

INTERROGATING PUBLIC RELATIONS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE NIGERIAN POLICE FORCE: A STUDY OF FORCE HEADQUARTERS ENUGU

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the effect of public relations on the performance of Nigerian police force, a study of force headquarters Enugu, with specific objectives to examine ways in which public relations practices of the Nigerian police force affects her relationship with the public, to identify the various ways public relations practice of the Nigerian police could be conducted to enhance her relationship with the public for improved performance. Institutional theory was used in interrogating the work. The study used descriptive survey method, data were collected using both primary and secondary sources. However, the population of the study is 262, while the sample size was 158 using Taro Yamani statistical formular. The study revealed that the public relations practice of the Nigerian police force has negatively affected her relationship with the public. However, the study concludes that the Nigerian police force has earned herself bad image in the society, which has made it very difficult for the public to build their trust. The study therefore in the light of the findings and conclusions recommended amongst others that concerted efforts should be made by the authorities of the Nigerian police force to boast the level of trust and confidence that the masses have on them. The study examines the effect of public relations on the performance of Nigerian police force, a study of force headquarters Enugu, with specific objectives to examine ways in which public relations practices of the Nigerian police force affects her relationship with the public, to identify the various ways public relations practice of the Nigerian police could be conducted to enhance her relationship with the public for improved performance. Institutional theory was used in interrogating the work. The study used descriptive survey method, data were collected using both primary and secondary sources. However, the population of the study is 262, while the sample size was 158 using Taro Yamani statistical formular. The study revealed that the public relations practice of the Nigerian police force has negatively affected her relationship with the public. However, the study concludes that the Nigerian police force has earned herself bad image in the society, which has made it very difficult for the public to build their trust. The study therefore in the light of the findings and conclusions recommended amongst others that concerted efforts should be made by the authorities of the Nigerian police force to boast the level of trust and confidence that the masses have on them.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Recognizing police institution all over the world has been predicated on the need to secure and protect the interest of society in terms of rights, duties, and obligations which are the different facts of the contractual nature of the human society (Smah, 2012; Zems, 2019). Any nation's security is a source of pride and hope at any moment. They have a responsibility to uphold the nation's territorial integrity, foster peaceful coexistence, and safeguard the people in every way. In the course of development of society, different interest are aroused in the process of attaining political, economic, social, and cultural goals and challenges that arise in the course of achieving these aims. The existence of law and order is often highly valued in the African culture. The stability of society is generally threatened by their absence. The police perform the most prominent and strategically important role in defending the system in a culture where individuals

perceive crime as an urgent danger to their wellbeing. Their main goal is to maintain peace and control crime while ensuring that each person's constitutional rights are upheld (Adesina, 2013). In modern Nigeria, the police are viewed in low esteem and do not benefit from the public's accustomed collaboration since they are perceived by the populace as a tool and face of the administration in power, which is constantly prepared to unleash terror at the first opportunity. The attitude of the staff, not the type of work they are required to accomplish, determines how the public views the police. In many instances, their actions undermine the rule of law, threaten the public, and damage the institutional reputation of the police they represent. Despite the fact that they put their lives at danger to protect people, the police are well aware of how unpopular they are with the general public. They are booed and jeered upon by the people at the least chance, who call them vile and offensive names. This hostility toward or resentment of the police may have some connection to the colonial background of the Nigerian Police (Zems, 2019).

It is imperative to state that public relations cuts across every field of human endeavour, be it politics, economy, governance, management and even education to mention but a few. It is a principle and practice that is as old as man and his environment (Nwambuko, 2017). Fundamentally, public relations implies the systematic and organized mechanism of packaging and sharing information, or opinion with the public, through sustained interaction and approach which is often aimed at achieving a specific objective (Ugwu, 2014). More so, it is the process of ensuring that the said organization engages itself in meaningful relationship, discussion and interaction with the public that is geared towards educating, enlightening and re-orientating the public about the recent achievements and dispositions of the organization (Okoro, 2011). However, it is undeniably true that the Nigerian police force has a poor reputation in society, making it very challenging for members of the public to have faith in, confidence in, and hope in the police. The myriad atrocities committed by police officers, which generally do not speak well of them and are harmful to the general people, are what give them their terrible reputation. These unfavorable police practices in Nigeria include extorting money from the populace, making false accusations against civilians, and even providing weapons and ammunition to armed robbery gangs. These actions damage the reputation of the Nigerian police force, necessitating the use of public relations to improve the public's perception of the force.

