

# APPRAISAL OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS CAMPAIGNS INFLUENCE ON NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING IN MBAITOLI COMMUNITY

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## ABSTRACT

*Community relations campaign is a series of security-oriented messages, presented for public consumption as a public service announcement. It is aimed at creating security awareness, sensitizing message consumers on security related issues so as to mobilize them for effective participation in securing an environment. The survey research method is used to obtain data from 384 respondents selected using the cozby formular, in Mbaitoli locality in Imo State. The study found that though the messages were extensively consumed in the community, the level of expected result was not achieved. No significant link was established between the campaign message and the level of crime detection and prevention in the locality. It was therefore recommended that the intervening factors which militated against communication success should be investigated.*

**Keywords:** Community relations, Campaign influence and Neighbourhood policing.

## Introduction

Recently, the southern Kaduna experience of July, 2017, where persons were killed by communal conflicts resulted in the state police command to plead with community members and “fish out” the culprits, suspected to be living in their communities. The incessant calls for the exposition of suspected criminals, like kidnappers and robbers operating from the communities have ranted content of various media publications in Southern Nigeria, like in Imo State. In spite the calls, the suspects still live in the communities, presumably known to community members without any risk of identification and report to the law enforcement agencies. The situation has therefore, become worrisome to society since crime and

its effects adversely affect humanity. Why is the situation not mitigated despite knowledge of how crime affects society?

The presentation of “Evans” the kidnap suspect in June, 2017, provided the background to this study. The “Focus Nigeria” edition of Thursday, asked his neighbours why he was not identified and reported to the police. Some of them claimed not to know him, some others said he was a nice man while others did not see him as a criminal to warrant such a report. It became certain that the said “Evans” lived in their community, since his mansion was shown as part of the locality. It became necessary therefore, to investigate why neighbourhood policing seem difficult since community members can easily identify and report suspected criminals to the police.

Numerous public service announcements (Owuamalam, 2007, Nwamuo, 2017) have been used to create awareness about issues related to security (NTA, 2017, NOA, 2017, FMOI 2017), in Nigeria. The radio and television in particular have been used to stimulate the attention of message consumers to the need for interest on crime detection and prevention. The essence of the concerted effort is to ensure that the central message objective is achieved through the campaign effort, irrespective of the medium used in the assignment (McQuail, 2006). It is the central goal which directs action and facilitates media use for a considered effectiveness and influence.

In Imo State, Nigeria, some criminal situations have resulted to the use of radio and television messages to appeal to community members to assist the police in identifying criminals within their localities. It was through the death of a suspected robbery terror in Owerri, the destruction of kidnapping dens, like the one at Enyigugu Mbaise and the recent escapades of “Vampire” in various communities in Imo State, that have made the appeal to communities more striking than ever before. The influence of such media content influence is assessed in this study as to understand if communities in Mbaitoli Local Government Area, where the Eze-Imo hails from are moved to comply with the expected result of the campaign messages. This is the thrust of the current study.

Statement of the Problem why campaign fails to achieve the desired objective is a problem to the mass media. The enormous cost expended on such media productions and the valuable airtime and space used for communicating such a message is also an issue of concern to the media establishment. It becomes necessary, therefore, to investigate why suspected criminals still live among community members in spite of the media campaign for crime detection and prevention in communities by members of the localities.

The various media messages from the Orient-FM and TV, Owerri, Heartland FM,

Owerri and NTA 12, Owerri, have stressed the need for community and neighbourhood policing as a strategy for crime prevention and identification of culprits. How effective have the process messages (Owuamalam, 2007) of such media presentations being towards their production objectives. Has crime reduced due to the impact of such presented messages? What would have made objective realization difficult? This perspective is adopted since kidnapping, robbery and other forms of criminalities still thrive despite the campaign messages. It is the need to ascertain what should be done to achieve the message objective that was led to this study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Media campaign failure is a problem in mass communication. The enormous cost expended, the waste of valuable time (for electronic) and space (for print) are worrisome. It means that an understanding of why messages fail to achieve the desired objective need to be investigated.

