

# Citizens' Assistance and Satisfaction with Community Policing in Crime Control in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** The Nigeria police have been since inception bedeviled with myriads of challenges in the course of discharging their roles of crime prevention and control. They have also lost public trust because of their high-handedness and other inhuman treatment in dealing with the public. To mend fences and ensure public acceptability, the Nigeria police reviewed series of strategies which include community policing in crime control. To this end, this paper examined Citizens' Assistance and Satisfaction with Community Policing in Crime Control in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria. Ishielu L.G.A has a total population of one hundred and fifty-two thousand, five hundred and eighty-one (NPC, 2006), while the target population studied are the adult residents who have attained the age of 18 years and above. The study is anchored on social bond theory. The study adopted mixed methods design. The sample size of 349 was generated using Fisher Lang, Stockel and Townsend method of determining sample size. The multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted in selecting respondents for the study. Questionnaire schedule was used to collect quantitative data while in-depth interviews were used to collect qualitative data. The quantitative data were processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Windows, Version 17. Also, descriptive statistics like frequency distribution tables, simple percentages and graphic illustrations were used to analyze the quantitative data while manual content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. Findings of the study indicate that majority of the citizens are ready and willing to assist police in their effort to control crime. They also indicated high level of satisfaction with police services since they cooperate with members of the community in crime control. The study therefore recommended among others that the police and members of the public's willingness to participate in activities that would ensure community safety should be seen and not mere media reports. Also, the police should eschew those behaviours that discourage the public from working with them.

**Keywords:** Assistance, community policing, crime control, police, satisfaction

## I. INTRODUCTION.

Community policing is a child of circumstance introduced by the police in the process of searching for an effective strategy to control crime, promote public safety and enhance quality of life in the community. Community policing also

entails a collaborative effort between the police and the members of the community to identify the problems of crime and disorder and develop solutions within the community, thereby making the police more responsive and connected to the communities they serve (Rosenbaum, 1989). He further observed that community policing is an idea that emerged in the mid-1980s when it was realized that formal and informal means of crime control or order maintenance were complementary and that community should work together to define "community crime prevention". Community policing as a concept was first introduced in the United States in the 1960s to increase police-community contact and reduce the fear of crime (Cordner, 1999; Innes, 2003). It also suggests a policing philosophy or crime control strategies based on the notion that community interaction and support can help control crime and reduce fear, with community members helping to identify suspects, detain vandals and bring problems to the attention of police. Barbara (2006) observed that the establishment of community policing forums empowered by 1993 interim constitution marked the official introduction of community policing in South Africa. The forum is charged with monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of the South Africa Policing Service, advising police on priorities in the neighbourhood and promoting the accountability of the South Africa Police Service to local communities.

Nigeria, on her part to strengthen police/public relationship towards crime control has since witnessed numerous policing reforms which led to the introduction of community policing in 2004. No wonder, Siegel (2005) noted that in recent years, police departments have experimented with new forms of law enforcement including community policing. Preventing crime and reducing fear of crime are both closely related to rebuilding strong communities (Giddens, 2004). Furthermore, community policing in Nigeria presumes that there is need for better communication and understanding between the police and the public. Okeke (2013) noted that community policing is more effective in preventing offending and encouraging more liberal and tolerant attitudes towards offenders.

According to Okeke, the central theme of the Nigerian policing is that community model of policing is not only meant for uniform patrol or specific community policing units rather the potential rewards cannot be fully realized unless there is a shared understanding, assistance and satisfaction of the community members towards that approach throughout police organisation.

Again, the crux of community policing in Nigeria is that for members of the police force to fulfill the privileged role they perform in the society, they must be part of and not apart from the communities they serve. In line with this, Siegel (2000) observed that decision making about the community should involve the officer on the scene not a directive from central headquarter. In all, community policing is perceived to bring the police and citizens together to prevent crime and solve crime problems in the community. The police are in a better position to interact with the members of the community and develop a cordial relationship with them. This will encourage the public to give the police sufficient information on criminal hideouts. It is against this background that this study examined the citizens' assistance and satisfaction with community policing in crime control in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria.

