

# An Empirical Analysis of Public Satisfaction with Police in Addis Ababa City, Ethiopia.

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## Abstract

*The purpose of the study was to find out the association between public satisfaction and the competences of frontline community policing officers. Descriptive research design was used with the application of multistage sampling techniques. 377 usable household samples were selected from the Addis Ababa City through questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to present data and test hypotheses respectively. The findings revealed that the result-oriented competency highly associated with public satisfaction with police. Teamwork, interpersonal communication and personal effectiveness competency of the officers also associated with public satisfaction. Therefore, the officers should be trained as a generalist to deal with various issues and fits in every situation where they needed.*

**Keywords: Community Policing, Competences, Result Oriented, Public Satisfaction**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Public satisfaction with police is determined by the behavior and service quality they experienced at the encounter level (Reisig and Parks, 2002). Reisig and Parks (2002) explained that people who had favorable or unfavorable experience at encounter level have more satisfaction or dissatisfaction with police compared with those who had no contact with police. Hence, police service at the encounter level has a significant influence on public satisfaction. Moore and Braga (2003) pointed out that the frontline officers should provide quality service that meets the expectation of customer as one dimension of police functions.

In community policing, frontline officers have a pivotal role and empowered to manage whole policing efforts and deliver quality police service in their assigned area (CPC,1994). Hence, the effectiveness of policing efforts and the service quality of police service depends on the competences of frontline community policing officers (Mekuriaw, 2019).

Frontline employees are responsible to manage the service delivery of an organization and their skills have a direct impact on the perceptions of customers about the organization (Chopra, 2014). He further explained that it is important to improve behavioral skills (teamwork, interpersonal communication skills) of frontline employees to customer satisfaction (Chopra, 2014). Kotler (2000) pointed out that when an employee meets or surpass the expectation of the customer, customers will be satisfied. Chopra (2014) explained that training on behavioral and technical skills important to meet the expectation of customers. Besides, community policing requires officers who have trained in service delivery spirit as private sectors do (Diamond & Weiss, 2009). Potnuru and Sahoo (2016) proved that training is increased the competences of the employees to deliver quality services. However, Addis Ababa Police commission uses conventional officers as community policing officers without providing a boost up training and development (Mekuriaw, 2019). Besides, there is no study has been conducted to measure the influence of competences of the officers on public satisfaction with the police in the city. Therefore, the current study found out how far public satisfaction is associated with the competences of the officers.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Community Policing and Public Satisfaction

Mekuriaw (2019) elaborated in community policing, crime and disorder are minimized in a specific geographical area by systematically studying the characteristics of the community problems that lead to crime and disorder and then provides solutions fitted the norms, values, and resources of the community. Hence, it shows each small geographic area has a unique problem that requires a specific solution (Cordner, 1997; wondem, 2019). Besides, CPC (1997) stated that the efforts of community policing require the support and involvement of the community, who knows well the neighborhood to identify the problems and thus, provide solutions.

In order to get community support, the police should give quality service that matches with public expectation (Moore & Braga, 2003). They elaborated that when the public satisfied, it will reward affection and trust which in turn create the opportunity to pool resources into policing efforts. Burke and Leben (2007) further pointed out that public satisfaction determines the extent of cooperation and support of the community. Hence, frontline officers are responsible to provide quality services that match with public expectation.

Raising and Parks (2002) also recommended that improving the quality of police service at the encounter level improves the overall evaluations of police. Enhancing behavioral competencies of employees can improve the services of at encounter level (Chopra, 2014). Mengesha (2015) enlighten that the competences of frontline employee have an influence on service quality. Therefore, frontline officers required certain competencies to deliver quality services.

## 2.2 Competences of the Frontline Officers on Public Satisfaction

The success of service delivering organizations depends on the competence of Frontline personnel (Nwulu, & Ateke, 2018). Frontline officers create a first impression favorable image in the minds of the customer and responsible to deliver the service of the organization. The competence of employee expressed on the application of knowledge in performing jobs and demonstration skills in practice (McClelland, 1973). Boyatzis (2008) also defined competences as it is a behavioral observable trait, skill or knowledge, expressed in the performance of the job or outcome. Hence, competence is not a single skill rather it is a bundle of skills the frontline officers revealed in delivering service. Competency is a cluster of interconnected attitude, knowledge, and skills that associate and influence the performance of work by individuals (Assamoi and Christophe, 2015).

Stroshine (2000) delineated, community policing multiplied the roles and responsibilities of frontline officers. They are a crime fighter, coordinators, meditate, problem solver, community organizer, planner, etc.... (Stroshine, 2000). Besides, it empowers frontline officers to manage whole efforts policing and deliver quality service that satisfies the community (CPC, 1994). Hence, in order to carry out the multiplied roles and providing quality services, frontline officers required to have teamwork, communication, personal effectiveness and result oriented competencies that help to deliver quality service (Wondem, 2019). Thus, frontline officers at least require teamwork, communication, personal effectiveness, and result oriented competencies to properly deliver quality services.