The situation where crime and criminality exist, inspite of security oriented messages provide the platform for such an investigation. The neighbourhood or community policy as a community relations strategy for protecting lives and property become a ready phenomenon for studying the influence of received campaign message on the intended target audience. The Mbaitoli experience is therefore investigated in this study. Does campaign message directed as media power capable of influencing desired attitude and behavior response? Are militating factors identifiable so as to take remedial action? This is the thrust of the current study.

### **Study Objectives**

Three objectives were set for this study and they include:

1. To find the level of awareness to the campaign on neighbourhood policing among community members in Mbaitoli community.
2. To ascertain the extent to which the campaign has influenced decision on crime detection and prevention within the community.
3. To determine if any link exists between crime prevention in the community and the community relations campaign.

### **Research Questions**

The study set three research questions to guide the study. The set questions were:

1. What is the level of awareness about neighbourhood policing among members of Mbaitoli community?
2. Does the campaign move members to make decisions on crime detection and prevention in the community?
3. Does any significant relationship exist between crime prevention in the community and the presented community relations campaign?

### **Research Hypothesis**

H<sub>1</sub>: The media campaign significantly influenced decision making on crime prevention in Mbaitoli community.

### **Conceptual Discussion**

Community relations is an aspect of public relations (Jefkins, 1997). It deals with how information is used in creating mutual understanding, for the generation of goodwill (Odua, 2017) which is required for facilitating social harmony (Owuamalam, 2016). It provides for the sharing of information (Fiske, 1999), which is expected to generate meaning since the homogenous entity (Owuamalam and Owuamalam, 2003) “belong to the same attention aggregate” (Schramm, 1984). Community relations, therefore, is aimed at reducing ignorance which would enable decisions to be made reasonably, for the benefit of the parties in the relations.

In the current study, communication recognizes that interactive contents can be used to induce “understanding” (Katz 1978, p.428). It is the content understanding that defines if a campaign message would be able to achieve its set objectives or not. Understanding, however, is related to “comprehension in the achievement of yielding” (McGuire, 1969, Oskamp, 1977). It is desire for knowledge to deal with ignorance that community members in Mbaitoli locality seek media content for information. The needed information is in the issue of how to protect lives and property from criminals in the society.

Campaign is a concerted media use of varying types, whose aim is to achieve a particular objective (McQuail, 2005). The media campaign uses both the print as a referral medium, the electronic as redundant medium (Fiske, 1999) and the billboards as the reminder medium (Ozoh, 2010). The essence is to ensure that the psyche of the audience is bombarded with a central message so as to influence attitude and behavior change. The radio and television, for instance, use jingles, public service announcements, discussion and panel programmes as public affairs broadcast format (Nwamuo, 2017) to influence the desired change. It is the combination of the media types and the simultaneous presentation of the central message within the same time frame that provide the campaign concept, used in media campaigns. Community or neighbourhood policing is captured by the assertion of Ojukwu (2013, p.xv):

The police is all about you. It is about your safety, security, well-being and harmonious existence with your neighbours. The police is all about your interest, your concerns, your investments and watch it, it's all about your life.

The import is that neighbourhood policing is a people-oriented strategy, rooted in the community for the protection of lives and property. Arase (2007, p.43) explained that the area of responsibility of the police is very expansive territorially that community input is required to compliment the institution's effort in achieving its obligations. It is such a realization that has led to the idea of community policing. Tamuno (1993, p.129) informs all that “the 'police idea' in its rudimentary form was already familiar to the various peoples who inhabited the country later designated 'Nigeria', even before their contacts with Europeans”. It is this regard that the vigilante groups, saddled with community scanning for criminal activities also play policing roles for security of the communities (Akpaka, 2017). The campaign on neighbourhood policing therefore, expanded the use of communication approaches, inducing media and community meetings, as avenues of influencing decisions and actions against crime and criminality within the localities. The effects of such a campaign has not been documented in any known literature in Nigeria. It is the intellectual void that this study, situated in Mbaitoli locality, has been designed to address.