#### *Statement of the Problem*

The need to control crime is as old as man because it is inimical to the survival of any human society. Crime is one of the most obvious events which confront man in the late modern age (Giddens, 2004). Ehindero, the Former Inspector General of Police stated in a lecture delivered to participants of National War College, Abuja that crime is the most potent threat to national security of any country (Ehindero, 2006). Marshall (2008) posited that crime is a universal feature of all human societies. The reason for this according to Marshall is because there is no human society where norms and values are not violated, from the simplest hunting and gathering societies to the most complex civilized societies (Nwankwo, 2013). It is because of this universal character of crime that every society is expected to have "specific mechanisms for the overall interest and wellbeing of the generality of the populace" (Igbo, 2007:14 as cited in Nwankwo, 2013). In this regard, Nigeria used cults, secret societies, messengers and palace guards as strategies for crime control in pre-colonial time (Marenin, 2008 as cited in Adinde, 2012). In the colonial period, the style and principles of policing or crime reduction have been described as anti-people by several authors (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2000; Ikuteyijo, 2009; Rotimi, 2001). The reason for this type of description is predicated on the fact that the establishment of colonial police was more to serve and protect the commercial interests of the colonial masters. The post colonial Nigeria Police Force is a carryover from the colonial era because post colonial Nigeria Police also serve the interest of their financiers or Nigeria politicians and nothing better can be expected from them (Chukwuma, 2001). This pitched the police against the people they were meant to protect and there were series of clashes between both parties.

Okeke (2013) noted that police alienation continued in the post colonial Nigeria thereby deepening the distrust or mistrust between the people and the police. This lack of cooperation from the people has a serious consequence which is the inability of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) to combat crime and tackle various security challenges in Nigeria leading to the proliferation of vigilante security apparatus particularly in the form of vigilante militia groups. This proliferation of vigilante according to Okeke later exacerbated security challenges in Nigeria, owing to distrust among them with concomitant increase in crime rate, that was why Chukwuma (2001) noted that the much that has been achieved seems to be crime spreading from one local government, state or region to another. The argument therefore is that to deal with such increase in the criminal activities, the new method or strategy like police/public partnership (community policing) should be introduced.

In order to tackle the worsening security challenges in the country, Okeke (2013) noted that the government and the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) embarked on the reform of the police in Nigeria by reaffirming the need to introduce and implement community policing therefore paving way for the introduction of community policing in 2004. But before the formal launching of community policing in April 27, 2004, the police had trained officers and men both locally and internationally to help spread the gospel of community policing. What is more, the major problem facing the implementation of community policing in Nigeria is the challenge of changing the perception of police officers about their primary responsibility in the society. This is because many of them still have the perception that their primary responsibility is to arrest, detain and interrogate a person suspected of committing a crime and to enforce law and order in the society by all means without seeking assistance from any member of the society (Okeke, 2013).

The challenges of gaining confidence, cooperation and understanding of the members of the public as numerous studies conducted on police-public relations in Nigeria showed that most of the members of the society had no confidence in the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2004a). Finally, and most importantly, is the problem of implementation of community policing in Nigeria despite the assistance of British Council under its programme on "Safety, Justice and Growth" (SJG) (Okeke, 2013). Without recourse to the challenges facing the effective implementation of community policing in Nigeria, its lofty expectations can never be over emphasized. It is in view of the aforementioned problems that this study focused on the citizens' assistance and satisfaction with community policing in crime control in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria.

#### *Research Questions*

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How ready are the citizens in giving assistance to the police in their efforts to control crime in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria?
2. How do citizens render assistance to the police in their efforts to control crime in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria?
3. What are the citizens' reasons for not assisting the police in their efforts to control crime in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria?
4. What are the citizens' opinions on whether they are satisfied with community policing in crime control in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria?
5. What are the citizens' reasons for their satisfaction with community policing in crime control in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria?

