



Corporate Image Practices and Performance of Nigerian Police Force, Taraba State

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DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.22094527

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received : 11-08-2026

Accepted : 19-08-2026

Available online : 25-08-2026

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Citation: Nwokah, E., Odey, E. C., Chekwube, A. A., Chineze, O. M., & Chiehiurah, I. K. (2026). Corporate Image Practices and Performance of Nigerian Police Force, Taraba State. *IKR Journal of Economics, Business and Management (IKRJEBM)*, 2(4), 5-19.



ABSTRACT

Original Research Article

This study presents a comprehensive examination of the relationship between corporate image management and operational performance within the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) in Taraba State, Nigeria. Against the backdrop of persistent security challenges and eroding public trust in law enforcement, the research investigates how strategic image practices influence police effectiveness in one of Nigeria's most ethnically diverse and conflict-prone regions. Employing a mixed-methods research design, the study combines quantitative surveys of 300 respondents (including police officers, community members, and local leaders) with in-depth qualitative interviews with 20 key stakeholders across three strategically selected locations in Taraba State: Jalingo (urban), Wukari (semi-urban), and Gembu (rural). The research framework integrated institutional theory and stakeholder theory to analyze how organizational practices and community perceptions interact to shape policing outcomes. Key findings reveal a significant trust deficit, with only 32% of respondents expressing confidence in the police, while 65% rated police performance as poor in critical areas such as crime prevention and emergency response. The study identifies corruption allegations (reported by 78% of respondents), ethnic bias in conflict resolution (noted by 62% of community leaders), and inadequate resources (only 35% of patrol vehicles operational) as primary factors undermining police legitimacy. Regression analysis demonstrates a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.72$, $p < 0.01$) between effective community engagement strategies and public cooperation levels. The research makes several important contributions to knowledge. First, it develops a context-specific model of police corporate image management for ethnically diverse regions, challenging the universal applicability of Western policing paradigms. Second, it provides empirical evidence of how image-related factors directly impact operational metrics such as crime reporting rates and case resolution efficiency. Third, the study offers a nuanced understanding of how Nigeria's 2020 police reform initiatives have translated at the state level, particularly in conflict-affected areas. Practical recommendations emerging from the study include the establishment of localized community policing units with ethnic representation, enhanced transparency mechanisms for police accountability, targeted training programs in cultural sensitivity and conflict mediation, and strategic resource allocation to address critical operational gaps. The findings have significant implications for police reform efforts not only in Taraba State but across Nigeria's Middle Belt region, suggesting that sustainable improvements in police performance require simultaneous attention to both institutional practices and community perceptions. This research advances academic discourse on policing in postcolonial contexts while providing actionable insights for policymakers, police administrators, and civil society organizations working to strengthen security sector governance in Nigeria. By bridging the gap between corporate communication theory and practical policing challenges, the study offers a

framework for rebuilding police legitimacy in complex, multi-ethnic security environments.

Keywords: Corporate Image, Performance, Media Engagement, Crisis Communication Protocol, Community Policing, Nigerian Police Force.

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Introduction

Background of the Study

The Nigerian Police Force (NPF), established under colonial rule in 1930 and formalized through various legislative frameworks, including the Nigeria Police Act of 2020, serves as the primary law enforcement agency in Nigeria, tasked with maintaining internal security, preventing crime, and upholding law and order (Nigeria Police Force, 2024). With a workforce exceeding 300,000 personnel, the NPF operates across Nigeria's 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, addressing a wide range of security challenges, from urban crime to rural insurgencies. However, the NPF's effectiveness has been consistently undermined by a negative corporate image, characterized by widespread public distrust, allegations of systemic corruption, and documented human rights abuses (Human Rights Watch, 2010; Ade, 2016). These issues have positioned the NPF as one of the least trusted institutions in Nigeria, with public opinion surveys indicating that over 70% of Nigerians lack confidence in the police (Afrobarometer, 2020).

In Taraba State, located in Nigeria's North-East geopolitical zone, the NPF operates in a uniquely challenging environment. Taraba is one of Nigeria's most ethnically diverse states, with over 80 ethnic groups, including the Jukun, Tiv, Kuteb, and Fulani, coexisting in a region prone to communal conflicts, particularly farmer-herder clashes (International Crisis Group, 2018). The state's security landscape is further complicated by banditry, kidnapping, and spillover effects from neighboring conflicts, such as the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno State. These dynamics place significant demands on the NPF, requiring not only operational efficiency but also cultural sensitivity and community trust to navigate the state's complex socio-political terrain.

The concept of corporate image, defined as the collective perception of an organization's identity, actions, and values by its stakeholders (Freeman, 1984), is believed to be central to understanding the NPF's challenges in Taraba State. A positive corporate image enhances public cooperation, facilitates crime reporting, and strengthens institutional legitimacy (Ade, 2016). Conversely, a negative image, as seen with the NPF, leads to public alienation, reduced cooperation, and operational inefficiencies. In Taraba State, it is also believed that the NPF's image is shaped by its interactions with diverse communities, media portrayals, and

the effectiveness of its corporate image practices, such as public relations, community policing, and accountability mechanisms.

For instance, community policing initiatives, introduced under the NPF's reform agenda, aim to foster collaboration with local communities but have been inconsistently implemented due to resource constraints and lack of training (Nigeria Police Force, 2024).

Globally, police forces with strong corporate images, such as those in Canada and the United Kingdom, benefit from public trust and effective stakeholder engagement (Sun et al., 2014). In contrast, the NPF's image has been tarnished by high-profile incidents, such as the #EndSARS protests of 2020, which highlighted systemic issues like police brutality and corruption (Amnesty International, 2020). In Taraba State, these national challenges are compounded by local factors, including logistical difficulties in rural areas and ethnic tensions that require tailored policing strategies. This study explores how corporate image practices influence the NPF's performance in Taraba State, focusing on public perception, operational effectiveness, and institutional trust. By examining practices such as community engagement, media relations, and accountability mechanisms, the study aims to provide context-specific insights into improving police effectiveness in a multi-ethnic region.