### 2.2.1 Teamwork Competence

Potnuru and Sahoo (2016) define that employee's teamwork competency is the skills, knowledge, and abilities to lead, support and develop a team to achieve goals. One of the assumptions of community policing is involving the community, who knows well the neighborhood, in policing efforts to prevent crime and disorder (Diamond & Weiss, 2009). Creating a strong partnership with various interest groups requires teamwork competencies. The officers should have an ability to operate with various groups to make the community safer. Mengsha (2016) also proves that the teamwork competence of employees has moderate ( $r=0.567$ ) associated with the satisfaction of customers.

*Hypothesis one: The Teamwork competence of the officers has an association with public satisfaction*

### 2.2.2 Interpersonal-Communication Competence

Interpersonal communication competence is an ability to understand the feeling, emotion of others and transferring once message, feeling, and emotion in a simple and easily understandable way (Barrett, 2006). It helps the frontline officers to understand the level of public expectation and their requirements, which is a base to provide quality service that meets public expectation. Binti (2012), found out customer satisfaction has affected by the communication skills (basic communication skills ( $\beta=0.32$ ), information clarity ( $\beta=22$ ) and information accessibility ( $\beta=19$ )) of Frontline employees. WA (2018) also identified that interpersonal communication has strong associations ( $r=0.676$ ) with customer satisfaction. He also added that it has 45.7 percent explained in the variation on customer satisfaction (WA, 2018). Mengsha (2015) also found out that interpersonal communication competence has an effect on public satisfaction.

*Hypothesis two: the interpersonal communication competency of the officers has an effect on the level of public satisfaction.*

### 2.2.3 Personal effectiveness competence

Personal effectiveness is the commitment of an employee to achieve the best of his/her ability to meet the objective (Rahman, 2016). Personal effectiveness is making use of personal resources such as time, skill, talent and energy at your disposal to enable you to achieve the organization's goals (Rahman, 2016). Critical thinking, patience, determined, optimistic, problem solving displaying responsible behavior, creativity and planning are a trait that encompasses in personal effectiveness competencies (Choudhary, 2016).

Since frontline officers are responsible for the crime situation where he/she in charge, they should engage proactively on identifying problems that potentially lead to crime and disorder, provide innovative and creative to provide sustainable solutions, and displaying responsible behavior (CPC, 1994). These activities require personal effectiveness competence of the officer to achieve the desired result. Mengsha (2016) also proved that personal effectiveness competencies have moderately (0.564) linear association with public satisfaction.

*Hypothesis three: the personal effectiveness of the officers has an association with public Satisfaction.*

#### 2.2.4 Result Oriented Competence

Result oriented competences is an employee should focus on outcome-oriented thinking rather than process-oriented thinking (Bhushan, XXX). Thompson, Hamilton, and Petrova (2008) proved that result-oriented thinking makes easy decision-making than process-oriented thinking. The former focuses on the benefits associated with attaining once goal and gives less importance to the feasibility. The latest deals with the trade-off between desirability and feasibility, the decision process will be more difficult, which results a postpone decision, and willingness to opt a compromise decision (Thompson, *et.al*, 2008). They also found out the result-oriented thinking increases satisfaction than later once (Thompson, *et.al*, 2008). Hence, unlike professional policing, community policing focuses on the end result rather than methods and means to an end (Goldstein, 1979).

Mengsha (2015) explained that result-oriented thinking competency is more important for Frontline officers to satisfy the customer. He also found out that there is a strong ( $r=0.765^{**}$ ) association between result-oriented competency of front-line employees and customer satisfaction (Mengsha, 2015).

*Hypothesis Four: The result-oriented competence the Officers has an association with public Satisfaction.*

### 3. MATERIAL AND METHOD

Descriptive research design was used to study the association between public satisfaction and the competences of the frontline officers. Descriptive research design enables to describe the real situation and determine the degree of association between variables (Malhotra, 2010).

Using multistage sampling, 384 households were identified as a sample using Krejcie and Morgan, (1970), sample size determination formula. However, 377 usable data were collected from the total sample households of Addis Ababa city to address the objective. The collected data were analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistics

### 4. DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1. The Competences of Frontline the Officers and Public Satisfaction

One of the functions of police is providing quality service that satisfies the public (Moore and Braga, 2003). Since the community policing success depends on Frontline officers (CPC, 1994), the competences of the officers to manage the policing and delivery of police services have a significant effect on achieving public satisfaction.