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### *Public Satisfaction with Community Policing*

Tyler (2003) conducted a study in Chicago on "Citizen Satisfaction with Police and Community Policing" and observed that citizens who are satisfied with the police are less likely to fear victimisation, more likely to cooperate with the police, and even less likely to commit crime. Schmallegger (1995) study on community policing in Reno, Nevada a city of 120,000 residents with 313 police officers showed that community policing efforts began under Chief R.V. B Bradshaw, following the defeat of the two public referendum to increase funding levels for the department. Following these and other well-publicized efforts to improve the department's image, community surveys reported a considerable degree of positive perception about community policing, while the initial 1987 survey showed that only 31.60% of the residents felt good about the Police Department. Again, a similar survey in 1992 revealed that 68.7% of the populace reported such feelings of being satisfied with police services especially while involving members of the public in their efforts to control crime. Similarly, 13% of respondents reported that officers did not convey a feeling of concern but 23% of the officers felt concerned about the development. Eventually, renewed citizen satisfaction with the Reno Police Department resulted in the success of a local tax referendum that provided additional officers with a 39% increase in community based personnel.

Furthermore, a survey conducted by Alemika and Chukwuma (2007) on Criminal Victimisation, Safety and Policy in Nigeria revealed that 48% (i.e. less than half) of Nigerians agreed that the police are doing everything they can to help people and to be of good service to the people. Nearly 3/10 (i.e. 29.9%) of the respondents disagreed that the police are not doing anything to render good services to the people and

slightly more than one-fifth (22.1%) maintained a neutral position. They are of the opinion that people respect work and have confidence in the police in the societies where the police serve and work with people in circumstances other than booking them for the breach of law. In all, the public did not perceive the police as very helpful while overwhelming majority of respondents in some states like, Jigawa, Zamfara, Taraba, Benue, Bauchi and Adamawa states said that the police strive to be very helpful and of good service to the public.

### *Efficacy of Community Policing in Crime Prevention*

The major shift in policing strategies was brought in by community policing (Walker & Katz, 2005) which introduced the concept of community participation (Palmiotto, 2000) and subsequently the traditional policing strategy of crime control transformed into crime prevention (Riechers & Roberg, 1990). Impact of community policing on crime prevention broadly depends on level of community participation by encouraging individuals and organizations to take responsibility for crime prevention in community (Jones & Newburn, 2002). Peak and Glensor (2004) stated notions held by The International Association of Chiefs of Police Crime Prevention Committee that it is everyone's responsibility to prevent crimes, which demands unified community approach.

Actively involved community members and organisations in crime prevention develop expertise, ability and dedication of community as a whole. The progressive and empirically backed shift in strategic implementation of community policing transform philosophy into practice as Moore (1992) and Rosenbaum (1998) mentioned the strategic shift from aggressive police patrol to crime prevention education and friendly collaboration with youths of society will render long term benefits. Numerous excerpts of evaluative studies directed towards police-public understanding and coordination as critical factor in deciding efficient crime prevention through community policing (Fielding, 1995; Thurman, Zhao, & Giacomzzi, 2001). Sherman and Eck (2002) concluded in their study that community policing acts as crime prevention tool when police facilitates problem solving of crime risk factors which are located by community members.

In a bid to acquire public confidence and cooperation, Trojanowicz (1986) observed that the police opened up wide opportunities to gather community based intelligence. For Trojanowicz (1986), the police justified increased flow of information (about potential offence and offender) by promoting better understanding and boosting motto of 'working in collaboration' towards same goal for safer society. The intelligence information will not only deter offenders, but will increase community cohesion and also enhance police effectiveness of intervention. After gathering and analysing the data, the police disseminate comprehended information to the public either through websites, pamphlets or discuss in community meetings.