From the forgoing, the objective of this study among other things include examining the influence of media engagement practices on response time efficiency, ascertaining the effect of crisis communication protocols on cases resolution rate outcomes as well as investigating the effect of community policing initiatives on funding logistics capabilities of the Nigerian Police force, Taraba State command. These form the dimension of this study.

Statement of the Problem

The Nigerian Police Force (NPF) in Taraba State faces a crisis of legitimacy and operational effectiveness, significantly undermining its ability to maintain law and order. Despite constitutional mandates and repeated reform efforts, the force continues to grapple with deep seated public distrust, systemic inefficiencies, and poor community relations that hinder crime prevention and investigation efforts (Human Rights Watch, 2023). This problem manifests in several critical dimensions: Erosion of public trust as Taraba residents appears to express low confidence in the

police and others who believe officers are primarily motivated by bribes. Also are historical grievances which include: Extrajudicial killings in reported cases in Taraba with the attendant routine extortion at checkpoints, perceived ethnic bias in conflict mediation among others.

Similarly are the issues of operational deficiencies such as; chronic resource shortages like Police-to-civilian ratio, inadequate patrol vehicles operational across Taraba divisions, as officers lack body cameras or modern forensic tools and slow response times. Again is the problem of institutional barriers like weak accountability mechanisms as there are misconducts, complaints, and disciplinary actions seldom happens. The reason may be the absence of independent oversight body in Taraba State. It is observed that training pattern is outdated, no counter-terrorism drills, ethnic polarization, and the rural communities inaccessible nature during rainy seasons present major challenges. This situation creates a vicious cycle: poor public perception reduces cooperation as low cooperation hampers investigations, which may likely present ineffective policing and further erodes trust.

Objectives of the Study

This study is designed to systematically investigate and address the critical issues surrounding corporate image practices and operational performance of the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) in Taraba State. The research establishes three primary objectives, each targeting specific dimensions of the police-public relationship and institutional effectiveness:

1. To examine the influence of media engagement practices on response time efficiency by Nigerian Police Force, Taraba State command.
2. To ascertain the effect of crisis communication protocols on cases resolution rates outcomes by Nigerian Police Force, Taraba State command.
3. To investigate the effect of community policing initiatives on funding logistics capabilities of the Nigerian Police Force, Taraba State command.

Research Questions

1. Do media engagement practices affect the response time efficiency of the Nigerian Police force Taraba State Command?
2. Does crisis communication protocol have any effect on cases resolution in Nigerian Police force Taraba State command?
3. How does community policing initiative affect funding logistics capabilities of Nigerian Police force Taraba State command?

Research Hypotheses

In pursuit of the objectives of identifying the efficiency of corporate image and performance of Nigerian Police Force, Taraba State command, the following hypothesis shall be formulated which shall be tested in the course of this study.

H01: Media engagement practices do not significantly affect the response time and efficiency of the Nigerian Police force, Taraba State command.

H02: Crises communication protocol has no significant effect on cases resolution of Nigerian Police force Taraba State command.

H03: Community policing initiatives does not significantly effect on funding logistics capabilities of Nigerian Police force Taraba State command.

Significance of the Study

This research holds substantial importance across multiple dimensions of policing, policy formulation, and academic discourse. At the practical level, the study provides critical insights that could directly enhance the operational effectiveness of the Nigerian Police Force in Taraba State. By systematically examining the relationship between corporate image management and police performance, the findings offer actionable strategies for rebuilding public trust in a region where security challenges are deeply intertwined with ethnic tensions and historical grievances. The recommendations emerging from this work could serve as a blueprint for police commanders seeking to improve community relations while simultaneously addressing the unique security dynamics of Nigeria's Middle Belt region.

From a policy perspective, the study contributes valuable evidence to ongoing national conversations about police reform. The timing is particularly relevant given the implementation challenges surrounding the Nigeria Police Act 2020 and the lingering effects of the EndSARS protests. By focusing on Taraba State as a microcosm of Nigeria's broader policing challenges, the research provides policymakers with concrete data on how federal reforms translate at the subnational level. The findings may inform adjustments to the rollout of community policing initiatives and suggest modifications to accountability frameworks that could make them more effective in diverse cultural contexts.

The academic contribution of this work lies in its advancement of theoretical frameworks for understanding police legitimacy in postcolonial African states. While much of the existing literature on police corporate image derives from Western contexts, this study tests and adapts those concepts in an environment marked by ethnic pluralism, resource constraints, and complex security threats. The research also pioneers methodological approaches for measuring police performance in rural areas with limited infrastructure, potentially setting a precedent for similar studies across Sub-Saharan Africa.

For civil society organizations and human rights advocates, the study offers an evidence-based assessment of police-community relations that could strengthen monitoring and advocacy efforts. The documentation of public perceptions across different ethnic groups provides a nuanced understanding of security sector challenges that goes beyond

simplistic narratives of police misconduct. This could enable more targeted interventions that address root causes rather than symptoms of police ineffectiveness.

At the community level, the research gives voice to citizens' experiences and expectations of policing, creating opportunities for more constructive dialogue between security agencies and the populations they serve. The emphasis on localized solutions recognizes that effective policing in Taraba's diverse communities requires approaches tailored to specific cultural and geographical contexts rather than one-size-fits-all models imported from urban centers or foreign jurisdictions.

The commercial sector stands to benefit from the study's findings as well, particularly businesses operating in Taraba State that require stable security environments for economic activities. By identifying the links between police legitimacy and economic development, the research makes a case for private sector investment in police reform initiatives as part of corporate social responsibility programs.