The level of Public Satisfaction and each competence of the officers was decided by the threshold of Best and Kahn (1977). The threshold is  $1 \leq X \leq 1.8$  considered as "Very low",  $1.81 \leq X \leq 2.6$  as "Low",  $2.61 \leq X \leq 3.4$  as "Moderate",  $3.41 \leq X \leq 4.2$  as, "Good", and  $4.21 \leq X \leq 5$  as "Very Good"

**Table 1: The level of Competences of the frontline Officers and Public Satisfaction.**

Description	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
Public Satisfaction	377	2.76	.564	Moderate
Teamwork competency	377	2.68	.778	Moderate
Interpersonal communication competency	377	2.74	.786	Moderate
Personal Effectiveness competency	377	2.94	.879	Moderate
Result Oriented competency	377	2.76	.865	Moderate

**Source: Own Survey, 2018**

Table 1 shows that the mean value of public satisfaction is 2.76 and which is interpreted that moderate level. The mean value of the teamwork, communication, personal effectiveness and result oriented competences of the officers had 2.68, 2.74, 2.94 and 2.76, respectively. Based on the rule of thumb of Best and Kahn (1977), the competences of community policing officers in Addis Ababa city are a moderate level.

#### 4.2 An Association Between the Competences of Frontline Officers and Public Satisfaction.

Public satisfaction could be enhanced by improving service quality at the encounter level (Raising & Parks, 2002). An organization delivering service quality and building a positive image in the minds of customers relies on Frontline officers (Pai, and Tsu-Ming, 2017). Thus, Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, (1985), Mastroski (1999), Mengsha (2015) and WA (2018) have suggested that the competences of Frontline

officers are a key driver of public satisfaction. In order to prove that effect of competences of the officers on public satisfaction, Pearson correlation was conducted.

Pearson correlation shows that the linear relationship between two or more paired variables. The magnitude and direction relationship represented by the correlation coefficient (Best, 1977). The threshold values are the coefficient lies in the range between 0.00 to +/-0.20, considers as “negligible”, +/- 0.21 to +/-0.4 as, “Low”, +/-0.41 to +/-0.6 as “Moderate”, +/-0.61 to +/-0.8 as ”high”, and above +/- 0.81 as “Very Strong” (Best and Kahn 1977).

**Table 2: The Association Between the Competences of Frontline Officers and Public Satisfaction**

		PS	TWC	ICC	PEC	ROC
PS	Pearson Correlation	1	.565**	.547**	.564**	.617**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	377	377	377	377	377
TWC	Pearson Correlation	.565**	1	.379**	.542**	.611**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	377	377	377	377	377
ICC	Pearson Correlation	.547**	.379**	1	.334**	.404**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	377	377	377	377	377
PEC	Pearson Correlation	.564**	.542**	.334**	1	.525**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	377	377	377	377	377
ROC	Pearson Correlation	.617**	.611**	.404**	.525**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	377	377	377	377	377

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

PS= Public Satisfaction, TWC= Teamwork Competence, ICC= Interpersonal communication Competence, PEC= Personal Effectiveness competence, and ROC= Result Oriented competence,

#### Source: Own Survey (2018)

The correlation coefficient between public satisfaction and the teamwork competences of Frontline officers is 0.565\*\*,  $P = 0.000$  and interprets that positive and moderate association between them. Mengsha (2015), and Pai and Yeh (2017) also found out there is a positive and a moderate association between the teamwork competence of employees and public satisfaction.

Binti (2012), Mengsha (2015), and WA (2018) found out that public satisfaction and interpersonal communication competence of the frontline employees have positively associated. The current study also proved that there is moderate and positive linear relationship between public satisfaction and interpersonal communication competence of frontline officers at  $r=0.547$  and  $P=0.000$ .

Table 2 reveals that personal effectiveness of Frontline officers has moderate and a positive association with public satisfaction at  $r=0.564$  and  $P=0.000$ . Mengsha (2015) also found that similar result with current students.

There is high and a positive linear association between public satisfaction and the result orient competence of the officers at  $r=0.617$ \*\* and  $p=0.000$ . This result is consistent with findings of Mengsha (2015). He found out, there was associated between result-oriented competence and public satisfaction (Mengsha, 2015) Therefore, all competencies of the officers have associated with public satisfaction at 95% confidence level. Therefore, all null hypotheses are accepted.

### 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The objective of the study is to determine the effect of the competences of the Frontline officers on the satisfaction of the public. The finding shows that there is a high and positive association between result oriented and public satisfaction. Interpersonal communication, personal effectiveness, and teamwork have moderately associated with public satisfaction and the relationship was positive. The finding of this study has been constant with various research findings. Doyle (1995), Johnston (1995), Raising and Parks (2002), Mengsha (2015) and WA (2018) found the competences of frontline officers has an influence on the satisfaction of the public. Therefore, the recruitment and training of community policing officers should be in the spirit of delivering service. The training curriculum also modified in line with the competencies that required for community policing. Finally, decision-making authority should be devolved to Frontline officers, which enable them to utilize their competencies in pursuit of the goals of community policing.

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