Finally, Sherman and Eck (2006) evaluated several studies to find out the impact of community policing on crime prevention and concluded that community meetings, door-to-door contacts and programmes targeted to improve police legitimacy are more effective in crime prevention, although informal institutions such as labor markets and families are much more effective in preventing crimes than any other policing strategy.

### III. THEORETICAL VIEWPOINT

#### *Social Bond Theory*

This study is anchored on social bond theory. It was the brainchild of Travis Hirschi. It was contained in his 1969 book "Causes of Delinquencies". It is now the dominant version of control theory (Hirschi, 1969; Siegel, 2005; Siegel, 2007). The theorist links all the onset of criminality to the weakening of the ties that bind people to society. Hirschi assumes that all individuals are potential law violators, but they are kept under control because they fear that illegal behaviour will damage their relationships and reputations with friends, parents, neighbours, teachers, and employers (Siegel, 2005; Siegel, 2007). Without these social ties or bonds, and in the absence of sensitivity and interest in others, a person is free to commit criminal acts. In view of the above, Hirschi noted that among all ethnic, religious, racial, and social groups, people whose bond to society is weak may fall prey to criminogenic behavioural patterns. Hirschi argues that the social bond a person maintains with society is divided into four main elements: attachment, commitment, involvement and belief (Carter, 2004; Inciardi, 2007; Siegel, 2005; Siegel, 2007). Hirschi further suggests that the interrelationship of social bond elements control subsequent behaviour. Social bond theory has been corroborated by numerous studies showing that delinquent youth often feel detached from society (LeBlanc, 1994; Mathur & Dodder, 1985; Wiatrowski, Griswold, & Roberts, 1981).

Relating this theory to community policing, it goes without saying that the emergence and survival of community policing is hinged on trust built by both the police and public to collectively work towards controlling crime without fear from both parties. What is more, a situation where the community will see the police as partners in progress having a common tie of working for a crime-free society. It further suggests that members of the community can draw police attention to crime incidents in the community if they feel that the police will respond and serve them well. The four elements identified by Hirschi in social bond theory are very useful in explaining and addressing the issue of community policing in the study area. Therefore, the theory is apt, relevant, suitable and appropriate and so has been adopted as the theoretical base in this study.

### IV. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study adopted mixed methods research design. This type of design is deemed appropriate because it offers richer insights into the phenomenon being studied and allows the

capture of information that might be missed by utilizing only one research design, it also enhances the body of knowledge and generates more questions of interest for future studies that can handle a wider range of research questions because the researcher is not limited to one research design (Gail, 2013). The study was conducted in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria. Ishielu Local Government Area is the most heterogeneous local government area in Ebonyi state as it accommodates people with different cultural background in the three political zones of Orri/Agba, Ezzagu and Igboesa zones. It is a gate way local government area from Enugu to Ebonyi state with her headquarter at Ezillo. Indigenes of the local government area are called cement people because of the deposit of limestone in Nkalagu. Their major occupation includes farming, fishing, civil/public service etc. It has a total population of 152,581 (NPC, 2006). However, the target population of this study were adult residents who have attained the age of 18years and above that can at least read and write or respond to the research questions. This set of people was adopted for the study because they have come of age and are matured in Nigeria to have observed and understood community policing in crime control. The sample size for this study is 349. This sample size was generated using Fisher, Laing, Stockel and Townsend (1998) formular for determining sample size. This sample was considered adequate in view of the statistical requirements and available resources at the time of the study. Probability and non probability sampling methods were used to select respondents. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used in selecting respondents who were administered questionnaire. Simple random sampling method of hand drawing without replacement was used to select Ohofia/Agba, Ezillo and Azuinyaba communities from the zones. The systematic sampling technique was used in selecting villages and balloting method was used to select respondents. Purposive sampling technique was used to select IDI respondents based on the relevance and position they occupy in the society. Questionnaire and in-depth interview were the major instruments used in collecting quantitative and qualitative data in the study. The structured questionnaire was divided into several sections, the first question dealt with socio-demographic characteristics of respondents such as gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, occupation and religious affiliation. Other sections dealt with substantive issues of the research which were derived from the statement of the problem, research questions and objectives of the study. The questionnaire was administered on a one-on-one (other administered) basis to the respondents while the researcher conducted the interview when it was suitable and convenient for the respondents with the help of two research assistants who were resident in the area at the time of the study. The data from the questionnaire were processed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Windows, Version 17. Frequency distribution tables, simple percentages and graphic illustrations were also used to analyze data collected from the field study. The data from the in-depth interviews were analyzed using content analysis. Qualitative data collected



