about by social developments and exposure to the Western culture and their life style. Crime is in an important sense, a socially constructed phenomenon; its meaning is profoundly influenced by considerations of time and space.

The concept of crime prevention and control

Crime prevention is the anticipation, recognition and appraisal of a crime risk and the initiation of some action to remove or reduce it. Crime prevention and control are, however, closely related and their elements overlap. Crime prevention involves the community, government as well as individuals; crime control involves the whole of the criminal justice system, that is, the police, courts and prisons (Danbazzua, 2007). According to Robert (2003), Criminologists have adopted three perspectives of crime prevention as primary, secondary and tertiary preventions; (a) Primary Prevention – the attempt to change

environmental conditions that provide opportunities for occurrence of criminal acts. Here, the police are the primary focus and three main issues are involved which are –increasing the effort, increasing the risk of committing crime, and reducing the reward for the potential offender; (b) Secondary prevention – the engagement in early identification of potential offenders by seeking to intervene and prevent criminal behaviour from developing. Various bodies and organisations such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs); (c) Tertiary Prevention - This deals with actual offender and interventions aimed at preventing further criminal acts. The intervention here centered at the prisons and probation services (Roberts, 2003).

The Nigerian Police

Historically, the Nigeria Police Force is variously documented to fully understand the context of policing in the present day Nigeria (Rotimi, 1993; Onoge, 1993). Some scholars believe that modern police emerged from two types of police system; the Hausa Constabulary of 30 ex-slaves from Sierra Leone constituted and controlled by the British Colonizers who through wars, treaties obtained by violence and foul means, subjected nationalities to compliance and the local forces established around local or native authorities controlled by local surrogate (indigenous traditional rulers) (Alemika, 2013; Alemika, 2003). The main purpose of the constabulary was the enforcement of colonial laws and gunpoint extraction of resources; to protect the colonial interest in Lagos colony and not to serve the citizens (Onyeozili, 1998). Constabularies were alien to the customs and traditional values of the local people; as they were Hausa-speaking ex-slaves from Sierra Leone and non-indigenes of Lagos colony (Onyeozili, 1998). This first foundation of policing ingrained in the citizens a police force that could not be trusted and should be avoided at all cost (Alemika, 2013; Oluwaniyi, 2011; Otu, 2012).

Between 1900 and 1905, Otitte (1990) stated that the various police forces and constabularies created by the colonialist were amalgamated into two major forces; Northern Nigeria and Southern Nigeria Police Force; which were brought together in 1930 to be what we called today the Nigeria Police Force (Onyeozili, 2005). Today, the police have variously been referred to, rightly or wrongly as “the first line of defence of the nation”, “the first line of attack by the public,” “the keeper of the public’s peace” (Tinubu, 1972). Unfortunately, the Nigerian police have turned against the very citizens that are supposed to be collaborators; by their inhumane acts, brutality and the exorbitant charges (Akinlabi, 2017).

Perception of police, crime prevention and control in Nigeria

Crime prevention and control is an issue of concern to almost all societies in the globe, due to the frequent rise in crime rate. Reports from United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2013) Numbeo (2015) revealed that Africa and Americas are highest continents with crime rates in comparison with other regions; 16.3 per 100,000 people and Africa 12.5 per 100,000 which is quit greater than the worldwide average of 6.2 per 100,000 people. FundaUngo (2017) revealed that the rates of crimes are still increasing in most of the countries which is a confirmation of the projection of UNODC (2013) that nearly a third of the world killings committed in 2012 happened in Africa. Six African countries –Nigeria, South Africa, South Sudan, Libya and Kenya are ranked among the twenty nation-states with the highest number of crime rates in the world as of 2015 and in that same year, Africa was ranked the second in terms of regional murder rates (Numbeo, 2015). This assertion record is still said to be correct with Numbeo (2019) revealing that South Africa, Namibia and Nigeria are the top three African countries with the highest rate of crime at 77.02, 68.14 and 64.64 percentage of world crime index. This report also has it that most Africa countries occupy the top 40 world ranking in the crime index chart.

The aforementioned are confirmation of Dambazau (2007) who maintained that Nigeria has been on the world crime map since 1980s. The types of crimes that are very common in country ranges from homicide, armed robbery, rape, housebreak, car theft, fraud, drug and food abuse, bribery and corruption, gambling, kidnapping, smuggling, human trafficking, drug trafficking, cyber crime, money laundering, advanced fee fraud (419) and more recent ones including oil bunkering and the Boko Haram killings (Akinlabi, 2017; Baba, Babajo & Namahe, 2017).