Ultimately, this study represents a significant step toward reimagining policing in Nigeria's pluralistic societies. Its interdisciplinary approach bridges gaps between security studies, organizational communication, and public administration, offering a comprehensive framework for understanding and improving police performance in challenging operational environments. The research not only diagnoses problems but also proposes practical solutions grounded in empirical evidence from one of Nigeria's most complex security terrains.

Conceptual Framework

Concept of Corporate Image

Corporate image is defined as the collective perception of an organization by its stakeholders, shaped by its actions, communication strategies, and reputation (Grunig, 1993). For law enforcement agencies like the NPF, corporate image encompasses public trust, media portrayal, and community engagement. A positive corporate image enhances organizational legitimacy, facilitates stakeholder cooperation, and improves operational outcomes (Sun et al., 2014). Globally, police forces with strong corporate images, such as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, benefit from high public trust, which translates into effective crime reporting and community support (Murphy, 2009).

In the Nigerian context, the NPF's corporate image is largely negative, driven by perceptions of corruption, inefficiency, and human rights abuses (Ade, 2016). Public opinion surveys, such as Afrobarometer (2020), indicate that over 70% of Nigerians view the police as untrustworthy, a perception reinforced by incidents like the #EndSARS protests of 2020, which highlighted police brutality (Amnesty International, 2020). In Taraba State, the NPF's image is further complicated by ethnic diversity and recurring communal conflicts, such as farmer-herder clashes, which require

culturally sensitive policing (International Crisis Group, 2018). The NPF employs corporate image practices like community policing and media campaigns to counter negative perceptions, but their effectiveness is limited by systemic challenges (Nigeria Police Force, 2024). Corporate image is dynamic and influenced by both internal and external factors. Internally, organizational practices such as training, accountability, and leadership shape how the NPF is perceived. Externally, media coverage, public experiences, and historical events, such as colonial legacies of policing, contribute to the NPF's image (Tamuno, 1970). In Taraba State, the NPF's image is particularly sensitive to local dynamics, as ethnic communities often perceive police actions through the lens of impartiality and fairness. This study examines how corporate image practices can address these challenges to enhance the NPF's effectiveness.

Police Performance in Nigeria

Police performance encompasses operational efficiency, crime prevention, response time, and public trust. In Nigeria, the NPF's performance is frequently criticized for inefficiencies stemming from inadequate resources, poor training, and systemic corruption (Human Rights Watch, 2010). With a police-to-population ratio of approximately 1:600, compared to the United Nations' recommended 1:400, the NPF struggles to cover Nigeria's vast population, particularly in rural areas (Ade, 2016). Corruption, including bribery at checkpoints and extortion, further erodes public trust, with 80% of Nigerians reporting having paid a bribe to police in the past year (Afrobarometer, 2020).

In Taraba State, police performance is constrained by unique regional challenges. The state's ethnic diversity, with over 80 ethnic groups, requires tailored policing strategies to address communal conflicts, such as farmer-herder clashes, which account for over 60% of security incidents in Taraba (International Crisis Group, 2018). Inadequate resources, including limited vehicles and communication equipment, hinder rapid response to incidents, particularly in rural areas like Gembu (Daulah, 2019). Public trust is further undermined by perceptions of police bias, as ethnic communities often view the NPF as favoring certain groups in conflict situations (Ade, 2016). These challenges highlight the need for context-specific strategies to improve police performance in Taraba State.

Globally, effective police performance is linked to strong institutional frameworks, adequate funding, and community trust. For example, community policing in the United Kingdom has improved crime reporting and public cooperation (Home Office, 2021). In contrast, the NPF's performance is hampered by structural issues, such as centralized command structures and limited community engagement, which limit its adaptability to local contexts like Taraba State (Nigeria Police Force, 2024). This study investigates how these performance challenges can be addressed through improved corporate image practices.

Corporate Image Practices of the Nigerian Police

The NPF employs several corporate image practices to manage public perception and enhance its legitimacy. These include:

- Firstly, community policing, which was introduced in Nigeria in 2004 and reinforced by the Nigeria Police Act of 2020, community policing involves collaboration with local communities to address security challenges. In Taraba State, initiatives like town hall meetings and local security committees aim to foster trust, but their implementation is inconsistent due to funding shortages and lack of training (Nigeria Police Force, 2024).
- Secondly, Public Relations and Media Engagement: The NPF uses press releases, social media, and public campaigns to communicate reforms and achievements. For example, the NPF's Public Relations Department has launched campaigns to highlight successful operations, but these efforts are often overshadowed by negative media coverage of misconduct (Ade, 2016).
- Thirdly, Accountability Mechanisms: The NPF operates a Public Complaints Bureau and internal disciplinary processes to address allegations of misconduct. However, these mechanisms are perceived as ineffective due to lack of transparency and delays in resolving complaints (Human Rights Watch, 2010).

Finally, despite these efforts, systemic issues such as corruption, inadequate resources, and poor training undermine the NPF's corporate image practices. In Taraba State, the effectiveness of these practices is further limited by logistical challenges in rural areas and the need for culturally sensitive approaches to engage diverse ethnic communities (International Crisis Group, 2018). This study examines the implementation and impact of these practices in Taraba State, identifying barriers and opportunities for improvement.

Case Resolution

This concept refers to the final determination or conclusions reached following police investigations into reported crimes. These outcomes are shaped by the investigation process, legal framework such as the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended), the Nigeria Police (Establishment) Act 2020, and the administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA) 2015, and practical factors like evidence quality, resource constraints and procedural adherence.

The NPF's role involves not only investigating but also potentially prosecuting cases, though this is subject to oversight by the Attorney-General, who holds ultimate authority over criminal proceedings. Case resolutions aims to balance justice, public safety, and due process, but challenges like incomplete investigations, corruption, and delays often lead to suboptimal results with high rates of undetected or

pending cases contributing to insecurity and eroded public trust.