Research has also shown that public relations has not produced the desired results since it was first implemented in the programmes and activities of the Nigerian police force. As a result, stakeholders in this field must identify the fundamental barriers to the achievement of these goals and develop strategies to improve the implementation of public relations within the Nigerian police force (Adekoya, 2016). A study of the Nigeria Police State Headquarters Enugu is necessary to examine the police-public relations in Nigeria because the role it is expected to play in her concerted efforts to combat crime, insecurity, and social disorder in Nigeria cannot be close to perfect without the cooperation of the people. It is against this backdrop that this study tends to question Public Relations on the Performance of the Nigeria Police Force.

1.1 Objectives of the study

The general objective the research work is to examine the Effect of Public Relations on the Performance of Nigeria Police Force. The specific objectives of the study will include.

- To examine the ways public relations practice of the Nigeria police force affected her relationship with the public.
- To identify the various ways public relations practice of the Nigeria police force could be conducted to enhance her relationship with the public for improve performance.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Conceptual review

2.1.1 Concept of Public Relations

Public relations have been defined in various ways by scholars, authors, academics, professionals and even laymen. Fundamentally, these definitions share common objectives as regards the execution of public relations in the Nigerian Police Force (Eze, 2012). Public relations are defined in terms of public persuasion. In this respect it is viewed as the process of establishing forum where by the larger society can be engaged in persuasive discussions with the Nigerian Police Force, through selected channels, which is aimed at making them accept the opinions, views and activities of the Nigerian Police Force. In this regard, the Nigerian Police Force's public relations officer sees to it that the necessary measures are taken to ensure that the public is encouraged to develop trust and confidence in the Nigerian Police Force. More so, research has shown that the Nigeria public do not so much believe in public relations programme that is centered on persuasion, rather, police force (NPF) is what matters most (Mbanefo, 2016). More so, public relations are equally defined in terms of reorientation. In this concept, it provides the forum whereby the Nigerian Police Force can conduct reorientation for Nigeria public based on the previous and present trends in the Nigerian Police Force, thereby promoting knowledge update in the area of public relations and the Nigerian police force. This principle of reorientation enhances the idea of re-education and re-acknowledgement of events and trends within the Nigerian police force and how the public can constantly be well informed about state policing through public relations (Oluwasola, 2016).

Finally, public relations in the Nigerian Police Force are equally explained in terms of socialization. In this perspective, it is considered as the mechanism through which the Nigeria Police Force socializes with the public, such that the areas of weaknesses, strengths, opportunities and threats are critically dealt with to the benefits of both the public and the Nigerian Police Force, (Ubah, 2010). Public relations in the present day Nigerian Police Force is an issue which has generated a lot of controversies, agitations and speculations, to the extent that the society where we belong do not seem to appreciate public relations in the Nigerian police force (Okoro, 2012).

2.1.2 Public Relations Approaches and Activities

Every organization, whether big or small has a reputation either good or bad. When Center & Jackson (2011) claim that the managerial difficulty is whether something is intentionally done to face the fact of reputation, they essentially corroborate this. In essence, an organization's reputation can be either good or poor by the pragmatic approach its public relations staff takes while handling problems. To this aim, some businesses' PR strategies are proactive while others are reactive.

- i. *Proactive Public Relations:* To Center & Jackson (2011) practitioners using this approach are often analyzers/prospectors. They clarify that these professionals always anticipate potential future events, designate efficient plans and programs to deal with such forecasts, and then assess results.
- ii. *Reactive Public Relations:* To Oluwasola & Ibitoye (2017) this describes the conduct of public relations practice in response to external influences. It deals typically with changes that have negative consequences on an organization. As a result, reactive public relations strategies aim to restore an organization's reputation, control crisis situations, stop market eroding, and boost sales. Public relations professionals should be proactive, but it's important to remember that there may be unplanned events that require reactive answers. However, only those that plan ahead will be able to successfully navigate a reactive circumstance. Simply said, comprehensive and adequate planning is required to prepare for any future developments that are both anticipated and unforeseen.

