Wukari International Studies Journal, Vo.7, No1, 2023

The Role of Community Police in Crime Prevention and Control for the Effective Management

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ABSTRACT

The study examined community policing and crime prevention in Nigeria with reference to Jenkwe Development Area. The study further sought to achieve other objectives which include to identify community policing and crime prevention; to examine the duration of combatting crimes; to identify the problems with community policing and crime prevention. The study adopted survey design and took census of the entire target population of the three communities. Questionnaire was administered. Tables, frequency and percentages were used to describe the responses from respondents, which shows that 3.56% was targeted sample from the population, out of 46 of the respondents, representing 29.5% described community policing as very effective mechanism of crime prevention in the study area. As well out of 45 respondents, 28 of the respondents representing 62.22% agreed quality information determined police response on crime prevention, this implies that community policing is an appropriate tool for crime prevention. While chi-square was used to examine the relationship between and among the variables and test of hypotheses. On this basis of analysis for this study, the study revealed that community policing and crime prevention has strengthen relationships of the community and the police amongst others. The study further revealed that community policing and crime prevention faces inadequate funding, lack of enough physical structures, poor management and logistics to be some of the major problems affecting community policing and crime prevention. The study concluded and recommended that community policing and crime prevention should be adequately funded to acquire state of the arts equipment's to enhance effective community policing and crime prevention, also the police should create awareness for everyone to provide useful and needful information.

Keywords; Community police, Nigerian police, Crime prevention.

Introduction

The history of Nigeria police is rooted to traditional Nigeria societies, policing of various communities was carried out by age grades, vigilante groups, under traditional institution non as traditional policing and other organizations. Serious violations of institutionalized ways, values, and norms were corrected or punished by these organization or body of security outfit. With the advent of colonialism, the British established a colonial police force in 1861 to enforce sanitary regulations in Lagos for crime prevention and enforcement of criminal laws. The colonial system of policing and crime prevention in northern and western Nigeria where the system of administrative of justice which anchored in enforcement of rules and regulations to sustain stability, Odekunle (2002). Nigeria police is one of the professional institutions, responsible for arresting, detecting, investigating and prosecuting offenders or criminals, this is one the legacies of colonial masters from that of pre colonial era which was solidly traditional based operations of policing. Traditional community policing is a form of inter-groups relation as both the police and the community regard each as identifiable groups with specific characteristics. Attitude and perception from both the police and community tend to be collectivity influenced and the experiences of other groups lead to stereotypes being formed to combat crimes, Arnold (2009)

Modern societies are diverse in socio-cultural composition which means, police are agency of state employed to maintain order, promote and protect interest of the dominant class and to the detriment of majority class. The interaction between the community and the police are restricted to involuntary law enforcement encounters such as arrest, detection, investigation, such encounter always end up with hostility. Whereas if the police and the community have other avenues of meeting and understanding each other, their relationship would be less hostile and friendly Rainer (2000).

There are number of reasons why countries, state need community policing and crime prevention initiatives and strategies as a result of incessant violence attacks by ethnic militias, such as armed robbery gang, youth restiveness, burglary, rape, youth restiveness, social disorder, incessant attacks on farms and farmers in the community Ajomo, (2001). These reasons are mostly grounded in the history of Nations, due to social change; shifting and characteristics of crimes, violence and disorder are becoming worrisome. Community policing, is a pressing need for innovation practices within conventional police to help curb and support unconventional policing, such as vigilante group, to combat crimes Odekunle (2002). Crime is a social problem which goes beyond the general notion of theft, murder, assault, rape, fraud and other unwholesome behavior, it's about lives and properties of the community, how safe they are in their communities Berth, (2006).

Crime is an act of omission or commission committed against the state within the legal law that defined certain behaviors as crime against humanity within the criminal justice system, punishable under defined acts, Adeyemo, (2001) and Tapper (1946). The judiciary comprises of the Police, court and the prison service, given a social and legal responsibility to arrest, prosecute and sentence offenders according to the crime committed within the location Adisah, (2004). Curbing

disorder, fighting crime and increasing feelings of personal safety requires commitment from both the police and the host community, Wilson, (2009). The concept of community policing and traditional policing(vigilante group) has two distinct commutative meanings, referring to a social unit larger than a small village that shares common values. The concept can also refer to the national community, international community. Community constitutes of beliefs systems, intents, needs, risks, and structures share among small or larger group Alemika (1993).