from the in depth interviews were used to support and elucidate the quantitative data.

V. RESEARCH RESULTS/FINDINGS

Out of the 349 copies of questionnaire administered to the respondents, only 341 copies were correctly filled, returned and used for quantitative analysis. However, 8 copies of the questionnaire were filled wrongly, discarded and were not included in the analysis. The response rate is 97.7%. The results and findings of the study were presented in the tables and graphic illustrations below:

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Sex:</b>		
Male	187	54.8
Female	154	45.2
Total	341	100
<b>Age:</b>		
18-27years	132	38.7
28-37years	98	28.7
38-47years	62	18.2
48years and above	49	14.4
Total	341	100
<b>Education:</b>		
No formal Education	55	16.1
FSLC	22	6.5
SSC/GCE	44	12.9
OND/NCE	77	22.6
B.Sc./HND	132	38.7
M.Sc./Ph.D	11	3.2
Total	341	100
<b>Occupation:</b>		
Unemployed	63	18.5
Farming	82	24.0
Civil Servant/Public Servant	101	29.6
Students	47	13.8
Trading/Business	48	14.1
Total	341	100
<b>Marital Status:</b>		
Single	96	28.2
Married	229	

Divorced	67.1	08
Widowed	2.3	05
Separated	1.5	03
Total	0.9	341
<b>Religion:</b>		
Christianity	84.7	289
Islam	1.2	04
African Traditional Religion	14.1	48
Total	100	341
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>341</b>

Table 1 shows that 187(54.8%) were male respondents while the female respondents were 154(45.2%). This implies that men are more involved in security matters than their female counterpart. The table also indicates that the respondents who were within the ages of 18-27 years are 132 (38.7%), the respondents within the ages of 28-37 years are 98 (28.7%), the respondents within the ages of 38-47 years are 62 (18.2%), those within the ages of 48 years and above are 49(14.4%). This implies that majority of the respondents were within the ages of 18- 27. This age category is made up of matured adults who can respond to the questions in the questionnaire and might have heard and know what police-community partnership in crime control entails. Also, the table indicates that 55(16.1%) of the respondents had no formal education, 22 (6.5%) of the respondents had First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC), 44(12.9%) of the respondents had WASSCE/SSCE/GCE as their highest educational qualification, 77(22.6%) of the respondents had obtained NCE/OND, 132(38.7%) of the respondents had also obtained B.Sc./HND as their highest educational qualification while 11(3.2%) of the respondents obtained M.Sc./Ph.D. as their highest educational qualification. The implication of the findings is that majority of the respondents are educated and enlightened which also raises high expectation to the quality of data to be collected from this group since they are literate. This is not surprising since people from this geo-political zone attach so much importance to education. A further look at table 1 on occupation of the respondents shows that 63(18.5%) of the respondents were unemployed, 82(24.0%) of the respondents were farmers, 101(29.6%) of the respondents were public/civil servants, 47(13.8%) of the respondents were students, 48 (14.1%) of the respondents were engaged in business/trading. The implication is that people who are educated usually work in government offices. The table also shows that 96(28.2%) of the respondents indicated that they were single, 229(67.1%) of the respondents indicated that they were married, 8(2.3%) of the respondents indicated that they were divorced, 5(1.5%) of the respondents indicated that they were widowed, while 3(0.9%) of the respondents indicated

that they were separated. This shows that majority of the respondents were married. This is not strange since in this part of the country marriage is seen as a mark of responsibility and any person who is of age is expected to get married. In terms of religious affiliation, 289(84.7%) of the respondents were Christians, 4(1.2%) of the respondents were Muslims while 48 (14.1%) were worshippers of African traditional religion. This result is expected because Christianity is the major religion practiced in

Ishielu local government area of Ebonyi state, South-East, Nigeria, hence the domination of Christians in the study area and geo-political zone.

