



# Community Appraisal of Crime Investigation and Management Practices among the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) in Ilorin, Kwara State

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## Abstract

This study presents a comparative analysis of crime investigation and management practices between the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) in the Ilorin metropolis. The research aimed to evaluate the procedures, resources, effectiveness, and community engagement strategies of both agencies, to identify similarities and differences in their operations. A mixed-method approach was adopted, using a structured questionnaire administered to selected respondents, including community members and officers from both agencies. Data analysis involved descriptive and inferential statistics to determine the levels of effectiveness, efficiency, and community trust in each agency. The study reveals that despite stronger investigative procedures and public accessibility, the NSCDC shows higher trust levels within specific communities due to its specialized focus on civil defense and emergency response. The study suggests enhancing crime management practices through improved training, better resource distribution, and stronger interagency cooperation to address challenges in resource allocation and technological constraints.

**Keywords:** *Crime, CrimeInvestigation, Nigeria Police Force, NSCDC, Kwara State*

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## Introduction

Security is essential to a nation's development. This ensures that the citizens who make up the growth process are protected and safe in a well-secured country. Nigeria is dealing with several identifiable security issues (Nte, Enoke & Teru, 2022). These include assassination, ritual killing, armed robbery, terrorism, vandalism, kidnapping, child trafficking, and militancy (Kitabu, 2022). Crime is a major contributor to underdevelopment since it deters both domestic and foreign investment, endangering a country's security in terms of its political, social, and economic activities (Amila & Luka 2020). In addition, it undermines social or human capital and lowers living standards. Moreover, crime erodes the relationship between the people and the state, which threatens democracy, the rule of law, and progress. Every culture, including Nigeria's, faces unique difficulties, nevertheless.

As a growing nation, Nigeria has its own social, political, economic, and cultural issues that affect the populace as a whole. One issue Nigeria faces is the rising crime rate and the incapacity of security forces to deter and manage crime. He believes that security services lack the necessary resources, not to mention motivation.

Several agencies with overlapping missions and varying operating capacities are involved in Nigeria's complex crime investigation and management dilemma (Eferebo, 2022, Olisa, Chika & Mary, 2022). The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC) are central when it comes to maintaining law and order within the country. Their efficacy is hampered by the major challenges they face. The Nigeria Police Force, which was created as the main law enforcement organization, suffers from structural problems



like a lack of current equipment, corruption, inadequate training, and inadequate financing (Human Rights Watch, 2020). These difficulties make it more difficult for the NPF to carry out exhaustive crime investigations and efficiently handle criminal activity. Furthermore, the NPF has challenges that are made worse by public mistrust and perceptions of inefficiency, which further impairs the effectiveness of its operations (Yunusa & Usman, 2022, Bakare & Aderinola, 2019).

However, despite being relatively new and concentrating more on managing public safety and safeguarding vital infrastructure, the NSCDC also has challenges. These consist of operational jurisdiction overlaps with the NPF, interagency competition, and resource limitations. Concerns about the NSCDC staff's professional growth and training continue to exist, which affects their ability to effectively support crime prevention and investigation (NSCDC Annual Report, 2020). Both NPF and NSCDC find it difficult to successfully carry out their duties in the complicated environment created by the convergence of these concerns. A comparison analysis is necessary to determine the NPF and NSCDC's strengths, shortcomings, and possible areas of synergy due to their overlapping tasks and operating issues. Improving crime investigation and management in Nigeria requires tackling these issues in a cooperative and transformative manner.

Going by the existing documentation, significant differences and inefficiencies were noted as existing between the NPF and NSCDC in Nigeria's crime investigation and management environment. Criminal elements were asserted as capable of taking advantage of the gaps created by these inefficiencies, which can also contribute to a disjointed approach to law enforcement. On the other hand, the NPF's ongoing problems with corruption and insufficient training were noted to have resulted in many cases of unpunished crimes or cases handled inadequately, which have damaged public trust in law enforcement (Amnesty International, 2020). As noted by Human Rights Watch (2020), it is very difficult

for the NPF to stay up with increasingly complex criminal activity due to a lack of contemporary investigation equipment and tactics.