### **Empirical Reviews**

Onubi (2013) studied community relations effectiveness in redeeming police image in Delta State. The study was predicated on the consistent and continuous accusation of the corrupt nature of the Nigerian Police Force since according to him, “the police image was negatively perceived by the community members it is expected to serve in Delta State”. That study attributed “the negative imager to ignorance and misconception about police duties.” Community members saw the police as “a corrupt public institution”.

The study used survey research method and found:

- ❖ There was a poor image of the police in Delta State.
- ❖ Provided information to the community did not change the already formed poor impression held of the police by community members.
- ❖ There is no constant contact between the police and its community of operation
- ❖ Public enlightenment was required to correct the erroneous impression about the police.

The current study dealt with how the recommended public enlightenment, as community policing campaign can be used to influence decisions and actions crime in the neighbourhood. It is believed that the gap which earlier study identified would be filled through the current study in another aspect of policing.

Also, Akpaka (2017) studied the use of Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC) as a strategy for enhancing community policing in Imo State. He identifies

the police – population ratio as insignificant for effective policing of the state. He, therefore, sought to investigate how the PCRC, a combination of police officials and community members can pool their skills and efforts in preventing and detecting crime in Imo State.

Again, the survey research method was used. The study's major finding was that mutual trust between the police and community members was required to generate the needed goodwill, required to achieve effective policing in the state.

This study realized that the concept of policing needs to be clarified and understood by community members so as to know their expected roles in community policing. It is the lacuna in not providing a holistic information on policing that this study investigated in using media campaign combined with community meetings to find if any significant relationship exists between the message and observed action.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **The Social Judgment Theory**

This theory, developed by Muzafer Sheriff, Carolyn, Sheriff and their colleagues (Sheriff and Hoveland, 1961; Sheriff and Ndergal, 1965) avens that “attitude change will be influenced by cognitive judgment processes in which a proposed position is compared with a person's existing system of attitudes and beliefs” (Mille 2002, p.116). The theory sees the belief platform of the message receiver as the anchor around which acceptance and rejection of received information revolves. Received message which is agreeable to the belief of the receiver is in his latitude of acceptance and the century is in the latitude of rejection. Those others that make the receiver indifferent are in the latitude of non-commitment. Messages are assimilated if in consonant or seen to be close to the anchor and contrasted when far from anchor. It is the quantum of information and its nature in moving the receiver not to be indifferent that makes for attitude and behavior change.

In this study, issues related to life and property interest humans. It is how the pressure or make them safe that became an issue since various approaches abound among which neighbourhood or community policing is one. It is how the campaign message is able to move the message receiver from non-commitment to a specific action that is desired as its objective. This study, therefore, investigated if the campaign message was successful in moving the receiver to take action in preventing and detecting crime in Mbaitoli locality.

### **The Media System Dependency Theory**

This theory by Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur in 1976 dealt with the media, audience and society as essential in explain how each group influences the effects felt

*Appraisal of Community Relations Campaigns Influence on Neighbourhood Policing in Mbaitoli Community* by the others (Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur, 1976). The use of media campaigns observe that “as society has become more urbanized and industrialized, life has become less organized around traditional social groups, such as the family and the church (Merskin, 1999, p.78). It explains why radio and television were used to propagage the neighbourhood policing campaign. It was however, the realization that interpersonal contact produces immediate effect that community meetings were held to discuss the campaign message. It is expected that a total impact derived would help in influencing positive response to the campaign message.

This theory was considered apt for the study because it's contextual positioning in the current “times of social upheaval” (Miller, 2003, p.249) makes community members as individuals in Mbaitoli community to depend largely on the mass media for information and orientation. The content of dependency is, therefore, critical in a situation of insecurity like kidnapping, rape and assassinations as related to life and robbery, arson and destruction, related to property. The community members, therefore, depend on the radio and television which are controlled by societal institution. Even the community meetings as a societal system of information sharing, in community relations (Owuamalam, 2016) expects to influence participants with and society with resolutions. It is an understanding of the efficacy of such media contacts and community interactions in influencing attitude and behavior that makes the apt for this study.