*Analysis of Research Questions*

*Research Question One.* How ready are the citizens in giving assistance to the police in their efforts to control crime in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria?

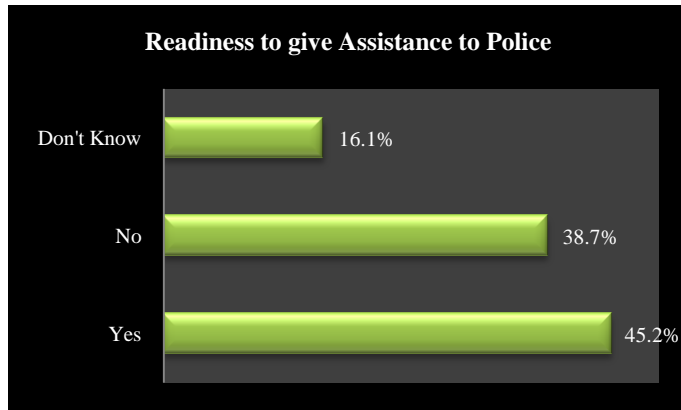


Fig 1: Respondents' views on their readiness to assist police in crime control

From Figure 1 above, it is clear that majority (45.2%) of the respondents agreed that they were ready and willing to help the police in their effort to control crime, a total of 38.7% of the respondents said that they were not ready to assist the police in crime control while 16.1% of the respondents did not know whether they were ready to give assistance to the police or not. The respondents who said that they were ready and willing to assist the police in their effort to control crime were further asked to say how they would render such assistance to the police in their effort to control crime. Their responses are shown in Table 2 below.

**Research Question Two:** How do citizens render assistance to the police in crime control in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria?

Table 2. Respondents' views on ways they would render assistance to police

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Giving them necessary information that would lead to the arrest of a suspect	104	30.5
Willing to participate in the activities that would promote community safety	21	6.2
Cooperating with other members of the		

community in controlling crime	13	3.8
Operating within police/community guidelines in crime control	11	3.2
Not applicable	187	54.8
No response	5	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 above shows that majority 104 (30.5%) of the respondents were of the opinion that they would assist the police in their effort to control crime in the neighbourhood by giving them necessary information that could lead to the arrest of the suspect, 21 (6.2%) of the respondents said that they were willing to participate in the activities that would promote community safety. However, 13(3.8%) of the respondents said that they will cooperate with other members of the community in controlling crime while 11 (3.2%) of the respondents said that they will operate within police/community guidelines in crime control. This finding is expected since the survival of community policing lies in peoples' support and acceptance. The citizens are in a better position to know who the criminals are and can easily identify the criminal hideouts. This disposition enhances and facilitates arrest of suspects by the police.

Driving this point home, an IDI respondent in Ohofia/Agba community stated that;

Well, as a custodian of our people's culture I use to have security meeting with police from Agba police post. They have

been very cooperative with us. The last time my neighbour's house was burgled in midnight, I placed a call on them and they arrived immediately. They later arrested the suspect. In fact, we are working well with them (Male, 98years, Traditional ruler, Akwurakwu village).