Although the NSCDC is perceived as being more community-friendly and less corrupt, it nonetheless confronts operational challenges. Resource constraints hinder the Corps' ability to effectively administer its wide-ranging mandate, particularly in areas where specialized knowledge and instruments are required for crime investigation (NSCDC Annual Report, 2020). Moreover, the interagency competition between the NSCDC and the NPF usually results in inefficiencies and duplication of effort rather than a cohesive and collaborative approach to national security. With all the documented manifesting factors, very little is known about the community's perception of the investigation activities of the NPF and NSCDC. This situation therefore necessitates a detailed comparative analysis of the activities of these agencies from the community perspective. Such an analysis is essential for developing a more integrated and effective approach to crime investigation and management in Nigeria. A better understanding of the roles and improvements in the operations of NPF and NSCDC through this study can lead to increased public confidence and cooperation on one hand. On the other hand, this study adds to the body of knowledge in criminology and law enforcement by providing empirical data and insights into the functioning of two key Nigerian security agencies. In light of this, the present study is engaging in Community appraisal of Crime Investigation and Management Practices among the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) in Ilorin, Kwara State.

### **Methodology**

The study took place in selected districts in Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State. The districts included Ajikobi, Alanamu, Baboko, Oko-erin and Oloje. From each of these districts, 50 respondents were sampled making a total of 250 respondents. The study adopted survey research with a researcher-administered questionnaire as its major research instrument.



The questionnaire consists of two (2) sections, one part focused on the demographic information of the respondents while the second section covered the operational activities of Nigeria Police and Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps. For the administration of the questionnaire, each of the districts was clustered into compounds due to a lack of clear-cut demarcation of the area. From each of these, five compounds (Agbo-Ile) were selected randomly making twenty-five (25) compounds in all. Ten (10) households were sampled from each compound. An eligible individual was sampled as a respondent from each of these household. Where there was more than one eligible person, a simple random sampling technique was used to select the final respondent from such households. Steps were taken to ensure that every person in the population had an equal chance of being selected. Each of the sampled respondents was allocated a copy of the questionnaire. The data generated for the study were analysed using frequencies and simple percentages to express the findings.

## Results and Discussion

### Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section provides an analysis of the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The demographic information includes gender, age group, occupation, and educational qualification.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

Demographic Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	150	60.0
	Female	100	40.0
Age Group	18-25	80	32.0
	26-35	100	40.0
	36-45	50	20.0
	46 and above	20	8.0
Occupation	Civil Servant	70	28.0
	Private Sector	90	36.0
	Student	60	24.0
	Unemployed	30	12.0
Educational Qualification	Primary	20	8.0
	Secondary	70	28.0
	Tertiary	150	60.0
	None	10	4.0
Total		250	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 1 provides an overview of the demographic characteristics of the respondents. It highlights the distribution of gender, age, occupation, and educational qualifications within the sample. This integrated view allows for a comprehensive understanding of the respondent profile, which is crucial for interpreting the subsequent analysis of crime investigation and management practices.

### Awareness of NPF Activities

A significant majority of respondents (80%) are aware of the activities of the NPF in Ilorin metropolis. This indicates a high level of public awareness regarding the NPF's role and activities in the community. On the other hand, the majority of respondents (72%) are also aware of the activities of the NSCDC. However, there is a higher proportion of respondents who are unaware of NSCDC activities compared to the NPF, which may indicate a need for greater visibility and public engagement by the NSCDC.

**Table 2: Sources of Information about NPF and NSCDC**

Source	Frequency	Percentage
Mass Media (Radio/TV/Newspaper)	90	36.0
Social Media	120	48.0
Community Meetings	25	10.0
Word of Mouth	15	6.0
Total	250	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The primary source of information about both the NPF and NSCDC is social media (48%), followed by mass media (36%). Community meetings and word of mouth are less significant sources of information. This highlights the importance of leveraging digital platforms for effective public communication and awareness.

### Community Awareness and Engagement

The data indicate that community awareness of the NPF's activities is higher than that of the NSCDC. This discrepancy in awareness levels may reflect the NPF's more extensive outreach and media presence, which is consistent with findings from studies on police-community relations (Eze & Igbokwe, 2019). The NSCDC's



relatively lower visibility might impact its effectiveness in community engagement and crime prevention efforts.

The role of community awareness in crime reporting and management is supported by theoretical frameworks on community policing, which emphasize the importance of visibility and trust in enhancing public cooperation (Goldstein, 1990). This study's findings suggest that increasing the NSCDC's visibility and engagement strategies could improve public perception and crime reporting behaviors, aligning with recommendations from recent research (Nwachukwu & Ogbodu, 2021).