### **Methodology**

The survey research design was used to obtain and analyze data obtained from residents of Mbaitoli locality, where the issue of neighbourhood or community policy exists. The research approach realized that studying the entire population of the locality was not possible due to its infinite nature. Mbaitoli population is infinite because it has exceeded the minimum population of 50,000 which was qualification for the creation of local government as at 1992, when created. The population is currently estimated at above 100,000 since no census has been conducted recently to authenticate any figure. It is therefore, assumed that the population is infinite.

The 9 communities of Mbaitoli locality stood chance of being selected through the probability sampling technique (Asika, 2000). However, the simple random without replacement (Gravette and Forzani, 2005) was used to select two-thirds of the communities or 6 to be studied out of the entire number of communities for convenience. The selected communities were, thereafter allocated the obtained sample as follows:

**Table 1. Sample size allocation**

S/N	Name of selected community	Sample size allocated
1	Ubommiri	64
2	Umunoha	64
3	Mberi	64
4	Eziama-Obiato	64
5	Ifakala	64
6	Ogwa	64
Total	5	384

*Source: Field survey, 2017.*

The communities were purposively allocated equal sample since no authentic population to direct sample fraction or even sample ratio (Owuamalam, 2010) was available. Such a sample frame consideration would have been most appropriate. Also, the nation of equal share of items as operational in the traditional communities in Mbaitoli, guided the above allocation.

The questionnaire was used as tool for data collection. It consisted of open and closed-ended questions. The open-ended were used to elicit respondents view as data for the study while the closed-ended provided answer options to choose from so as to focus emphasis on relevant issues of concern to the study, as well as to save response time. The strategy blended data sources in a remarkable manner to mitigate and remove bias from a leading directions perspective.

The pilot study approach was adopted to test the reliability of the used measuring instrument. Also, structural analysis was applied to ensure that questions were clear and understand so that obtained result would become analyzable in order to use the result to prefer solution to the stated problem of understanding why campaign messages fail to achieve the desired objective.

#### **Data presentation and Analysis**

Obtained date were classified into mutually exclusive categories (Nwodu, 2006) and presented as respective tables, with identification numbers and titles. The table contents show analysis based on simple percentage calculations. Results were placed



*Appraisal of Community Relations Campaigns Influence on Neighbourhood Policing in Mbitoli Community* in the appropriate class or group and illustrated with a bar-chart where necessary. This approach applied to demographic data as well as to data related to the research questions.

However, the weighted mean or Likert Scale (Owuamalam, 2010, Wimmer and Dominick, 2000) was used to test the only formulated hypothesis in the study. The questions as comments were presented in a positive form, hence, the assignment of code values in a descending order of 5 to 1. The used formular provided a mean value which was compared to the decision point, for the acceptance or rejection of the null hypothesis. The code ranged from strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree to strongly disagree. The decision point was determined through a mean of 3.

### **Demographic Data**

A total of 384 copies of the questionnaire were produced and distributed through the convenience method, in the selected community as study units. It was found that 4 copies of the questionnaire or 1.04% were invalid for this study because 4 copies were not returned. It means that 98.96% of the distributed copies of the questionnaire were valid and use for the study for the study. It was the 380 valid copies that were used for this study, as presented in the tables under.

### **Distribution by Gender**

**Table 2: Sex of respondents**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Female	170	44.74
Male	210	55.26
<b>Total</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>100.00</b>

*Source: Field survey, 2017*

Result above shows that the females in the valid sample were less than the males by a difference of 10.52%. It means that the males were more than by a significant value of 10.52% or one-tenth of the respondents. It implies that majority of the respondents were males. The import of this finding is that both males and females were in the used sample but with a varied proportions.