Since public relations is about creating an institution's image, this means that every method of communication and every action (verbal or nonverbal) taken or done all contribute to the perception that people have of an institution. This then leads into defining corporate image and its management (Oluwasola & Ibitoye, 2017).

2.1.3 Need for Public Relations in Organisational Image Management

Of course, a well-planned attempt to have a favorable impact on an organization's image is the top benefit of adopting public relations plans and programs for image management and reputation. The lack of a comprehensive strategy and the overemphasis on communication are mostly to blame for flaws in employing public relations as a means of image management. In essence, every public relations tool that is suitable for use with the image of such an organization must be used (Oluwasola & Ibitoye, 2017). This includes traditional public relations tools like press releases, advertising, press conferences, sponsorships, open door meetings with the community or some stakeholders, organizing shows, etc. Massey (2013), citing Treadwell & Harrison (1994), signaling the importance of Public Relations, argued that organizational image management is important for two reasons. First, images determine stakeholders' emotional, behavioral, and cognitive reactions to the organization. Public relations is about creating a favorable image. Second, the use of shared images enables interdependent relationships between organizations and stakeholders. Behavior, communication, visual presentation, results/performance, and external influences (such as media messages, rumors, other stakeholders reviews and appreciations) all have an impact on an organization's reputation. Consequently, image management should be tackled using a comprehensive public relations strategy.

Center & Jackson (2011) have emphasized the necessity of a positive working connection between the media and public relations staff in order to effectively serve the needs of the general public. They contend that journalists and public relations professionals owe a duty of courtesy, honesty, and truth because of their capacity and opportunity to influence public opinion. A high degree of ethical responsibility involving moral standards and integrity is implicit in serving the ultimate best interest of the public, they stress. According to Ajala (2013), friendly media relations may be a resource that proves invaluable in times of corporate crises. This, she claimed, can be seen in the media's favorable coverage of the situation. The researcher, however, scowls at the aforementioned submission. It should be reminded that positive media coverage of a crisis involving a large number of fatalities, like as the Lekki Toll Gate, will only paint the media and security personnel as callous and careless. Even attempting to do that would be going against the principles of successful public relations, which center on forming connections and being honest.

Therefore, Center & Jackson (2011) identify a number of recommendations that practitioners could implement in order to foster positive media interactions.

- i. Confirmation that the company has a designated spokesman who is readily available.
- ii. Being as open and honest as you can in your responses to questions, within the clear bounds of national security and competitive advantage, as well as out of sympathy for individuals the news has impacted.

- iii. Creating positive news events as a history to counteract negative news occurrences. Don't just sit back defensively and wait for bad news.
 - iv. Constantly teaching and preparing staff members and spokespersons on how to act in front of the media.
 - v. Anticipating and preparing for the unexpended by setting up a crisis management committee.
- In all, professionals should make an effort to have timely, open, friendly, direct, and two-way communication with the media.

2.1.4 Understanding the Nigerian Police Force (NPF)

The Nigeria Police is the principal law enforcement and the lead security agency in Nigeria with a staff strength of about 371,800 police officers. Adding 278,200 new recruits to the existing 371,800 police officers is what will raise the force's size above 650,000. The National Protection Force (NPF) is a fairly sizable organization made up of 36 State commands divided into 12 zones and 7 administrative units. IGP Usman Alkali Baba is currently in charge of the agency. Major renovations were made to it in 2020 (Odeyemi & Obiyan, 2017). The Nigerian Police (NP), which has exclusive jurisdiction over the whole country, was established as the national police of Nigeria under the 1999 constitution. A constitutional clause, however, also allows for the establishment of unique NPF branches "forming part of the armed forces of the Federation or for their protection of harbours, waterways, railways, and airfields." The Port Security Police, one of these sections, reportedly had between 1,500 and 12,000 officers on staff in 1990, according to various accounts (Akinola, 2012). The Inspector-General of Police created the Police Mobile Force as a strike or anti-riot unit to handle incidents of civil unrest. It is intended to take over operations when normal police forces are unable to handle a significant crisis. There are now 12 MOPOL Commands, also known as MOPOLs 1 through 12, according to Oluwasola and Ibitoye (2017), and they are in command of 52 Police Mobile Squadrons that are scattered over the 36 State Commands and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). After fluctuating between N360 million and N380 million from 1984 to 1988, the NPF operating budget increased to N521 million in 1988. More noteworthy were the enormous capital inflows of N206,000,000 in 1986 and N260.3,000,000 in 1988, which accounted for 3.5 and 2.5 percent of the total federal capital expenditures in those years. These increases were used to buy cutting-edge communications equipment, vehicles, and weapons, including the 100 British Leyland DAF Comet trucks that were delivered in 1990, to combat the rising crime wave. Despite these purchases, the budget of the force still needed to grow in order to meet its needs, according to a 1990 NPF report (Oluwasola & Ibitoye, 2017).

