

Police satisfaction in developing countries dependent on less corruption

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Improving police satisfaction in developing nations will require a reduction in corruption and greater public security and safety, a new study by researchers at the universities of Kent and Utrecht has shown.

The research suggested that, even in situations where people felt they had been treated fairly by the [police](#), [satisfaction](#) could be undermined by an awareness of [police corruption](#) and ineffectiveness.

Dr Thomas Akoensi, of Kent's School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research, worked with Utrecht's Dr Amy Nivette on the study, which focussed on the city of Accra in Ghana.

The research, entitled Determinants of satisfaction with police in a [developing country](#): A randomised vignette study, saw the researchers construct two scenarios depicting what they described as 'citizens' plausible encounters with police in an urban setting in a developing country.

A total of 559 residents took part in the 2014 study, drawn from four Accra neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods reflected diverse socio-economic conditions, namely high, middle and low class, as well as various ethnic backgrounds.

Each participant was presented with scenarios depicting eight different police-citizen encounters. These encounters presented a scenario that was either police-initiated or citizen-initiated, with three varying factors

built in: respect vs no respect; bribe vs no bribe and effective vs ineffective. Participants were then asked to rate how satisfied they were with the encounter.

Dr Akoensi said the results had important implications for criminal justice institutions seeking to improve relations with citizens and boost satisfaction and ultimately legitimacy.

In certain situations, unlawfulness and ineffectiveness can undermine any positive influence of procedural justice policing on satisfaction, he added. Procedural justice policing is therefore 'more likely to improve satisfaction when it is implemented alongside broader criminal [justice](#) reforms to reduce corruption and impunity and establish baseline public security and safety'.

More information: Amy E. Nivette et al, Determinants of satisfaction with police in a developing country: a randomised vignette study, *Policing and Society* (2017). [DOI: 10.1080/10439463.2017.1380643](https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2017.1380643)

Provided by University of Kent

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