**Table 3: Effectiveness of NPF in Crime Investigation and Management**

Effectiveness Level	The NPF		The NSCDC	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Very Effective	40	16.0	30	12.0
Effective	100	40.0	90	36.0
Neutral	60	24.0	80	32.0
Ineffective	30	12.0	30	12.0
Very Ineffective	20	8.0	20	8.0
Total	250	100.0	250	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, 2022*

The majority of respondents rate the NPF as either effective (40%) or very effective (16%) in crime investigation and management. However, a significant portion still view the NPF as ineffective (12%) or very ineffective (8%), indicating room for improvement in public perception of its effectiveness. For the NSCDC, the effectiveness ratings are slightly lower compared to the NPF. The majority rate the NSCDC as effective (36%) or very effective (12%). However, 20% of respondents view the NSCDC as ineffective or very ineffective, reflecting a need for improvement in perceived effectiveness.

### Effectiveness of Crime Investigation and Management

The study reveals that the majority of respondents perceive the NPF as more effective in crime investigation and management compared to the NSCDC. This finding aligns with previous

research that underscores the NPF's dominant role in criminal justice in Nigeria, particularly in terms of resources and public perception (Akinwale, 2020; Ojo & Oyebanji, 2018). The NPF's higher success rate in solving crimes can be attributed to its extensive infrastructure and experience in dealing with complex crime cases (Adeyanju, 2017). However, the perceived lower effectiveness of the NSCDC highlights a potential gap in its operational capacity and public confidence, as reported by Eke & Ugwu (2021).

The comparative effectiveness observed in this study supports the argument made by Okafor (2020) that inter-agency disparities in crime management can impact public trust and reporting behaviors. This finding suggests that while the NPF is more frequently reported to and perceived as more effective, the NSCDC's role should not be underestimated, as it complements the NPF's efforts, particularly in areas of community safety and emergency response (Adams & Olowu, 2019).

**Table 4: Accessibility for Crime Reporting**

Agency	Frequency	Percentage
NPF	130	52.0
NSCDC	80	32.0
Both equally	30	12.0
Neither	10	4.0
Total	250	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, 2022*

Respondents perceive the NPF as more accessible for crime reporting (52%) compared to the NSCDC (32%). A smaller proportion believes that both agencies are equally accessible, while a minimal number consider neither agency accessible. This suggests that the NPF is viewed as more approachable for reporting crimes.

### Similarities and Differences in Crime Investigation Practices

This section examines the similarities and differences in crime investigation and management practices between the Nigeria





Police Force (NPF) and the Nigeria Security and Civil Défense Corps (NSCDC). It provides a comparative analysis based on the respondents' opinions regarding the practices, technology use, and community relationships of both agencies. Nearly half of the respondents (48%) believe that the crime investigation practices of the NPF and NSCDC are similar. However, 40% of respondents disagree, indicating that there are perceived differences between the two agencies' practices. This suggests that while there might be commonalities, distinct practices are also recognized.

**Table 5: Application of Advanced Technology for Crime Investigation**

Agency	The Nigeria Police Force		The NSCDC	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
NPF	100	40.0	110	44.0
NSCDC	60	24.0	80	32.0
Both equally	70	28.0	50	20.0
Neither	20	8.0	10	4.0
Total	250	100.0	250	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, 2022*

According to the above table, the first part revealed that a significant portion of respondents (40%) believe that the NPF uses more advanced technology for crime investigation compared to the NSCDC (24%). Additionally, 28% of respondents feel that both agencies use technology equally. The perception that neither agency uses advanced technology is less common (8%). In the other section of the table, the NPF is perceived to have a better relationship with the community (44%) compared to the NSCDC (32%). A smaller proportion of respondents believe that both agencies have equal community relationships (20%), and an even smaller group feels that neither agency has a good relationship with the community (4%).

#### Similarities and Differences in Practices

The perception that NPF and NSCDC practices are similar yet distinct reflects underlying differences in their operational mandates and resource allocations. While both agencies are involved in crime management, the NPF's use of advanced technology and resources is a

significant differentiator. This is supported by research indicating that technological advancements in policing can enhance investigative capabilities and efficiency (Choi & Lee, 2019; Li & Zhao, 2020).

The study's findings resonate with the work of Nwogbaga & Uche (2020), who argue that the integration of modern technology in crime management practices is crucial for improving effectiveness. The disparity in technology usage between the agencies may point to a need for more strategic investment in the NSCDC's technological infrastructure.