The Nigerian police force started as community policing, a situation whereby every family in a community will send their representative to participate in safeguarding lives, properties and environment, in the day and in the night. This form of policing started in England in the 18th century, (Adesanya, 2016). Also, during this era, the metropolitan police of London was equally established by Sir Robert peel. In this approach, able bodied men in the society where crime is prevalent were trained and paid to perform their functions as police men, which saw them working day and night to protect the city (Edeh, 2011). However, the British colonial rulers formed the consular guard in Bonny, which later led to the formation of the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) as an organized system of policing. The custom has persisted in Nigeria up to the present day (Ikeh, 2012). Despite the fact that public relations played a significant role in the Nigerian police reform exercise, the Yaradua administration's reform of the Nigerian police force did not appear to restore the hope, confidence, or trust that the Nigerian public had in the Nigerian police force (Nwachukwu, 2014).

2.1.5 History of the Nigerian Police Force

The history of the Nigerian Police Force has been extensively documented in order to completely comprehend the Nigeria of today's policing. The first police force in the country was established in 1861; and between 1861 and 1906, the British colonizers, through wars, treaties obtained by violence and foul means, subjected the estimated four hundred nationalities that inhabited the territory of Nigeria. Alemika (2015) pointed out that these nationalities were amalgamated at various levels and times, which resulted into the creation of the colony and protectorates of Southern and Northern Nigeria, in 1900. These two protectorates were further amalgamated in 1914 to become a political entity-the colonial Nigeria state. According to Alemika (2015), other police forces were created between 1867 and 1914 to maintain colonial definition of law and order within the different nationalities subjected to British colonial rule. Two types of police system were maintained by the colonialist. These were forces and constabulary established and controlled by colonial officials and the local forces established around local or native authorities controlled by local surrogates – indigenous traditional rulers. In between 1900 and 1905, Otite (2012) stated that the various police forces and constabulary created by the colonialist were amalgamated into two major forces Northern Nigeria Police Force and Southern Nigeria Police Force. In particular in the Northern and Western regions of the nation, the two forces coexisted with the local/native authority police forces between 1917 and 1930. In 1930, the police forces from the North and South were combined to form the Nigeria Police Force, which is still in operation today. The forces also coexisted with local police units until 1966, when they were disbanded as a result of their abuse as a tool for political repression, extortion, and annihilation (Ajayi & Longe, 2018).

At inception, the force was saddled with 'normal police duties' as well as 'extra police' functions. The normal police duties' and para-military roles, which the colonial authorities assigned the Nigeria Police, have remained largely

unchanged for the past seventy-three years. The upkeep of law and order is the police's primary duty everywhere in the world. This fundamental goal calls for the protection of public order and peace, the prevention, control, and combat of criminal activity, the provision of aid and services to community members in need, and the upholding of the rule of law. In the same perspective, (Ajayi & Longe, 2018) viewed the idealistic vision of the police roles as explained by John Alderson's advocacy that the police should:

contribute towards liberty, equality and fraternity ... help reconcile freedom with security and to uphold the rule of law...facilitate human dignity though upholding and protecting human rights and pursuit of happiness...provide leadership and participation in dispelling chromogenic social conditions... contribute towards the creation and reinforcement of trust in communities, strengthen the security of persons and property and the feeling of security of persons, investigate, detect and activate the prosecution of offences, within the rule of law, curb public disorder, deal with major and minor cases and to help and advice those in distress where necessary (Ajayi & Longe, 2018, p.73).