Available statistics from UNODC (2013) reveals that, the rate of murder in Nigeria stand at 20 per 100,000 people in 2012. Based on the data from the law enforcement agents, the number is on the rise, especially in crimes like homicide, corruption, kidnapping, theft and other forms of ferocity (Nigeria Police, 2009). A recent investigation carried out by Afrobarometer (2015) discovered that 39 percent of Nigerians felt insecure in their neighborhoods and 33 percent had some anxiety about crime happening in their households. This report has not significantly improve as Afrobarometer (2017) confirmed that more that 13 to 18 of the people 1200 representative sample surveyed in both rural and urban of the Nigerian communities expressed the feeling unsafe walking in the neighborhood, fear of crimes occurring at home, had something stolen from them and had been physically attacked.

Though the high number of crimes in Nigeria can be explained by the instability and failure, as well as historic dynamics which include inter-ethnic, intra/ inter religious prejudices, poverty, corruption, unemployment and the effects of improved successes of anti-drug law enforcement, the Nigerian Police saddled with the responsibility of safeguarding lives and property has not lived up to its bids as good number of people do not only feel unsafe but also attacked in both rural and urban communities.

Police in Nigeria has been viewed as a luxury denied to the general public (Alemika, 2013; Orole, Gadar & Hunter, 2014). Crime perpetration abounds uncontrollably. The nature of these crimes includes armed robbery, murder, rape, car theft, burglary, fraud, bribery and corruption, food and drug adulteration, gambling, smuggling, drug and human trafficking, kidnapping, money laundering, internet scam, advanced fee fraud and other illegal activities (Akinlabi, 2017; Baba, Babajo & Namahe, 2017). The vast coverage of police seems not to have effectively prevented and controlled crime, rather police have been indicted in several ways including the widespread of corruption, unfair dealing with suspects, bad temper, bullying and other abuses of citizen's rights (Omisakin, 1998; Murphy Bradford & Jackson 2016). Anyigba town as the choice setting of this study is based on it being known as the hot bed of various criminal activities like thuggery, armed robbery, Kidnapping, cultism, prostitution etc. carried out by students, settlers and indigenous residents (Esomchi, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

Anomie Theory

The development of Durkheim's Anomie theory has been traced to the idea of anomia in ancient Greek philosophy (Orru`, 1987). Orru` (1987) maintained that Durkheim alluded different meaning to anomie in several works, but his most explicit discussions of this concept were presented in *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893/1984) and *Suicide* (1897/1951). The present study is anchored on the *Division of Labor*, where Durkheim (1893/1984) discussed anomie in terms of an abnormal form of the division of labour. He maintained that the division of labour is the primary source of social solidarity in modern societies. When it is well developed, the structure of society consists of a complex yet cohesive system of specialized and interdependent units, a situation that represents normal situation. The division of labour, however, can emerge in an abnormal form, one that does not engender solidarity, which can manifest in three different forms, namely; the "anomic division of labour," "the forced division of labour," and what can be referred to as a "badly

coordinated” division of labor (although Durkheim simply labeled it “another abnormal form”). An anomic division of labour exists where relationships between different organs of a society lack adequate regulation (Durkheim, 1893/1984). This condition is attributed to an abrupt change in the social system. During this change, many well-established relationships and rules become obsolete, but the development of new functional relationships and rules that sanction them cannot keep pace with the transformation that is occurring. Thus, there is a lack of adequate regulation, a state of anomie. Anomie is present when social controls are weak, when the moral obligations that constrain individuals and regulate their behaviour are not strong enough to function effectively. In Nigerian context, the inability of existing rules and regulation, societal social institutions to adequately prevent the breakdown of family values, high unemployment rate, bribery and corruption, inadequate equipment to match force with criminals’ sophisticated weapons and the demoralized personnel have contributed significantly to the incapacitation of the police to prevent and control crime; thereby leading to the rise in criminal activities such as murder, rape, theft etc.

Research Questions

- i. What is the perceived relationship between public and police in crime management?
- ii. What are the abuse and assaults suffered in Anyigba community by the inappropriate policing style in the last 12months?
- iii. What is the public perception of the effectiveness of police performance in crime prevention?
- iv. What is the difference between police and public perception on crime prevention and control?