*Research Question Three:* What are the citizens' reasons for not assisting the police in their efforts in crime control in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria? Respondents who said that they were not ready to assist the police in their efforts to control crime were further asked to mention the reasons for their responses and they are presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3. Respondents' views on their reasons for not assisting the police in their effort to control crime

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Police can easily collect bribe and release the suspect	23	6.7
Because the police cannot hide identity of anyone who reports a criminal to the police	47	13.9
The suspect can come back and attack whoever that reports the case to the police	28	8.2
The police are mere pretenders and cannot do anything	30	8.8
Not applicable	209	61.3
No response	4	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3 above indicated the various reasons why a total of 128 (37.5%) respondents said that they will not help the police in their effort to control crime. In view of this, 23 (6.7%) of the respondents said that police can easily collect bribe and release the suspect, 47 (13.9%) of the respondents suggested that police cannot hide the identity of anyone who reports the case to them, 28 (8.2%) of the respondents said that the suspect can come back and attack whoever that reports the case to the police, while 30 (8.8%) of the respondents said police are mere pretenders and cannot do anything if a crime incident is made known to them. The findings here are not strange since cases of police brutality and complicity in crime abounds in the area. Again, there are cases of lackadaisical attitudes of police in the discharge of their duties in Nigeria which lends support to these findings.

*Research Question Four.* What are the citizens' opinion on whether they are satisfied with community policing in crime control in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria? The respondents were asked to know if they are satisfied with community policing in crime control in the area, their responses are stated below.

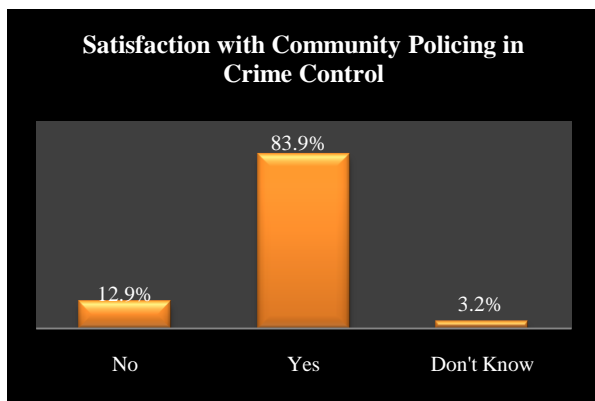


Figure 2: Respondents' views on whether they are satisfied with community policing in crime control

Figure 2 shows that 83.9% of the respondents were of the opinion that they were satisfied with the efficacy of community policing in crime control while 12.9% of the respondents said that they were not satisfied with community policing in crime control in the study area. Also, 3.2% of the respondents did not know whether they were satisfied with community policing in crime control. This overwhelming number of respondents who are satisfied with community policing in crime control is expected since the members of the community are among the decision making body over the security of the community.

*Research Question Five:* What are the citizens' reasons for their satisfaction with community policing in crime control in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria? The respondents who said that they are satisfied with community policing in crime control were further asked to state their reasons why they felt satisfied with community

policing in crime control and their responses are stated in Table 4 below:

Table 4. Respondents' views on reasons for their satisfaction with community policing in crime control

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Because it can reduce crime	49	14.4
Because the public is seen as partner in progress	68	19.9
Because it builds trust between the police and the policed	52	15.2
Because it is more inclusive in attending to neighbourhood problems	117	34.3
Not applicable	55	16.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4 indicated different reasons why the respondents agreed that they are satisfied with community policing in crime control in the area. In this regard, 117 (34.3%) of the respondents said that they satisfied with community policing because it is more inclusive in attending to neighbourhood problems, 52 (15.2%) of the respondents said that it builds trust between the police and the policed, 68 (19.9%) of the respondents are of the opinion that the strategy sees the members of the public as partners in progress, while 49 (14.4%) of the respondents said that it can ensure reduction in crime. These findings are expected since the members of the public are included in the security architecture of their community. Again, the police found them worthy in this regard, hence the efforts to mend fences with the public through the introduction of community policing in Nigeria.

According to an IDI interviewee, he stated thus:

Yes, since the police started incorporating our people and also responds quickly to our distress call, the rate of crime has been reduced. The increase in crime in our hitherto peaceful community was an offshoot of Ezza/Ezillo crisis which lasted for some years but for a long time now, our people have been sleeping with two eyes closed.