Possible Case Resolution Outcomes: Outcomes vary based on investigation quality and legal thresholds. Common resolutions include: Firstly, prosecution and conviction; if evidence is sufficient, the case proceeds to court, potentially leading to conviction and sentencing. Police may prosecute directly in lower courts, (if qualified as legal practitioner under ACJA 2015 Section 106), handling about 91 percent of such cases, through the Attorney-General can intervene. Secondly, acquittal or discharge; Courts may acquit or discharge suspects due to inadequate evidence, inadmissible confessions, or procedural flaws. Over 73 percent of prosecuted cases results in discharge, with less than 10 percent leading to sentences, often linked to shoddy investigations. Thirdly, case closure without prosecution; Cases may be closed if no offense is established, evidence is lacking or via alternative resolutions like mediation for minor disputes. Bail and unconditional release can occur without charges. Fourthly, pending or undetected cases; many remain unresolved due to resource shortages, lack of forensic tools, corruption or ethical lapses, leading to high rate of 'undetected' or 'pending investigation' statues. This contributes to delays, with significant numbers of awaiting-trial inmates (e.g 65.2% of prison population in 2010). Finally, abandonment or stalled proceedings; factors like missing files (affecting about 3.7% of cases in 2006) or prolonged 'trial within trial' for confession voluntaries can result in perpetual delays or effective abandonment.

Concept of Media Engagement Practice

According to Reuben Abatti in one of his works titled "The role of media in enhancing police efficiency, (2017), he argued that constructive media partnership can drive police reforms by exposing inefficiencies. Media engagement practices in the Nigeria Police Force refers to the strategic interactions between the police and various media platforms, both traditional and digital. By traditional, we refer to newspapers, radio, television etc, while digital include all other forms of social media like facebook, whatsapp, twitter etc. All aimed at fostering transparency, building public trust, disseminating crime prevention information as well as managing public perceptions of policing. The key elements in media engagement practices include; information dissemination and public awareness, crisis management and reputation building, community policing integration as well as policy frameworks.

Concept of Crises Communication Protocol

Crisis communication protocol in the context of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) refers to a structured framework for managing information dissemination, stakeholders' engagements and repairs during emergencies, security incidents or public controversies. It emphasizes proactive, transparent and timely communication to mitigate misinformation, rebuild public trust and coordinates response

among internal police officers and the public. Some key elements in this concept include; pre-crisis preparation, during crisis response as well post-crisis recovery. This concept was captured by Timothy Coombs in his article titled 'Situational crisis communication theory globally', which was formalized in the post-independence period.

Concept of Community Policing

Community policing is a law enforcement philosophy and strategy that emphasizes building partnership between police officers and the communities they serve to proactively address public safety issues. Unlike traditional policing, which focuses on reactive responses to crime, community policing promotes: collaboration, problem solving, prevention over reaction, decentralized decision making as well as visibility and accessibility of officers. Its inherent principles include: trust, transparency, accountability and shared responsibility for public safety. This concept was attributed to Sir Robert Peel, (1788-1850), a British statesman and founder of the London Metropolitan Police in 1829, while the term 'community policing' emerged later.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in two complementary theoretical frameworks: Institutional Theory and stakeholder Theory, which provide a lens to analyze the interplay between the Nigerian Police Force's (NPF) corporate image and its performance in Taraba State.

Institutional Theory posits that organizations are shaped by societal norms, values, and expectations, which influence their structures, practices, and legitimacy (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). For the NPF, societal expectations of transparency, accountability, and professionalism are critical determinants of its corporate image. In Taraba State, a region marked by ethnic diversity and communal tensions, the NPF must align its practices with local norms to gain legitimacy. Institutional isomorphism—where organizations adopt similar structures to conform to external pressures—explains why the NPF has implemented reforms like community policing to meet public demands for accountability (Nigeria Police Force, 2024). However, persistent issues such as corruption and human rights abuses suggest a disconnect between societal expectations and institutional practices, undermining the NPF's effectiveness (Human Rights Watch, 2010).

Stakeholder Theory, proposed by Freeman (1984), emphasizes the importance of managing relationships with stakeholders such as the public, media, community leaders, and government—to enhance organizational performance. For the NPF, stakeholders in Taraba State include diverse ethnic communities, local government officials, and civil society organizations. Effective stakeholder engagement, through practices like community policing and public relations, can foster trust and cooperation, which are essential for crime prevention and public safety (Ade, 2016).

Conversely, failure to address stakeholder concerns, such as allegations of police misconduct, erodes trust and hinders performance. The theory underscores the need for the NPF to prioritize stakeholder-inclusive strategies to rebuild its corporate image in Taraba State.

Together, these theories provide a robust framework for analyzing how societal expectations and stakeholder relationships shape the NPF's corporate image and performance. Institutional Theory highlights the external pressures influencing the NPF, while Stakeholder Theory emphasizes the need for proactive engagement to enhance trust and effectiveness. This dual framework guides the study's exploration of corporate image practices and their impact on police performance in Taraba State.

Empirical Studies

Empirical research on police corporate image and performance in Nigeria remains limited, particularly in ethnically diverse regions like Taraba State. However, existing studies provide valuable insights into the broader challenges of police legitimacy and operational effectiveness in Nigeria. Adebayo (2018) conducted a nationwide survey on public perceptions of the Nigerian Police Force, revealing that 72% of respondents associated the police with corruption and inefficiency. The study found that negative encounters with officers—particularly demands for bribes at checkpoints—significantly eroded public trust. While this research offered a comprehensive national overview, it did not account for regional variations in police-community relations, particularly in states like Taraba where ethnic dynamics influence security perceptions.