Aim and objectives of Study

The aim of the study is to analyse police and public perception of crime, crime prevention and control in Anyigba, Kogi State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Examine the perceived relationship between public and police relationship in crime prevention and control.
- ii. Ascertain the abuse and assaults suffered in Anyigba community by the inappropriate policing style in the last 12months.
- iii. Analyse public perception of the effectiveness of police performance on crime prevention.

- iv. Examine the difference between public and police perception on crime prevention and control.

Research Hypothesis

- i. There will be significant difference between police and public perception on crime, crime prevention and control.

Method

Design: A cross-sectional survey design was adopted for the study, because the participant of the study cut across varying characteristics.

Participants: The participants of this study are of two categories; the residents of Anyigba community and the members of Nigerian Police. The researcher recruited 13 field workers who were trained on the sampling techniques as well as methods of completing the questionnaire designed for the collection of data via primary method. These field workers were given 130 questionnaires (10 each) to administer to residents of Anyigba community, this yielded 100 percent return, but 128 were properly completed. The police participants were sampled by the researcher with 74 questionnaires, 68 which returned were properly completed, resulting to 196 participants. The administration and collection of the questionnaires among the participant lasted for a day between 10:00am to 4:00pm. Participants sampled have mean age of 34.5 with standard deviation of 10.3. This implies that majority of the respondents are middle-aged adults, who must have direct or indirect dealings with the police.

Sampling technique and procedure: Multi-stage and non-parametric sampling technique (purposive sampling) were used in the selection of research participants. The first stage involved simple random sampling from the three Kogi Senatorial Districts (i.e. Kogi Central, Kogi East and Kogi West) with Kogi East Senatorial District being selected. The second stage involved the simple random sampling from the list of the nine Local Government Areas (i.e. Ankpa, Bassa Dekina, Ibaji, Idah, Igalamela/Odolu, Ofu, Olamaboro and Omala) in Kogi East Senatorial Districts with Dekina Local Government Area being drawn. The third stage is the selection of Anyigba from the list of wards in Dekina, through balloting. The fourth stage is selection of 13 polling units following even number counts from the list of the 27 available units in Anyigba Ward. The fifth stage is the selection of 2 participants from every ten house among the selected polling unit, with 128 public participants selected for the study. Also 68 police officers were purposively selected in Anyigba police station for the study. The

questionnaires were administered to 204 participants but the researcher was able to retrieve 196 questionnaires making for a 94.1 percent response rate. The research was conducted by upholding ethical requirements of avoidance of harm, confidentiality, informed consent, among many other criteria during data collection. Useable data 196 were subjected to analysis via SPSS software, while improperly completed questionnaire were discarded.

Instrument: The major instrument used in this study is self-report questionnaire which is divided into five sections A to D. Section A dealt with the socio-biographic details such as sex, age, education, marital status, religion, ethnicity, employment status, housing arrangement, report of offence and types of mobility of respondents. Section B to C of the questionnaire contained 12 items. Section B contained 10 items which measured police abuse and assaults as were adapted from Akinlabi (2017) and Ajayi and Longe (2015) on a four-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 – strongly disagree to 4 – strongly agree with Cronbach alpha $\alpha = 0.84$. Section C contained 1-item that measures the relationship between public and police in crime prevention, this was rated on 5-point Likert scale; Section D contained 1-item that measured public and police perception of the effectiveness of police performance, this was rated on a 4-point Likert Scale of 1“very ineffective” 4“very effective”. The scales recorded between 0.84 to 0.95 Cronbach alpha (α).

Analysis of Data. Socio-demographic information of participants and research questions were analysed using descriptive statistics. T-test was used for analysing the hypothesis.

Results

Table 1: Demographic characteristics (n=196)

S/n	Bio-data	Frequency	Percentage%
1	Sex		
	Male	152	77.6
	Female	44	22.4
2	Age		
	20-29yrs	57	28.0
	30-39yrs	42	22.0
	40-49yrs	48	24.5
	50-59yrs	37	19.0
	60yrs+	12	6.5
3	Educational qualification		
	No schooling	31	16.2
	Primary school	47	23.9
	Secondary	62	31.4
4	Marital status		
	Single	60	30.4
	Married	136	69.6
5	Religion		
	Islam	46	23.6
	Christianity	99	50.4
	African Tradition	51	26.0
6	Tribe		
	Igala	117	60.0
	Ebira	21	10.0
	Yoruba	49	25.0
	Others	9	5.0
7	Housing Arrangement		
	Renting	127	65.0
	House owners	69	35.0
8	Employment Status		
	Unemployed	61	31.0
	Unskilled workers	86	43.9
	Skilled worker	49	25.1
9	Offence Status		
	No offences committed	157	80.0
	Minor offence	31	16.0
	Major offences	8	4.0
10	Means of mobility		
	Cars	59	30.0
	Bikes	109	55.6
	Others	28	14.4