### **Distribution of Occupation**

The respondents' occupation was ascertained as follows:

**Table 3: Occupation of respondents.**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Students	65	17.10
Farmer	102	26.84
Worker	91	23.95
Trader	88	23.16
Non-employed	34	8.95
<b>Total</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>100.00</b>

*Source: Field survey, 2017.*

Result from above table shows that the number of students were less than one-fifth of the respondents. Those who had no income as students and the unemployed accounted for slightly more than one-quarter of the respondents at 26.05%. It means that those who earned income as farmers, workers and traders constituted nearly three-quarters or 73.95% of the respondents. It means that majority of the respondents can afford radio and television sets, through which access to the media campaign on neighbourhood policing could be obtained.

### **Distribution by Educational Qualification**

**Table 4: Respondents' educational qualification**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No formal certificate	68	17.89
Primary six	98	25.79
SSC/Equivalent	112	29.47
NCE/Diploma	56	14.74
<b>Graduate/Equivalent</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>12.11</b>
Total	380	100.00

*Source: field survey, 2017.*

Result from above table shows that more than four-fifths or 82.11% were confirmed as literate through their educational qualification and could understand the English language, used in the media campaign. It means that less than one-fifth were not competent to be assigned comprehension of the presented media campaign, which was rendered in English language.

**Research Question One: What is the level of awareness about neighbourhood policing among members of Mbaitoli community?**

Item 4 in the questionnaire was used to answer the above question. The question sought to know if members of Mbaitoli community are aware of the campaign messages. Obtained data were analyzed as follows:

Table 4: Level of awareness to the media campaign

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	241	63.42
No	22	5.79
Can't remember	117	30.79
Total	380	100.00

*Source: field survey, 2017.*

It was seen from the above result that more than three-fifths of the respondents or 63.42% were aware of the media campaign, while less than one-tenth or 5.79% claimed not to be aware of the campaign. If the value of those who held no specific opinion was added to those who were not aware of the campaign, it would be seen that their sum value was lower than that of those who were aware by a difference of more than one-quarter or 26.84%. It means that majority of the respondents who resided in Mbaitoli were aware of the community relations campaign on neighbourhood policing.

Also, item 5 in the questionnaire was used to ascertain if the respondents comprehend the media campaign messages. Obtained data were analyzed as follows:

**Table 5: Comprehension level of the campaign message**

Item 5	Response						Total	Mean value $\bar{X}$
The message in the community policing presentations on radio and TV is clear and understandable.	Code value	SA=5	A=4	UD=3	D=2	SD=1	15	$\frac{1244}{380}$ = 3.27 $\bar{X} = 3.27$
	Frequency	31	126	72	118	33	380	
	Code value result	155	604	216	236	33	1244	
	Percentage	8.16	33.16	18.95	31.05	8.68	100.00	

Source: field survey, 2017.

Result from above table shows that those who agreed with the comment at item 5 were more than those who did not agree by a difference of 1.59%. It shows that the level of comprehension of the campaign message was low at 41.32% when compared to those who disagreed at 39.739% and the others who held no opinion at 18.95%. It means that the level of comprehension of the campaign message is low within the Mbaitoli community and the reason should be further investigated since comprehension is related to understanding which creates awareness.

**Research Question Two: Does the campaign move members to make decisions on crime detection and prevention in the community?**

Item 6 in the questionnaire was used to answer the above questions. The item sought to know if the campaign explained the benefits of neighbourhood policing to message consumers. Obtained data were analyzed as follows:

**Table 6: Message explained benefits of neighbourhood policing**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	128	33.68
No	165	43.42
Can't say	87	22.90
Total	380	100.00

Source: field survey, 2017.

The result above shows that more respondents at above two-fifths said that the presented message did not explain details of the neighbourhood policing for easier comprehension unlike the one-third that agreed it did. Less than one-fifth of the respondents held no specific opinion on the issue. The obtained result was further explained by the data obtained from item 8 in the questionnaire. The item wanted to know why the respondents felt the message did not explain the details as to lead to easier comprehension.