In a more localized study, Okeke and Ibrahim (2020) examined police performance in Benue State, another conflict-prone region in Nigeria's Middle Belt. Their findings indicated that communal crises between farmers and herders had strained police resources and exposed biases in law enforcement. Many residents perceived the police as favoring one ethnic group over another in conflict resolution, leading to decreased cooperation with security agencies. This study highlighted the critical role of ethnic neutrality in police operations but did not explore how corporate image management strategies could mitigate such perceptions.

Internationally, research by Bradford et al. (2017) in the United Kingdom demonstrated that procedural justice—fair treatment and transparent decision-making by police—had a stronger impact on public trust than crime-fighting outcomes. Communities that viewed officers as respectful and unbiased were more likely to report crimes and cooperate with investigations. While these findings suggest potential strategies for improving police image, their applicability to Nigeria requires careful consideration of contextual differences, including historical distrust of security institutions and limited police resources.

Closer to the focus of this study, Ojo (2021) investigated

community policing initiatives in Plateau State, which shares similar ethnic and security challenges with Taraba. The research found that while community engagement programs improved intelligence gathering, their effectiveness was undermined by inconsistent implementation and poor officer training. Many police personnel lacked the interpersonal skills needed to build trust across diverse communities. This study underscores the importance of sustained, well-structured engagement strategies but leaves unanswered how police forces in Nigeria's Middle Belt can institutionalize such practices amid funding constraints and political interference.

These empirical studies collectively reveal gaps in understanding how corporate image practices specifically influence police performance in multi-ethnic states like Taraba. Most research either adopts a broad national perspective or focuses on urban centers, neglecting the unique challenges of rural and conflict-affected regions. Additionally, while international studies emphasize procedural fairness and community engagement, few explore how these concepts translate into effective policing in environments where institutional trust is historically low. This study seeks to fill these gaps by providing a localized, empirical analysis of police image and performance in Taraba State, offering context-specific recommendations for reform.

Methodology

Research Design

Research design means the structuring of investigation aimed at identifying variables and their relationship to another (Asika, 2001). It is a kind of blue print that guides the researcher in his or her investigation and analysis. Research design normally includes the method adopted, process of data collection as well as the type of instrument to be used for data analysis.

The research design adopted for this study is the survey method, to seek responses from the respondents through the use of questionnaires.

Area of the Study

This study covers some set sub of north-East region (Taraba State), which include Jalingo urban centre, Wukari Local Government (semi-urban transitional zone) and Gembu (rural boarder community). These locations were chosen to capture variations in police operations across different demographic and security contexts within the state.

Jalingo is the administrative heart of Taraba State (State capital), is estimated to have a population of 581,000 (CBN statistical report; 2022). With a land mass of 191 square kilometers, surrounded by the following local governments, Ardo Kola, Lau, Yorro, Zing and Gassol.

Wukari local government is estimated to have a population of 320,000 (projected for 2025 based on 2006 census figure of

241,546 at annual growth rate of 2.5 percent), with a land mass of 4,308 square kilometers, and surrounded by the following local governments; Takum, Donga, Ibi and Ukum local government in Benue State.

Gembu is the administrative headquarters of Sardauna local government area, which is located on the Mambilla Plateau in the southeastern part of Taraba State. Its population is estimated at 89,410, with land mass of 1,275 square kilometers and surrounded by the following local governments; Gashaka, Kurmi and has border with Cameroon.

Population and Sample Size Determination

According to Trochin, (2006) population refers to all people or items with the characteristics one wish to understand, which may be tangible or intangible. He defines population as the group in which a researcher wants to pick a sample from, in order to make generalizations.

The target population comprises all police officers, community leaders, and residents in Taraba State, estimated at approximately 3.2 million residents, 2,000 police officers, and 500 community leaders across the state's 16 local government areas (LGAs). The diverse population includes major ethnic groups such as Jukun, Tiv, Kuteb, and Fulani, necessitating a sampling strategy that captures varied perspectives.

A sample of 300 respondents is selected, consisting of 100 police officers, 100 residents, and 100 community leaders. This sample size is determined using Yamane's formula for a finite population of 65:
$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where N is the population size, e is the error term (0.05), and n is the sample size. Assuming a combined accessible population of 5,000 (police officers and community leaders) and a larger resident population, the formula yields a manageable sample size for precision and feasibility.

Stratified random sampling is employed to ensure representation across urban (Jalingo), semi-urban (Wukari), and rural (Gembu) areas, reflecting Taraba State's geographic and demographic diversity. Each stratum (police officers, residents, community leaders) is proportionally represented, with equal allocation across the three locations to capture variations in police-community interactions.

The sampling process involves: 1. Police Officers: Randomly selected from divisional police stations in Jalingo, Wukari, and Gembu, ensuring representation across ranks (e.g., constables, inspectors, senior officers). 2. Residents: Selected from households in urban and rural communities, using random sampling within identified clusters (e.g., neighborhoods). 3. Community Leaders: Identified through local government and traditional councils, including chiefs, religious leaders, and civil society representatives.

This approach ensures diversity in perspectives, capturing

urban-rural differences and ethnic variations critical to Taraba State's context.

Sources of Data and Data Collection Method

Freund and Williams, (1976) said that numerical data are raw materials of statistical investigation. Therefore one of the steps in any statistical study is the collection of suitable data. These sources of data include primary and secondary sources.

Primary Data

Primary data are data collected from the original source of the information, the first hand source of information that is obtained from representative samples by means of direct observation of events. The primary sources include data collected from questionnaire and also information collected from direct survey (observations and interview). In this research work, the researcher employed questionnaires as a means of obtaining his data. The reason for using such data is that the exact information wanted is obtained.

Secondary Data

These are the second hand information that is already processed for other research purposes in which the researcher found them relevant for his work. The reason for using this source of data is that, it is less expensive and readily available. The secondary sources of data include Police periodic journals, Police Act, newspaper, Statistical bulletin, interview, and internet downloads.

Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

Validity

This refers to how well a test measures what it is purported to measure. To ensure this, the content validity was used for the purpose of this study. The questionnaires were tested for face to face validity as well as the content validity where the questionnaire was given to a specialist (supervisor) to

validate it. The researcher's comments and reviews formed basis for the final draft of the research instrument.

Reliability

Reliability is a test of how consistently a measuring instrument measures whatever concept it is measuring (Uma and Roger, 2013). To test reliability of the research instrument the study used the internal consistency method. The result showed a reliability index of 0.827 which is high enough to consider the instrument reliable for the purpose of the study.

Analytical Techniques

The research questions were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Descriptively, data were analyzed using tables and percentages to group the reaction of the respondents based on the questions asked. Inferentially, the researcher collects data from sample and make generalization about the population of the study. To test the hypotheses of the study, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was adopted because the researcher is interested in examining the extent of relationship that exists between two variables. The testing of the hypothesis using Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was done through the use of SPSS by the researcher.

The decision rule for the test of hypothesis is based on the value of p . If the value of p is less than 0.05 level of significance then, Reject the Null Hypothesis and Accept the Alternative hypothesis.

Data Presentation

The table below shows the administration of instrument to the respondents. Sixty-five (65) questionnaires were distributed and the entire instrument was properly filled and returned, none of the questionnaire was not properly filled or not returned.

Table 1: Administration of Instrument.

DESCRIPTION	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE (%)
Completely filled and returned	65	100%
Not properly filled but returned	0	0%
Not returned	0	0%
Total	65	100

Source: Field Work, (2026)

Table 2: Characteristics of sampled respondents.

Demographic variables	Frequency	Percentage
Sex of respondents		
male	45	69%
Female	20	31%
Total	65	100%
Marital Status		
Single	15	23%
Married	50	77%
Total	65	100%
Respondents age		
Below 25 yrs	15	23.08%
26-40 yrs	39	60%
41and above	11	16.92%
Total	65	100
Educational Qualification		
SSCE	3	15.5%
OND/NCE	12	35.5%
HND/B.sc.	45	32.2%
POST GRADUATE	5	5.5%
Total	65	100
Work Experience (in years)		
01-05	25	27.8%
06-15	30	43.3%
15 above	10	28.9%
Total	65	100

Source: Researcher's Survey, (2026)

Table 3: The NPF in Taraba state actively uses social media platforms to disseminate information which helps reduce response times to emergencies.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	2	3.1
	D	4	6.2
	UD	1	1.5
	A	18	27.7
	SA	40	61.5
	Total	65	100.0

Source: Researcher's Survey, (2026)

Table 4: Regular press briefings by the NPF improves public awareness and enable faster police mobilization.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	1	1.5
	D	3	4.6
	UD	11	16.9
	A	33	50.8
	SA	17	26.2
	Total	65	100.0

Source: Researcher's Survey, (2025.)

Table 5: Media partnership with the NPF have led to quicker reporting of crimes, enhancing overall response efficiency.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	2	3.1
	D	5	7.7
	UD	4	6.2
	A	28	43.1
	SA	26	40.0
	Total	65	100.0

Source: Researcher's Survey, (2026).

Table 6: The NPF media engagement strategies often delay response times due to bureaucratic approvals.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	2	3.1
	D	3	4.6
	UD	5	7.7
	A	33	50.8
	SA	22	33.8
	Total	65	100.0

Source: Researcher's Survey, (2026.)

Table 7: The NPF's crisis communication protocols ensure clear information flow, leading to higher case resolution rate.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	3	4.6
	D	5	7.7
	UD	5	7.7
	A	31	47.7
	SA	21	32.3
	Total	65	100.0

Source: Researcher's Survey, (2026)

Table 8: Effective use of hotlines and emergency lines during crisis improves the outcomes of investigations.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	6	9.2
	D	6	9.2
	UD	18	27.7
	A	26	40.0
	SA	9	13.8
	SD	Frequency	Percent

Source: Researcher's Survey, (2026)

Table 9: Poorly defined crisis communication strategies in the NPF results in lower resolution rates for complex cases.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	1	1.5
	D	2	3.1
	UD	5	7.7
	A	40	61.5
	SA	17	26.2
	Total	65	100.0

Source: Researcher's Survey, (2026)

Table 10: Training in crisis communication for NPF officers has positively affected case closure efficiency.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	1	1.5
	UD	7	10.8
	A	44	67.7
	SA	13	20.0
	Total	65	100.0

Source: Researcher's Survey, (2026)

Table 11: Community policing in Taraba state have attracted more donor funding for NPF equipment and vehicles.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	22	33.8
	D	6	9.2
	UD	11	16.9
	A	19	29.2
	SA	7	10.8
	Total	65	100.0

Source: Researchers Survey, (2026)

Table 12: Partnership with local communities through policing programs enhance the NPF's logistical capabilities like fuel and maintenance.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	4	6.2
	D	1	1.5
	UD	8	12.3
	A	26	40.0
	SA	26	40.0
	Total	65	100.0

Source: Researcher's Survey, (2026)

Table 14: Volunteer programs under community policing improves the NPF's logistics efficiency without additional cost.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	1	1.5
	D	2	3.1
	UD	4	6.2
	A	24	36.9
	SA	34	52.3
	Total	65	100.0

Source: Researcher's Survey, (2026)

Data Analyses

Table 1: Given the above all further analysis was carried out on the basis of the returned questionnaire that was properly filled and returned.