Community policing is a governmental department of a state or nation organized policing for keeping law and order. Police based on this dissertation represent civil force which is entrusted with the task of maintaining public order and enforcement of the law according to Nigeria constitution Anderson, (1999). Police plays crucial roles and responsibility as part of criminal justice system in prevention and control of crimes, which as to do with public order, detection of crimes and enforcement of laws as proscribe by justice system Coatman (2000).The police play vital role in the prevention and control of crime in the community, this is well organized using traditional methods, involving prominent members of community to stand as reliable agent that report certain defined crimes such as rape, armed robbery, kidnapping, e.t.c. Asemota, (1993). The police and vigilante group play a vital roles in sustaining social order among members of community, Alemika,(1999), added that any attempt to understand police community relations must begin with the analysis of the social structure that is functional in the community, that is traditional institutions, the primary mission of police is to defend innocent civilians against all sort of criminal attack, violence or non-violence conflicts.

Historically, the concept of community policing can be examined base on defined roles that is traceable from pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial period in Nigeria. The three basic regions in Nigeria, the North, East, and West are composed of three basic ethnic groups, the Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba have their system of community policing based on their traditional norms and values, commonly known as neighborhoods watch Blumberg, (1997).

This is determined by increase in crime rate associated to their values, norms and taboo. Crime is an act against individual or community or violation of human rights punishable by the state within defined laws. The colonial period experience was a new face of community policing with the introduction of colonial masters and western style of policing different from traditional policing with new structure and equipment to protect citizens from violent crimes, through fast medium of information and communication technologies Dwflem, (1994).

The role of community policing and traditional policing on the prevention of crimes in the society is necessary in this contemporary modern world, especially, due to human right violation. The development of advance technology has enabled many complex methods of committing crimes as well checkmating in the community. Sophisticated weapons use for armed robbery, kidnapping for ransom, rape, assault, ethnic violence are obvious social reality that make police force to remain active force in combating crimes at all level Friendrich, (1996). This can only be achieved as a result of conventional

police force developing mutual relationships with members of community to inform the police relation department any criminal behavior, should be reported to the police investigation department. The motive behind community policing is to function as a medium of relationship with communities to report or give any information of crimes to conventional police that have the constitutional backing to arrest, investigate, and prosecute offenders at the court of justice David, (2008).

The scope and the nature of interactions between police and community are restricted to involuntary law enforcement encounters such as arrest, stop and search, detention; these worsen public perception of police as a hostile social institution, though if done with vigilante group it helps in easy identification of criminals Garba, (2001). However, the police and members of community will develop avenues of meetings to defined crimes, the community can play essential roles on prevention of crime alongside with conventional police. Increase in population, distribution of wealth has constituted many forms of crimes that both prevention and control measures are necessary for checkmating the growing trends especially ethnic militias, organized armed robbery, rape Odekunle, (1997). The development of crime is as a result of poor relationship between traditional community and the police, responsible for prevention and control of crimes. Though, the role of community policing on prevention of crimes is explicitly in terms of prevent and control of criminal acts and behaviors as the variables are obvious. There are many researches that shows community policing has aided in prevention of crimes in neighborhood, due to concern by residence to work in line with conventional police in gathering information through mutual communication without victimization of innocent citizens that produce reliable and valid information Ohonbamu, (2002).

The modern systems of the world societies view its functions or roles from its strategies, methods, operations and performance in line with it general goals. How effective has Nigeria government describes and promotes community policing and crime prevention since independence? Is there any active partnership between the conventional police and traditional community, in terms of mutuality and cooperation in order to prevent crimes Tamino, (1990).

The Nigeria police force is designated by section 194 of the 1979 constitution as the national police of Nigeria with exclusive jurisdiction throughout the country for prevention and control of crimes against Nigerians and other foreigners resided in Nigeria. The Nigeria police force performs conventional functions and is responsible for internal security and supporting the prison, immigration and custom services. The relationship between the conventional police and members of community is popularly known as neighborhood watch or crime watch commonly used in our dailies news. With the help of community policing, in affiliation with vigilante group, crimes that are violent oriented can be avoided such as robbery, rape, ethnic violence, assault, homicide, fraud, gangsters'', cultism in tertiary schools Edifield, (2003). The role of community policing is to prevent crimes.