In this context, Ajayi & Longe (2018) opined that Alderson's advocacy served as one of the major reasons why critics of the Nigeria police have labeled the establishment as over centralized, pro-state and belligerent not to serve the society or the people but to serve some parts of society and some particular people at the expense of others. This view justifies the critics' notion that the Nigerian Police are pro-government while the public see them as unfriendly with penchant to unleash terror. It is important to note that a number of variables work against the Nigerian police force having excellent public relations. They include a lack of confidence, bad public relations management, the unrepentant behavior of the Nigerian Police Force's officers, and weak government initiatives and policies. Finally, poor government policies and interventions with regards to public relations. It is significant to state that the government at all levels which includes, the local, state and federal governments are expected to formulate policies that will aid the process of effective public relations in the Nigerian Police Force (NPF). However, this goal has not been achieved, as most of the interventions and policies of these governments in recent years were not pragmatic (Okoye, 2017).

2.1.6 The Effect of Public Relations on Nigerian Police Force

It is impossible to overstate the value of public relations to the Nigerian police force. The majority of police administrators have seen it as a theory and practice that is highly important for the development of the Nigerian police force.

- i. One of these outcomes is a change in how the Nigerian police force is seen.
- ii. Involving the public in state policing
- iii. Suppressing criminals and gangs in the society
- iv. Involving the government in the business of managing Nigerian Police Force and
- v. Making the Nigerian Police force more competitive in discharging her functions.

2.1.7 Prospects of the Nigeria Police Force and Public Relations

It is significant to state that the Nigeria police force (NPF) through the adoption of public relation in discharging its functions effectively has the following prospects (Madubuike-Ekwe & Obayemi, 2019; Onyeozili, 2015; Zems, 2019; Odekunle, 2014 and Alemika, 2015). Firstly, the prospect of building a greater confidence and trust by the public which will create room for the appreciation and acceptance of the programmes and activities of the Nigeria police force. Also, this ambition can be actualize by using public relation to change the negative impression that has been created about the force in the recent past, through sensitization, re-orientation and enlightenment of the Nigeria public. Secondly, the Nigerian police force through public relations equally have the prospect of reorganizing public relations within the force such that the information that is communicated to the public is timely, reliable and through the appropriate medium, which ensures that the impact of public relations is felt by the public. In addition, this prospect will equally give room for wider acceptance of the programmes of the Nigerian police force. Thirdly, the Nigerian police force have the prospect of sensitizing its personals to desist from their evil habits, most especially extortion of money from the public and aiding and abating crime in the society by providing arms, ammunitions and information to various criminal gangs. This ambition will be actualized by proper remuneration and motivation of the personnel's of the Nigerian police force. Also, the prospect of completely preventing the distortion of public relation activities by criminally inclined members of the society. This prospect will be achieved by using the appropriate media to showcase or disseminate the criminal activities of these gangs or hoodlums, which will go a long way to adequately and timely inform the public about the imminent threats in their environment. This ambition is what the Federal Government through the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) has adopted to unravel the counter-information strategies of Boko Haram terrorists sets in Nigeria.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research work will adopt the Institutional Theory in its discussion. Institutional theory or simply institutionalism was propounded in 1977 by DiMaggio Paul, Powell Walter Meyer John and Rowan Brian (Scott, 2004 cited in Nwatu, 2012). This theory according to Ezeani (2006), argued that the activities of the government institutions, agencies and

organizations are the primary focus with regards to public policy formulation and implementation. Institutional theory is a widely accepted theoretical posture that emphasizes rational myths and legitimacy. Institutional theory focuses on the deeper and more resilient aspects of social structure. It takes into account the procedures by which institutions, such as plans, regulations, customs, and practices, come to be recognized as reliable manuals for social behavior. The creation, diffusion, adoption, adaptation, decline, and disuse of these characteristics over time and space are all explained by various aspects of institutional theory. Institutional theory looks for cognitive and cultural explanations of social and organizational events by taking into consideration the properties of supra-individual units of analysis that cannot be reduced to aggregations or direct consequences of individual's qualities or intentions. Nwatu (2012) contends that institutions need to change to survive because structural and functional institutional isomorphism will give them legitimacy. Multinational corporations, for instance, will face a variety of pressures when operating in institutionally diverse countries. Some of these pressures in host and home institutional environments have been shown to have a significant impact on practices for managing human resources and competitive strategy. Social and non-governmental organizations may likewise be vulnerable to isomorphic influences. The theory is relevant to this research project because it explains why the Nigerian police force's public relations system has to be effective and efficient. The research project is titled "Interrogating Public Relations on the Performance of Nigeria Police Force." It is obvious that without strong public relation packages and channels, the Nigeria police force cannot interact well with her environment and get the necessary trust, support and co-operation needed to execute their job. The theory shows how important good public relations are for the Nigeria police force to face the varying and diverse pressure from her dynamic environments.