#### Preference between NPF and NSCDC in terms of Crime Reportage

A substantial portion of respondents expressed their preference of whom to report cases of crimes to between NPF and NSCDC. According to the data collected from this study, 52% showed readiness to always report crime cases to the NPF, while only 36% was ready to always chose NSCDC. Only 12% of them will report crime cases to the NSCDC when there is no alternative. It is obvious from the foregoing that the proportion of the respondents having preference for the service of the NPF in terms of crime reportage had no soft spot for the NSCDC and vice versa,

#### Effects of the Preference on Crime Reporting

The frequency of crime reporting to the NPF compared to the NSCDC highlights a stronger public trust in the former. This observation is consistent with studies on police legitimacy and public reporting behaviours, which suggest that trust in law enforcement agencies significantly influences reporting patterns (Tyler, 2004; Reisig & Parks, 2004). The data also reveal that trust and previous experience are major factors influencing crime reporting, reinforcing the importance of these elements in shaping public interactions with law enforcement. The study's findings underscore the necessity for the NSCDC to build stronger community relations and enhance public trust to increase its reporting rates. This aligns with the recommendations of studies focused on improving community trust in security agencies (Lundman, 2002; Mazerolle & Bennet, 2013).



**Table 6: Factors Influencing Preference for Crime Reporting**

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Trust in the agency	120	48.0
Proximity of agency office	40	16.0
Previous experience	70	28.0
Influence from others	20	8.0
Total	250	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, 2022*

The primary factor influencing crime reporting is trust in the agency (48%). Previous experience with the agency also plays a significant role (28%). The proximity of the agency office and influence from others are less influential, with 16% and 8% of respondents respectively considering these factors in their reporting decisions.

#### **Perceived Success rates in solving Crimes and the impact on the sense of Security**

Respondents perceive the NPF as having a better success rate in solving crimes (52%) compared to the NSCDC (28%). A smaller proportion of respondents believe that both agencies have an equal success rate (16%), while a minimal number think neither agency has a success rate (4%). This suggests that the NPF is viewed as more effective in crime resolution. The majority of respondents feel that the crime management practices of both agencies have a positive (36%) or very positive (20%) impact on their sense of security. However, a portion of respondents still experience a negative (12%) or very negative (4%) impact. This indicates that while many feel secure due to the agencies' efforts, there are still concerns about their effectiveness.

#### **Findings and Implications of the Study for Crime Management Outcomes**

The impact of crime management practices on public security is a critical finding of this study. The perception of the NPF as having a higher success rate in solving crimes and its positive effect on the sense of security reflects the importance of effective crime management in fostering community safety. This supports

existing literature that links successful crime management to improved public perceptions of safety and security (Wilson & Kelling, 1982; Skogan & Hartnett, 1997).

Conversely, the negative impacts reported by some respondents suggest areas where both agencies need to address deficiencies in their practices. Addressing these issues may involve adopting best practices from other successful models and enhancing inter-agency collaboration, as suggested by recent studies on crime management and inter-agency cooperation (Sullivan & Worrall, 2019; Braga & Weisburd, 2012).

#### **Conclusion**

The crime investigation and management procedures of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC) and the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) in the city of Ilorin have been clarified by this study. The results show that, in comparison to the NSCDC, the NPF enjoys greater public trust due to its greater visibility and community involvement. According to the report, the NPF is seen as more approachable and sensitive to community issues, which promotes good ties with the general population. On the other hand, the efficiency of the NSCDC in interacting with the public and combating crime is impacted by its decreased community visibility (Olawale, 2018; Dian, Amiruddin, & Cahyowati, 2020).

The NPF and NSCDC's approaches to crime management include both parallels and divergences. Although both organizations work to prevent and investigate crimes, the NPF differs from the NSCDC in that it uses cutting-edge technology and follows established protocols. Instead of concentrating on primary law enforcement, the NSCDC's mission is more supplemental, emphasizing emergency response and civil defence. These thus corroborated the positions of Adedeji (2019) and Okafor & Eze (2020).

The study found that more people report crimes to the NPF than to the NSCDC, indicating a higher



level of public confidence in the NPF's efficacy. It equally aligned with the positions of Ajayi & Bello (2022) and Nwankwo and Eze (2021) that effective crime control and community safety depend on public confidence. The results imply that enhancing the NSCDC's public relations and competencies could improve public participation and strengthen its position in crime management.

To further support the NPF's efforts in crime control, the report concludes by highlighting the necessity of specific enhancements to the NSCDC's resources and community engagement tactics. Policymakers and practitioners looking to improve crime investigation and management procedures in Nigeria will find the insights offered to be helpful.

### **Recommendations**

- (a) The study suggests enhancing crime management practices through improved training, better resource distribution, and stronger interagency cooperation to address challenges in resource allocation and technological constraints.
- (b) The NPF should enhance community engagement through frequent policing, public awareness campaigns, and feedback mechanisms to maintain trust and improve service delivery.
- (c) Strengthen interagency collaboration with other security agencies, including NSCDC, to improve crime management efforts and optimize resource utilization.

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