**Table 7: Issues related to message comprehension**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Message is only in English and needs to be better explained in simple terms	102	26.84
Igbo version is expected since understanding is easier in the community	116	30.53
No incentive attached to reporting suspects to the police	84	22.11
What happens in the case of retaliation against an informant	78	20.52
<b>Total</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>100.00</b>

*Source: field survey, 2017.*

Result from the above table shows that language was an issue related to message comprehension. It was found that a total of 57.37% or more than half of the respondents believed that clarity of meaning was essential for message comprehension. For instance, nearly one-third of the respondents in the locality or 30.53% would prefer that Igbo language was used in the message presentation since community members understood and use that language in their communication and transactions. This group of respondents ranked highest among the others. It was also found that whereas above one-fifth of the respondents did not derive any incentive as benefit for participating in neighbourhood policing (as applicable to whistle blowers), another one-fifth feared reprisal and lack of protection to those who report or expose criminals in the community.

**Table 8: Influence of campaign message on crime prevention**

Item 8	Response						Total	Mean Value $\bar{X}$
Campaign message on neighbourhood policing makes me feel like finding and reporting criminals in our community to the police.	Code value	SA=5	A=4	UD=3	D=2	SD=1	15	$\frac{1036}{380}$ $= 2.73$ $\bar{X} = 2.73$
	Frequency	18	112	50	158	42	380	
	Code value result	90	448	150	306	42	1036	
	Percentage	4.74	29.47	13.16	41.59	11.05	100.00	

Source: field survey, 2017.

Result from the above table shows that those who disagreed were more than half of the respondents at 53.13%, while those that agreed accounted for 34.21%. There was a negative difference of -18.92% between those who disagreed that the campaign message on neighbourhood policing made them feel like reporting criminals in their community to the police. It means that majority of the respondents would not want to take any reporting action against criminals in their locality.

Again, item 9 in the questionnaire was used to answer research question two. The item wanted to know if the presented message made respondents feel like taking any decisions on community policing in Mbaitoli communities. Obtained data were analyzed as follows:

**Table 9: Community meetings on security issue**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Does not meet often to discuss security	57	15.00
Meets on security only when breaches occur	123	32.37
Meetings merely make appeals without action	96	25.26
No sanctions are placed on criminal families	104	27.37
Total	380	100.00

Source: filed survey, 2017.

The result above shows that those who believed that community meetings were reactive and not pro-active were about one-third of the respondents. This shows that decisions to prevent criminal activities were not evident but happens after the breaches had occurred. Another quarter said that meetings in the community do not resolve on concerted actions, so decisions on crime detection become difficult. Again, more than one-quarter believed that since no sanctions are placed on families where criminals come from, it becomes unrealistic to take any decision on crime prevention. It was only 15% of the respondents that were merely concerned on the regularity of meetings where security is discussed.

Finally, item 10 in the questionnaire was used to find if community meetings on neighbourhood policing as part of the campaign had influenced decision on crime detection and crime protection. Obtained data were analyzed as follows:

**Table 10: Impact of meeting on security decisions**

Item 10	Response						Total	Mean value $\bar{X}$
Resolutions made in community meetings have led to decisions on crime prevention and detection.	Code value	SA=5	A=4	UD=3	D=2	SD=1	15	$\frac{1132}{380}$ $= 2.98$ $\bar{X} = 2.98$
	Frequency	26	121	80	125	28	380	
	Code value result	130	484	240	250	28	1132	
	Percentage	6.84	31.84	21.05	32.89	7.37	99.99	

*Source: field survey, 2017.*

Result from above table shows that those who had no impact from community meetings on security issue, arising from the media campaign as related to neighbourhood policing were about two-fifths of the respondents at 40.26% as compared to those who were moved at less than that value by a difference of 1.58%. It means that community meetings as part of the campaign has not influenced action on community or neighbourhood policing.