4. METHODOLOGY

Table 1

Ways Public Relations Practice of the Nigeria Police Force Affected Her Relationship with the Public

Responses	Very High Extent	High Extent	No Idea	Low Extent	Very Low Extent	Total
Apparent lack of public trust on Nigeria Police Force	90 34%	81 31%	18 7%	54 21%	19 7%	262 100%
Fear of unlawful arrest and intimidation while providing information that can aid police investigation	99 38%	115 44%	8 3%	18 7%	22 8%	262 100%
Public unwillingness to cooperate with the police	69 26%	125 48%	15 6%	23 9%	30 11%	262 100%
Poor communication between the police and the public	116 44%	91 35%	13 5%	25 10%	17 6%	262 100%
People cynical about the law because of the actual or vicarious experiences of police abuse and procedural injustice	101 39%	96 37%	7 3%	27 10%	30 11%	262 100%

Source: Survey Report, 2022

The pattern of the responses presented and analysed above showed that the apparent lack of public trust on Nigeria Police Force, fear of unlawful arrest and intimidation while providing information that can aid police, public unwillingness to cooperate with the police, poor communication between the police and the public, and people cynical about the law because of the actual or vicarious experiences of police abuse and procedural injustice are the ways public relations practice of the Nigeria Police Force affected her relationship with the public.

Table 2

Various Ways Public Relations Practice of the Nigeria Police Force Could Be Conducted to Enhance Her Relationship with the Public for Improve Performance

Options	Very High Extent	High Extent	No Idea	Low Extent	Very Low Extent	Total
Re-orientation and regular counseling of the police for change of attitude towards the public	143 55%	35 13%	14 5%	41 16%	29 11	262 100%
Adequate public awareness and enlightenment over police activities	124 47%	79 30%	23 9%	25 10%	11 4%	262 100%
Quick response to emergency calls by the public	151 58%	52 20%	9 3%	23 9%	27 10%	262 100%
Framework to check intimidation, bribery, extortion and brutality by the police officers	112 43%	69 26%	37 14%	31 12%	13 5%	262 100%
Regular training of the lower rank police on public relations	52 20%	137 52%	41 16%	18 7%	14 5%	262 100%

Proper investigation of any allegation against police by the public	167 64%	51 19%	9 3%	20 8%	15 6%	262 100%
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Source: Survey Report, 2022

The pattern of responses presented and analyzed above shows that re-orientation and regular counseling of the police for change of attitude towards the public, adequate public awareness and enlightenment over police activities, quick response to emergency calls by the public, framework to check intimidation, bribery and brutality by the police officers, regular training of the lower rank police on public relations, and proper investigation of any allegation against police by the public are the various ways public relations practice of the Nigeria Police Force could be conducted to enhance her relationship with the public for improve performance.

5. ANALYSES AND RESULTS

The hypotheses were also tested using chi-square (χ^2) at significant level of 0.05.

Test Of Hypothesis One

Objective: Hypothesis one seeks to examine the way public relations practice of the Nigeria police force affected her relationship with the public.

Statement of Hypothesis One: The public relations practice of the Nigeria Police Force has negatively affected her relationship with the public.

Decision Criteria: When the computed value of chi-square (χ^2) is greater than ($>$) the table value of chi-square (χ^2), the first hypothesis will be accepted.