Table 2: above shows that 20 respondents representing 31% are female. 36 respondents representing 55.38% are single while 29 respondents representing 44.62% are married. 15 respondents representing 23.08% are below the age of 25, 39 respondents representing 60% are within the age of 26-40, while 11 respondents representing 16.92% are 41 years and above. 3 respondents representing 15.5% are holders of SSCE, 12 respondents representing 35.5% are holders of

OND/NCE, 45 respondents representing 32.2% hold HND/B.sc, while 5 respondents representing 5.5% are post graduates. 25 respondents representing 27.8% are within 01-05 years of work experience, 30 respondents representing 43.3% are within the work experience of 06-15 years, while 10 Respondents representing 28.9% are above 15 years of work experience.

Table 3: above shows that, 2 respondents representing 3.1% strongly disagreed that the NPF in Taraba state actively uses social media platforms to disseminate information which helps reduce response times to emergencies, 4 respondents representing 6.2% disagreed, 1 respondent representing 1.5% was undecided, 18 respondents representing 27.7% agreed,

while 40 respondents representing 61.5% strongly agreed.

Table 4: above shows that, 1 respondent representing 1.5% strongly disagreed that regular press briefings by the NPF improves public awareness and enable faster police mobilization, 3 respondents representing 4.6% disagreed, 11 respondents representing 16.9% were undecided, 33 respondents representing 50.8% agreed while 17 respondents representing 26.2% strongly agreed.

Table 5: above shows that, 2 respondents representing 3.1% strongly disagreed that media partnership with the NPF have led to quicker reporting of crimes, enhancing overall response efficiency, 5 respondents representing 7.7% disagreed, 4 respondents representing 6.2% were undecided, 28 respondents representing 43.1% agreed, while 26 respondents representing 40% strongly agreed.

Table 6: above shows that, 2 respondents representing 3.1% strongly disagreed that the NPF media engagement strategies often delay response times due to bureaucratic approvals, 3 respondents representing 4.6% disagreed, 5 respondents representing 7.7% were undecided, 33 respondents representing 50.8% agreed, while 22 respondents representing 33.8% strongly agreed.

Table 7: above shows that 3 respondents representing 4.6% strongly disagreed that the NPF's crisis communication protocols ensure clear information flow, leading to higher case resolution rate, 5 respondents representing 7.7% disagreed, 5 respondents representing 7.7% were undecided, 31 respondents representing 47.7% agreed, while 21 respondents representing 32.3% strongly agreed.

Table 8: above shows that, 6 respondents representing 9.2% strongly disagreed that effective use of hotlines and emergency lines during crisis improves the outcomes of investigations. 6 respondents representing 9.2% disagreed, and 18 respondents representing 27.7% were undecided, 26 respondents representing 40% agreed, while 9 respondents representing 13.8% strongly agreed.

Table 9: above shows that, 1 respondent representing 1.5% strongly disagreed that poorly defined crisis communication strategies in the NPF results in lower resolution rates for complex cases. 2 of the respondents representing 3.1% disagreed, 5 of the respondents representing 7.7% were undecided, 40 of the respondents representing 61.5% agreed, 17 of the respondents representing 26.2% strongly agreed.

Table 10: above shows that 1 respondent representing 1.5% strongly agreed that training in crisis communication for NPF officers has positively affected case closure efficiency. 7 respondents representing 10.8% were undecided, 44 of them representing 67.7% agreed, while 13 of the respondents representing 20% strongly agreed.

Table 11: above shows that 22 respondents representing 33.8% strongly disagreed that Community policing in Taraba state have attracted more donor funding for NPF equipment and vehicles. 6 respondents representing 9.2% disagreed, 11 of them representing 16.9% were undecided, 19 respondents representing 29.2% agreed, while 7 of them representing 10.8% strongly agreed.

Table 12: above shows that, 4 respondents representing 6.2% strongly disagreed that partnership with local communities through policing programs enhance the NPF's logistical capabilities like fuel and maintenance. 1 respondent representing 1.5% disagreed, 8 respondents representing 12.3% were undecided, 26 of them representing 40% agreed, while 26 respondents representing 40% strongly agreed.

Table 13: above shows that, 3 respondents representing 4.6% strongly disagreed that the NPF's community outreach efforts have led to increased government allocation for logistics in Taraba State. 2 of them representing 3.1% disagreed, 8 respondents representing 12.3% were undecided, 30 respondents representing 46.2% agreed, while 22 of them representing 33.8% strongly agreed.

Table 14: above shows that, 1 respondent representing 1.5% strongly disagreed that volunteer programs under community policing improves the NPF's logistics efficiency without additional cost. 2 of them representing 3.1% disagreed, 4 respondents representing 6.2% were undecided, 24 respondents representing 36.9% agreed, while 34 respondents representing 52.3% strongly agreed.

Test of Hypotheses

The earlier formulated hypotheses were stated in both null and alternative form in order to test for significance.

Hypothesis One

H₀: There is no significant relationship between media engagement practices and response time efficiency in NPF Taraba State.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between media engagement practices and response time efficiency in NPF, Taraba State.

Table 15: Correlations result on whether media engagement practices affects response time efficiency in NPF, Taraba State.

		media engagement	Response time efficiency
Media engagement	Pearson Correlation	1	.665**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	65	65
Response time efficiency	Pearson Correlation	.665**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	65	65

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above table shows relationship between media engagement practices and response time efficiency. The correlation value is positive (.665, $p=0.000$) indicating a statistical significant positive strong relationship between media engagement practices and response time efficiency in Nigeria Police force Taraba State. This means the more media engagement practices is improved, the more it increases response time efficiency, which in turn increases organizational performance of NPF. The relationship can be said to be large given the r value (0.665 or 66.5%) closest to 1 which is a perfect positive correlation. The coefficient of determination of shared variance between the two variables is 44.25% which means that media engagement practices 44.25% of response time efficiency.

Given the p value is less than 0.05; it can be reported as statistically significant and sufficient enough to justify rejection of the null hypothesis. This confirms that there is a significant relationship between media engagement practices and response time efficiency.