**Research Question Three: Does any significant relationship exist between crime prevention action in the community and the presented community policing campaign?**

Item 11 in the study was used to answer the above question. The item sought to know if the respondent was moved to take any action on neighbourhood policing on the presented campaign messages. Data obtained were analyzed as follows:

**Table 11: Action based on campaign message.**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	118	31.05
No	159	41.84
Can't say	103	27.11
Total	380	100.00

Source: Field survey, 2017

The result above shows that majority of the respondents were not influenced by the campaign message to take action on neighbourhood policing in Mbaitoli community. For instance, whereas two-fifths of the respondents were not moved by the campaign message, to take action on community policing, lower than one-third believed they were moved to take action. The difference between those who agreed and the others that disagreed was 10.79%. It implies that those not influenced by the campaign message were more by one-tenth of the respondent than those who were influence. The significance was therefore in the negative.

Again, item 12 was use to find if resolutions made at community meetings, as part of the campaign, has move respondents to take preventive action on neighborhood policing in the community. Obtained data were analyzed as follows:

**Table 12: Meeting resolution and action on community policing.**

Item 12	Response						Total	Mean Value $\bar{X}$
Resolution at meetings have led to action on neighbourhood policing in Mbaitoli.	Code value	SA=5	A=4	UD=3	D=2	SD=1	15	$\frac{1061}{380}$ $= 2.79$ $\bar{X} = 2.79$
	Frequency	23	125	72	130	30	380	
	Code value result	125	500	146	260	30	1061	
	Percentage	6.05	32.89	18.95	34.21	7.89	100.00	

Source: Field survey, 2017



Result from above table shows that whereas more than two-fifths or 42.10% were not influenced by resolutions at meetings, based on the campaign message to take action on community policing, more than one-third or 38.94% were influenced. It means that there is a negative relationship of -3.16% that existed between the campaign message and action on neighbourhood policing in Mbaitoli locality.

### **Research Hypothesis**

The research hypothesis formulated in the study was tested, using the weighted mean approach or the Likert scale method. The essence was to capture all shades of opinion obtained as analyzable data so that emerged result can be generalized over the population of study. This justifies the use of Likert scale as an inferential statistical method (Wimmer and Dominick, 2000). Obtained data were analyzed as follows:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** The media campaign on community policing did not influence action on crime prevention in Mbaitoli locality.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** The media campaign on community policing influenced action on crime prevention in Mbaitoli locality.

Item 13 in the questionnaire was used to test the hypothesis above. The obtained data were analyzed as follows:

**Table 13: Campaign influence on crime prevention action in Mbaitoli.**

Item 13	Response						Total	Mean Value X
Campaign message has influenced action on crime detection and prevention.	Code value	SA=5	A=4	UD=3	D=2	SD=1	15	$\frac{1115}{380}$ $= 2.93$ $\bar{X} = 2.93$
	Frequency	28	107	90	126	32	380	
	Code value result	140	421	270	252	32	1115	
	Percentage	7.37	28.16	23.68	33.16	8.42	100.00	

*Source: Field survey, 2017*

Result from the above table shows that the calculated mean value of 2.93 was less than the decision point value of 3.0. It means that  $X = 2.93 < 3.0$ . It implies that no significant relationship exist at a difference of 0.07. The result therefore accepts the null hypothesis  $H_0$  and rejects alternative,  $H_1$ . It shows that the media campaign on community policing did not influence action on crime prevention in Mbaitoli locality.

Again, item 10 in the questionnaire, on analysis, showed that even when meetings are held at the community level to discuss the campaign message, resolutions at such meetings did not lead to discussion on crime prevention and dictation. It was found that the calculated mean value of 2.93 was less than the decision point value of 3.0 i.e.  $X = 2.93 < 3.0$ . Again, the null hypothesis was accepted while its alternative was rejected.

Also, item 13 in the questionnaire which sought to link meeting resolutions to action on neighbourhood policing showed at table 12 that the calculated mean value of 2.79 was obtained. It meant that  $X = 2.79 < 3.0$  by a difference of  $-0.21$ . The result accepted the null hypothesis and rejected the alternative hypothesis.