Survey data, 2019

Table 1 above presents the socio-demographic characteristics and revealed that 152(77.6%) were males while 44(22.4%) were females. Age wise, 20-29yrs represent 28.0%, 30-39yrs (22.0%), 40-49yrs (24.5%) 50-59yrs (19.0%) while 60+yrs represent 6.5% of the sample. Educational qualification entails; no schooling (15.0%), primary (23.9), secondary

(31.4%), tertiary (28.8%). There are 30.4% single participants while 69.7% are married. Muslims represent 23.6%, Christians 50.4% and African Traditional Religion (ATR). Sixty percent of the participants are Igala by tribe, Yoruba 25.0% and Ebira 10% while 5.0% are from other tribes. The housing arrangements revealed 65.0% renting while 35.0% own the house. Thirty-one percent are unemployed, 43.9% are unskilled while 25.1% are skilled employees. Eighty percent had no offences/crime committed, 16.0% had minor offences while 4.0% had major offences. On the type of mobility, 30.0% have cars, 55.6% have bikes, while 14.0% have other means of mobility.

Analysis of Research Questions

Table 2: The perception of public and police relationship in crime prevention and control

How would you describe the relationship between the public and police in crime management? N = 128		
	Frequency	%
Very cordial	4	3.1
Cordial	8	6.2
Indifferent	12	9.4
Antagonistic	50	39.1
Very antagonistic	54	42.2

Survey data, 2019

Table 2 revealed that an overwhelming majority of the public saw the public and police relationship as antagonistic and very antagonistic at 39.1% and 42.2% respectively, while only 6.2% and 3.1% of the sampled population described the relationship as cordial and very cordial respectively.

Table 3: Abuse and assaults suffered by members of Anyigba community by the inappropriate policing style in the last 12months

S/n	Assaults and abuse	Min.	Max	N	Mean	Sd
1	Torturing and subjection to harsh treatment	1	4	128	3.08	.85
2	Forceful demand to offer a bribe	1	4	128	3.28	1.08
3	Force people to do or say something against their wishes	1	4	128	3.04	.83
4	Threats and verbal abuse	1	4	128	3.18	.66
5	Extortion of money from public	1	4	128	3.57	.88
6	Killing some members of public	1	4	128	1.94	.73
7	Kicking and beating	1	4	128	2.12	1.09
8	Slapping	1	4	128	2.46	.88
10	Injuring	1	4	128	2.08	.96

Survey data, 2019

Table 3 present the types of abuse and assaults the public suffer from the police. Analysis indicates that extortion of money has the highest mean score value of 3.57 (sd=.88) and killing members of public have the least score value of 1.94 (sd=.73). The table revealed that forceful demand to offer bribe has the mean score value of 3.28 (sd=1.08), threats and verbal abuse 3.18 (sd=.66), torturing and subjection to harsh treatment 3.08 (sd=.85), force people to do or say something against their wishes 3.04 (sd=.83), slapping 2.46 (sd=.88), kicking and beating 2.12 (sd=1.09) and injuring 2.08 (sd=.98).

Table 4: What is the public perception of the effectiveness of police performance in crime prevention?

Response	Public N = 128		Police N = 68	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Very effective	2	1.6	38	55.9
Effective	7	5.5	21	30.9
Ineffective	55	43.9	5	7.4
Very ineffective	64	50.0	4	5.8

Survey data, 2019

From the table 4 above, it was revealed that 50.0% of the public view the performance of police as very ineffective; 43.9% said that police performances are ineffective, while 5.5% is of the assertion that police performances are effective and only 1.6% view police

performance as very effective. The analysis also revealed that 55.9% of the police view the general performance of police as very effective; 30.9% said that police performances are effective, while 7.4% is of the assertion that police performances are ineffective and 5.8% view police performance as very ineffective. This means that police are of the perception that within the ambient of constitution in respect to their duties, they are up and doing.