Table 3

Observed Frequency for Hypothesis One

Economic Empowerment programs	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Idea	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Nigeria Police Force, State Headquarters Enugu	25	12	2	9	8	56
G.R.A Area	44	11	2	2	8	67
Iva-valley Area	17	9	11	6	5	48
Ogbete Area	36	21	11	18	5	91
Total	122	53	26	35	26	262

Source: Survey Report, 2022

Calculation of Degree of freedom (DF)

$$DF = (R-1) (C-1)$$

Where R = Number of Row in the contingency table

C = Number of columns in the contingency table

$$DF = (5-1) (4-1)$$

$$= 4 \times 3$$

$$= 12$$

At 0.05 significant level and 12 degree of freedom the table value of chi-square = 21.03

Computation of chi-square (χ^2)

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where o = observed frequency

e = expected frequency

Expected frequency (e) is given by $\frac{RT \times CT}{GT}$

Where RT = Row Total

CT = Column Total

GT = Grand Total

Table 4Chi-square(χ^2) Contingency Table for Hypothesis One

Observed Frequency (o)	Expected Frequency (e)	(o-e)	(o-e) ²	$\frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$
25	23.54	1.46	2.1316	0.09
12	10.32	1.68	2.8224	0.28
2	5.75	-3.75	14.0625	2.45
9	7.39	1.61	2.5921	0.35
8	6.90	1.10	1.2100	0.18
44	7.02	36.98	1367.5204	194.80
11	3.64	7.36	51.3696	0.03
2	2.44	-0.44	1.8400	18.07
2	2.15	-0.15	1.2501	0.25
8	2.39	5.51	26.1321	13.26
17	13.82	3.18	10.3124	0.73
19	8.65	10.35	102.1225	12.81
11	15.06	-4.06	16.4836	1.44
6	3.93	3.07	9.0849	3.96
5	22.76	17.76	315.4976	13.86
36	14.25	12.75	144.0625	9.92
21	19.35	1.65	3.1225	0.02
11	9.35	1.65	3.4225	0.06
18	12.03	6.97	36.0409	3.64
5	5.27	-0.27	0.0729	0.06
				$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(o-e)^2}{e} = 276.20$

Source: Survey Report, 2022

Decision: Since the computed value of chi-square (χ^2) of 276.20 is greater than (>) the table value of chi-square (χ^2) of 21.03, hypothesis one is accepted. It is therefore affirmed that the public relations practice of the Nigeria Police Force has negatively affected her relationship with the public.

Hypothesis Two: Hypothesis two seeks to identify the various ways public relations practice of the Nigeria police force could be conducted to enhance her relationship with the public for improve performance.

Statement of hypothesis TWO: Engagement of experts and change of attitude towards the public are among the ways public relations practice of the Nigeria police force could be conducted to enhance her relationship with the public for improve performance.

Decision Criteria : When the computed value of chi-square (χ^2) is greater than (>) the table value of chi-square (χ^2), the second hypothesis will be accepted.

Table 5

Observed Frequency for Hypothesis Two

Economic Empowerment programs	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Idea	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Nigeria Police Force, State Headquarters Enugu	19	14	4	7	12	56
G.R.A Area	46	11	2	2	6	67
Iva-valley Area	11	15	8	6	8	48
Ogbete Area	36	29	11	10	5	91
Total	112	69	25	25	31	262

Source: Survey Report, 2022

Calculation of Degree of freedom (DF)

$$DF = (R-1) (C-1)$$

Where R = Number of Row in the contingency table

C = Number of columns in the contingency table

$$DF = (5-1) (4-1)$$

$$= 4 \times 3$$

$$= 12$$

At 0.05 significant level and 12 degree of freedom the table value of chi-square = 21.03

Computation of chi-square (χ^2)