(Male, 56years, Town Union President, Ekeugwu Village)

## VI. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study examined Citizens' Assistance and Satisfaction with Community Policing in Crime Control in Ishielu Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, South-East, Nigeria. In this study, it was discovered that members of the community showcased their readiness to assist the police in crime control by giving them necessary information that would lead to the arrest of a suspect. This finding is in line with a survey conducted by Centre for Criminal Justice Research and Education which indicated that 88% of those interviewed contended that the citizens have been fully involved in the security of their life and property (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2004).

Again, in a report on the study conducted by Alemika and Chukwuma (2004) on the Poor Peoples' Perception and Priorities on Safety, Security and Informal Policing Access to Justice in four focal states in Nigeria, the findings indicated

that communities and individuals in four states involved in human safety activities were Benue state (60%), Ekiti state (69%), Enugu state (53%) and Jigawa state (62%). Also, findings of the study showed that the citizens of these states partner with the police in maintaining safety in the neighbourhood.

Furthermore, one of the in-depth interview participants in Ohofia/Agba community stated that the police have been very cooperative with them. He also stated that the last time a neighbour's house was burgled in midnight that he called the police and they arrived immediately. He concluded by saying that the community work hand in hand with the police. This finding corroborates with a survey conducted by Alemika and Chukwuma (2007) on Criminal Victimization, Safety and Policy in Nigeria which revealed that 48% (i.e. less than half) of Nigerians agreed that the police are doing everything they can to help people and to be of good service to the people. Nearly 3/10 (i.e. 29.9%) of the respondents disagreed that the police are not doing anything to render good services to the people and slightly more than one-fifth (22.1%) maintained a neutral position. They were of the opinion that people respect, work with and have confidence in the police in the societies where the police serve and work with people in circumstances other than booking them for the breach of law.

Again, it was discovered in the study that majority of the respondents agreed that they are satisfied with community policing since it is inclusive in attending to crime problems in the community and that it builds trust between the police and the policed. This finding is in line with a study conducted by Tyler (2003) in Chicago on "Citizen Satisfaction with Police and Community Policing" where it was observed that citizens who are satisfied with the police are less likely to fear victimisation, more likely to cooperate with the police and even less likely to commit crime. What is more, the results of a survey conducted in 1992 on community policing by Schmallegger (1995) in Reno, Nevada a city of 120,000 residents showed that 68.7% of the populace reported such feelings of being satisfied with police services especially while involving members of the public in their efforts to control crime. This finding lends support the finding on satisfaction with community of this study. However, the finding of this study varied with the finding of the survey by Morgan State University's Institute for Urban Research which was conducted as part of the city's ongoing federal consent decree to help the police department implement sweeping policing reforms. The survey found that more than 60% of participants say they are dissatisfied with the police department, including 57% who are "very dissatisfied." Only 12% said they were satisfied (Anderson, 2020).

## VII. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicated that the involvement of the community members in business of crime control is a welcome development in creating a crime free society. This resulted in the residents' overwhelming satisfaction with

police services since the community members have a stake in security enterprise thereby creating a road map of success in crime control in the area.

## VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. There should be a stringent punishment to any police officer who collects bribe in the course of his duty. This will give the citizens a sigh of hope to assist them in the control of crime in the community.
2. There should be no breach of trust on both parties by operating within the established security guidelines. The members of the community will be willing to work with the police if the police respect them, then effective community policing will ensue.
3. The members of the community should be fully involved in the business of crime control since they are ready to give necessary assistance to the police by providing relevant information that would lead to the arrest of suspects.
4. Programmes aimed at police/public attitudinal change should be organized regularly to douse the hitherto suspicion between the two parties. When this is done, the members of the community will participate actively in the activities that would promote community safety.
5. The police should ensure that the identity of anyone who reports a criminal to them is protected. This will strengthen their relationship as it will no longer give room for any reprisal attack.

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