Conducted test result of the hypothesis shows that the media campaign on neighbourhood policing has not made the expected impact on action against crime detection and prevention in the Mbaitoli locality. The result was not difficult even where the campaign message served as the platform for meeting and decision making. The finding, therefore, showed the weakness of community relations approaches (media and meetings) to achieve the desired objective of facilitating neighbourhood or community policing in Mbaitoli locality.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The finding showed that in spite of the large awareness created by exposure to the media campaign on community or neighbourhood policing, the message content was not fully comprehended by the respondent. The language of presentation was said to be responsible for the marginal comprehension experienced from the media campaign message content. This finding is in line with McGuire (1999) that attention and understanding are necessary for comprehension and yielding. It is probably the low level of message understanding, that made persuasion difficult (Borchers, 2000).

Also, the essence of benefit as need satisfaction instinct is necessary for compliance (Maslow, 1994, Owuamalam, 2016). It is the ability of presented message to meet the expectations in area latitude of acceptance that facilitates assimilation (McQuail, 2005) which stimulates message content acceptance and needed compliance (Miller, 2002). This is the essence of the social judgment theory as explaining the finding in this study.

Although the media system dependency theory was used, it was designed to show how “media power rather than use” became applicable to this study (Miller, 2002, p.249). The finding showed that the respondents exposed themselves to the media message and obtained awareness of neighbourhood policing as desirable in community's security yet respondents were reluctant to take decisions on crime

detection and prevention. It was consequence of any taken action, like reprisals from the culprits when reported that militated against decision-making. It is the contextual security situation in Imo State, where Mbaitoli is located, such as kidnapping, murder and robbery as violent crimes that necessitated the use of the media system depending theory. (Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur, 1976) in explaining this finding. It shows that the intervening factors in the society influenced media power in influencing desired response. It is the enhanced need for information and orientation (neighborhood policing) that showed the significance of the theory to the perilous security situation as studies in Mbaitoli locality.

The major finding in this study is that media messages and community expectations must meet the individual need satisfaction for way meaningful action to be realized. It is when a message explains benefits and rendered in a comprehensible and believable manner that an expected result can be achieved.

### **Conclusion**

The study found that a high level of awareness on neighbourhood policing was created by the media campaign on security, among residents in Mbaitoli locality. It was found that the content of crime as prevalent in the area may have been responsible for the respondents' need for information and orientation as to how to deal with suspects and culprits with the locality. It shows that attention and exposure are necessary for acquiring awareness on any raised subject.

It was also found that the campaign message neither stimulated decision making nor action on the neighbourhood policing. It is message content comprehension and explanation of derivable benefits, absent in the presented message that made expected reaction not realizable provisions must meet expectations for anticipated result to be achieved.

No significant relationship was established between the provided media message on community policing and action against crime in Mbaitoli community. This finding is in line with the boomerang effect of information where expectations do not satisfy need.

### **Recommendations**

The finding revealed that comprehension is related to understanding, associated with language use. The campaign message should be translated to Igbo, the predominant language used in the study area. Such an action would enable an easier understanding of the presented message.

Presented messages should not only contain expected action but should also explain how such an action benefits the content consumer. So as to stimulate an urge to act as desired. Baits when explained, makes issues vivid and attractive.

It is further recommended that another study be conducted to find why the discovered intermediaries influence action on the received the current one that the reason for campaign message failure can become better understood.

### **Contribution to Society and Knowledge**

The study has been able to justify the popular axiom that you can take a horse to the stream but you cannot force it to drink. It is an understanding of needs and their gratification that has shown why campaign messages fail to achieve results in the society. A remedial action is therefore advocated in order to help human society. An empirical evidence has been established so that the identification of intervening factors and how they should be addressed ought to engage a further intellectual investigation. It is when such issues are addressed that research findings become exact in achieving set objectives.

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