Testing Hypotheses

Table 5: T-test of independent samples showing the difference between police and public perception on crime, crime prevention and control

	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Df	T	P. value	Decision
Police	68	3.34	.69	194	-17.83	.000 (>.05)	Sig.
Public	128	1.63	.61				

Survey data, 2019

Table 5 above presents the result of **hypothesis one** which states that there will be significant difference between police and public perception on crime prevention and control. The hypothesis was significant ($t=-17.83; df=194; p(.000) < .05$); police (68;3.34) reported higher perception of crime prevention and control than the public (128;1.63). The hypothesis was fully supported because and therefore retained.

Discussion of findings

This study analysed police and public perception of crime, crime prevention and control in Anyigba metropolis, Dekina Local Government, Kogi State Nigeria. Result revealed that an overwhelming majority of the public saw the public and police relationship as antagonistic and very antagonistic at 39.1% and 42.2% respectively. This result is consistent with Ogunwale (2004) and Akinlabi (2017) who observed a high level of loggerheads between police and the public. This antagonism stems from public perception of police's insensitivity and lukewarm attitude to duty. According to Ogunwale (2004), this attitude has portrayed the police on the bad light among the public and therefore it becomes necessary if police is rebranded by ensuring that officers and the public have a new orientation about the function of the police in the society.

The study also revealed that public experience from police brutality and abuse ranged from extortion of money, forceful demand of bribe, threats and verbal abuse, torturing and subjection to harsh treatment, slapping, kicking, beating and killing members of the community. The brutality and abuse such as the use of whips, gun, teargas portrays inhumanity as well as contravenes the section 34 (11) (a) of the 1999 Nigerian constitution. These acts constituted degrading treatment prohibited by chapter 4, section 34 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 and section 31 of the 1979 constitution which states thus:

Every individual is entitled to respect
for dignity of his person and
accordingly no person shall be
subjected to torture or inhuman or
degrading treatment

The result showed that while public view police performances in relation to crime prevention and control as very ineffective while the police view their own performance as very effective. This result is discussed along with the hypothesis which yielded a significant difference between police and public perception on crime prevention and control. The ineffectiveness of police on crime can be as a result of many factors ranging from police personnel and citizenship ratio, inadequate and non commensurable weapons at the disposal of the criminals, facilities such as patrol van, public-police negative relationship, inadequate motivation for the police etc. Police perception of effective performance is disconcerting, more also that it is reported at a time where the occurrences of crimes of robbery, killings, kidnappings etc, are high; when people are afraid in their own houses not to talk about traveling to other parts of the country. This calls for the attention of the national orientation agency to embark on awareness campaign and reorient the police about the spate of crimes and its victims in Nigeria, sensitize the institution and deter the political influence on police's discharge of their constitutional duties.

Conclusion

The study which analysed police and public perception of crime, crime prevention and control in Anyigba metropolis, Dekina Local Government, Kogi State Nigeria; concludes that:

1. Overwhelming majority of the public saw the public and police relationship as very antagonistic while insignificant few of the sampled population described the relationship as cordial.
2. Extortion of money, forceful demand of bribe, threats and verbal abuse, torturing and subjection to harsh treatment are the most common abuses and assaults suffered by suspects from police officers.
3. Public do not feel the impact of police officers in relation to protection of lives and property, defending the rights of citizens and being friends in times of needs.
4. Police perceived that within the ambient of constitution that they are effective and efficient in the performance of their duties in relation to crime prevention and control.
5. Significant difference exists between police and public perception on crime prevention and control.
6. There is a significant relationship between crime, crime prevention and crime control.

Recommendations

In line with the above conclusions, the study recommends that public image of the police can be changed if police through the National Orientation Agency (NOA) are reoriented towards adequate care and respect for human dignity, citizen's fundamental human rights and privileges. This orientation will give rise to police imbining work ethics that encourage relentless attitude towards redeeming their public image of underperforming, immodest brutality and use of predatory force and ineffective policing strategies. Police should be citizen-focused, adopt democratic policing; this will encourage public trust and respect for the law. Government through the Police Commission (PC) should encourage police reform, weeding off the bad eggs among the police personnel.

Implication of study

The current study have implications for criminologists, criminal justice practitioners, researchers, policy makers and administrators seeking to understand and improve police efficiency as well as preventing and controlling crimes. Therefore, this study contributes to existing literature by seeking to provide a better understanding of police as an important agent of law and order maintenance in Nigeria.

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