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(o - e)^2}{e}$$

Where o = observed frequency

e = expected frequency

Expected frequency (e) is given by $\frac{RT \times CT}{GT}$

Where RT = Row Total

CT = Column Total

GT = Grand Total

Table 6

Chi-square(χ^2) Contingency Table for Hypothesis Two

Observed frequency (o)	Expected frequency (e)	(o-e)	(o-e) ²	$\frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$
19	1.91	1.09	1.1881	0.62
14	1.98	-0.98	0.9604	0.49
4	0.23	-0.23	0.0529	0.23
7	0.61	-0.61	0.3721	0.61
12	0.27	0.73	0.5329	1.97
46	26.34	19.66	386.5156	14.67
11	27.39	-16.39	268.6321	9.81
2	3.16	-1.16	1.3456	0.43
2	8.43	-6.43	41.3449	4.90
6	3.69	4.31	18.5761	5.03
11	71.76	-20.76	430.9776	6.01
15	74.73	17.27	298.2529	3.99
8	8.61	1.39	1.9321	0.22
6	22.96	7.04	49.5616	2.16
8	10.05	-5.05	25.5025	2.54
36	5.53	12.47	155.5009	28.12
29	4.48	-2.48	6.1504	1.37
11	66.73	-11.73	137.5929	2.06
10	79.65	16.35	267.3225	3.36
5	14.35	4.65	21.6225	1.51
				$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(o-e)^2}{e} = 90.10$

Source: Survey Report, 2022

Decision: Since the computed value of chi-square (χ^2) of 90.10 is greater than (>) the table value of chi-square (χ^2) of 21.03, the second hypothesis is accepted. It is therefore affirmed that engagement of experts and change of attitude towards the public are among the ways public relations practice of the Nigeria police force could be conducted to enhance her relationship with the public for improve performance.

6. CONCLUSION

The Nigeria Police Force's negative reputation in society has been unequivocally demonstrated in this study, making it exceedingly challenging for the general public to develop their faith in, hope for, and confidence in the Nigeria Police Force. The Nigerian Police Force has a terrible reputation because of the various crimes they have done, many of which speak negatively of them. These attitudes of the Nigerian Police Force include extorting money from the public, making false accusations against individuals, imprisoning innocent people, even providing weapons and ammunition to armed robbery gangs, regularly killing innocent people without intending to, among other things. The Nigeria Police Force ought to be aware that incidents like these harm their relationships with the general population and damage their reputation abroad. The idea that the human aspect is an essential component of effective policing is reflected in the police code of conduct. Effective public relations must be seen by the Nigeria Police Force as a lifelong effort that requires tenacity, optimism, and a constant lookout for ways to position the force favorably and build trust over time. Sincere to say, using public relations strategies to enhance how the public sees the police requires visible policing, which has four key elements: adequate funding, readiness, addressing institutional weaknesses, and a changed mindset among officers toward improper

conduct and the Nigerian people. When applied through consistent and well-thought-out public relations methods, this will serve to endear the police to the general people and aid to diminish or fully remove the bad view of the force.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are put forward.

The Nigeria Police Force's leadership should make a concerted effort to increase the degree of public confidence in them so that they can be viewed favorably. Employing the skills of independent public relations professionals to address the image issue facing the force will be a comprehensive strategy for cleaning up the police's reputation. The packaging and presentation of the Nigeria Police Force's public relations initiatives need to be improved. In order to carry out its duties effectively and efficiently, the Nigeria Police Force will benefit from the dissemination of the needed information regarding its activities. Additionally, the Nigeria Police Force must be included in the fight against corruption. This will aid in lowering extortion and bribery, two things that contribute to the seeming lack of trust between the general population and the Nigeria Police Force. The study advises that cops who commit errors should receive training, re-orientation, and ongoing disciplinary measures. As a result, the Nigeria Police Force's reputation, integrity, and culture will be improved by minimizing the crimes committed by its members. The officers of the Nigerian Police Force will also benefit from gaining the expertise in public relations needed to do their jobs properly. Since the public is the source of information, it is imperative that police become fully versed in public relations and make an effort to interact with civilians in an appropriate manner. A proper financial plan is also required, as is the correction of institutional flaws. To successfully wash the reputation of the police, the government must be ready to pay adequate resources for force actions, including Public Relations and other operational tasks. In order to stop adopting a reactive PR strategy, it is unavoidable that the Nigeria Police Force's compensation package be enhanced and that its data base be digitalized. The people's fear of the Nigeria Police Force would also be reduced as a result of increased public knowledge and overview of Nigerian Police Force actions. It is a well-known truth that people rarely provide information to the police out of concern about being intimidated and punished by them for doing so. Therefore, it is important to educate and teach the public on the activities of the Nigerian Police Force so that they can provide police with information without fear of retaliation and to prevent events like the END SARS protest from happening again.

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