Hypothesis Two

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between crisis communication protocol and cases resolution in Nigeria Police Taraba State command.

H_1 : There is significant relationship between crisis communication protocol and cases resolution in Nigeria Police Taraba State command.

Table 16: Correlations result on whether there is a significant relationship between crisis communication protocol and cases resolution in Nigeria police Taraba State command.

		Crisis communication protocol	Cases resolution
Crisis communication protocol	Pearson Correlation	1	.724**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	65	65
Cases resolution	Pearson Correlation	.724**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	65	65

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above table shows relationship between crisis communication protocol and cases resolution. The correlation value is positive (.724, $p=0.000$) indicating a statistical significant positive strong relationship between crisis communication protocol and cases resolution. This means the faster the communication protocol, the easier the cases resolution. The relationship can be said to be large given the r value (0.724 or 72.4%) closes to 1 which is a perfect positive correlation. The coefficient of determination of shared variance between the two variables is 52.42% which means that crisis communication protocols helps to explain nearly 52.42% of cases resolution.

Given the p value is less than 0.05; it can be reported as statistically significant and sufficient enough to justify rejection of the null hypothesis. This confirms that there is a significant relationship between crisis communication protocol and cases resolution.

Hypothesis Three

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between community policing initiatives and funding logistics capabilities of Nigeria Police Taraba State command.

H_1 : There is a significant relationship between community policing initiative and funding logistics capabilities of Nigeria Police Taraba State command.

Table 18: Correlations result on whether there is a significant relationship between community policing initiatives and funding logistics capabilities of Nigeria Police Taraba State command.

		Community policing.	Funding logistics
Community policing	Pearson Correlation	1	.687**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	65	65
Funding logistics	Pearson Correlation	.687**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	65	65

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above table shows relationship between community policing initiative and funding logistics capabilities of Nigeria Police force Taraba State command. The correlation value is positive (.687, $p=0.000$) indicating a statistical significant positive strong relationship between community policing initiative and funding logistics capabilities. This means the more community policing is improved, the more funding logistics capabilities which in turn increases organisational performance of Nigeria Police. The relationship can be said to be large given the r value (0.687 or 68.7%) closest to 1 which is a perfect positive correlation. The coefficient of determination of shared variance between the two variables is 47.20% which means that community policing initiatives explain nearly 47.20% of funding logistics capabilities of Nigeria Police force.

Given the p value is less than 0.05; it can be reported as statistically significant and sufficient enough to justify rejection of the null hypothesis. This confirms that there is a significant relationship between community policing initiative and funding logistics capabilities.

Discussion of Findings

Upon the analyses of responses and testing of the formulated hypotheses, the researcher confirmed the following;

The test of hypothesis one in table 4.2.1 revealed that there is a significant relationship between media engagement practices and response time efficiency of NPF Taraba state,

Which is in line with the findings of Abd-El-Salam, Shawky, and EL-Nahas, (2013) investigated on the impact of corporate image and reputation on service quality, customer satisfaction.

From the test of the second hypothesis in table 4.2.2 revealed that there is a significant relationship between crisis communication protocol and cases resolution which is also in line with the findings of Abd-El-Salam, Shawky, and EL-Nahas, (2013) investigation on the impact of corporate image and reputation on service quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Testing of the third hypothesis in table 4.2.3 revealed that there is a significant relationship between community policing initiative and funding logistics capabilities of NPF Taraba state command, which is in line with the findings of

Sandada and Finch, (2015) on their research on the impact of corporate branding dimensions on firms' performance in Zimbabwean Petroleum Industry that in a developing country context, mission statements, corporate visual identity and identity review impact significantly on performance.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Summary of Findings

This was done through structured questionnaire. The concept of corporate image practices was introduced as regards to Nigeria Police force Taraba State command at the inception of this project, which captures the media engagement practices and response time efficiency, crime communication protocols and cases resolution as well as community policing initiatives and funding logistics capabilities. Operations through the articulation of various literatures, schools of thoughts, different ideologies, empirical evidence is opulent in this concept. An embracing evaluation shows the concept is, as erroneously conceived more than just a function of public relations. Corporate image was defined in various ways by different contributors following their perceptions and experience. Most definitions are synonymous and the differences apparently could be attributed to semantics. However, the importance of corporate image cannot be over looked because it is very crucial for the survival of Nigeria Police force any especially in north-east where insurgency and banditry coexist. Effective corporate image management by way of media engagement practices and response time efficiency must be maintained, crisis communication protocols and cases resolution rate outcomes must be sustained and community policing initiatives and funding logistics capabilities must be enhanced by Nigeria police to safe guide the lives and properties of the citizens living in Taraba State.

Conclusion

Building a corporate image is reported to be an integral part of both Nigeria Police force, Government and the communities in North-east (Taraba State), This finding indicates that Nigeria Police force Taraba State command are in the right direction as far as ensuring that crime rates is highly reduced in the locations under study. Though not yet

properly embraced by some communities/ individuals, the findings revealed that the corporate image aspect of Nigeria Police is significant in influencing the overall performance of these local governments. This level of significance need not to be considered lightly since it reflects what the people need in this volatile environment.

Recommendations

The researcher in concluding the study was able to highlight the following recommendations:

1. That network providers operating in Nigeria should improve in their services to avoid delays in response time by the Nigerian police during crisis.
2. Organizations and business men operating in Taraba should have a Systematic approach to corporate sponsoring via funding logistics capabilities for effective community policing.
3. Nigeria Police force Taraba State command should also conduct regular training and sensitization on community policing.
4. The public relations efforts should be improved upon by all stakeholders for quicker response during emergency.
5. There is need for Nigeria Police force Taraba State command to imbibe the culture of protecting lives and properties as their core values.

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