Conceptual Analysis

Community policing is generally defined as a law enforcement philosophy that allows officers to continuously operate in the same area in order to create stronger bond with the citizen living and working in that area Tamuno (1996). A person may want to commit a crime and have the ability to commit crime, but if deny the opportunity, then no crime can be committed. Prevention is working ahead of the criminal before committing crime, Quincy (2009) and Senna (1997), went further to say that the main police role should be to increase the feelings of the community safety and encourage area residents to cooperate with their local police agencies. This call is to support the need to provide solution to the problems of crime and enhance public confidence.

Community policing is made up of two concepts. That is community and policing. The term community means a group of living in the same place with similar background and interest Senna, (1997). Community can be a group of people that interact through communication. Community also can be elucidated as a family, an ethnic group or volunteer organization, Friedman (1992) believed that communities have gotten informal network that are important to support formal institutions and policy makers in the world. Such communities include, Christian communities co-housing communities, eco-village, egalitarian communities and spiritual communities etc which are fundamental for community policing and crime prevention to succeed.

On the other hand, the term policing is an act of executing police duties among and to the benefit of communities. It is one of the act to keep law and order. It is mostly done by the police. Policing the community combines best techniques in order to combat not only crime and disorder but also the fear of crime and likelihood of crime. As a concept, it aims at empowering the people to resist crime and unsafe condition, resolve the root issues underlying social ills and create a safe community well informed on community safety issues. It also works to reduce the fear of crime and increase the capacity of various departments to engage citizens and community groups in day to day problems solving and prevention of crime activities, (Reid,2000).

As a concept of community policing demands natural social mechanism to be mobilized in order to prevent crimes, but the issue is how the police can mobilize such mechanisms within the community. In the first instance, the police have gotten a poor image within the members of communities arising from the past experiences and this has made the public or various communities to associate the police with social ills such as corruption, robbery, bribery, and murder. Such ills have left a blemish on the police image among the community and poor setting for the future. Well aware of this, the police has remained trapped within the paradox of its own making attempts to rectify the past have remained futile, Bennet,(1994) .

However, it should be emphasized that as long as community consensus is still perceived as pre-requisite to community policing and crime prevention, Johnson, (1997)

Community policing is best understood as policing tool through which communication about the risk and security of

modern society are revealed by the community to the police. Lamber (1994), indicated that the main task of community policing is to prevent crimes and bring about sustainable peace, the police must secure active communication and operation with the community. Community policing includes the involvement of community members in monitoring and controlling activities of the police, Trajanowic (1994) argued that the police takes social action opposed to legal and become part of the community. Through this approach, the police penetrate the community in all its aspects and develop personal relationships at local level and become part of the community. Since communities are organic and changing, flexibility of the police becomes must. The police therefore help to guild communities through multi-agency involvement. Stewart (1989) supported this by stating that the police must respond appropriately and view its role in the neighborhoods as a means of re-establishing the neighboring relationships and strengthening the institutions that make a community competent and able to deal with its problems.

Braiden (1992), believed that the aim of community policing and crime prevention is to empower the local people to resist crime and unsafe conditions which are root issues underlying social ills and create a safe community, well-informed on public safety issues. It also provides adequate response to street-level complaints in the community without reducing the police capability to respond appropriately to the emergencies. It establishes partnership with schools, social service agencies and citizen groups in the day to day problem solving and preventive activities to curb down crimes.

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The role of community policing is to prevent crimes to bearable level, is very vital for economic and political development of any existing society in the world, from North America, south America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia, needs functional structure of community policing for a sustainable socio-economic advancement (Whiteman, 1990).

Problem Confronting the Nigeria Police in Crime prevention and Control

The basic menace facing the Nigeria police in respect to policing the community and crime prevention is corruption Odekunle, (2002). Corruption in Nigeria police has been endemic and has eaten deeply into the fabric of criminal justice system. This obstacle has affected the attitude, perception and pattern of behavior of police and community members in crime prevention, such as road block syndrome and extortion of money from motorists, offenders, have battered the image of Nigeria police on community policing. Incessant killings, rise of militia groups, armed robbery, bandits, kidnappers are now the order of the day . This has led to the development of subgroups known as neighborhood watch in Jenkwe Development Area. The group work alongside with the police, the only protect the interest of the community. It is obvious that people from upper class are not committing crime like the lower class. Justice becomes commodity of high value where by only the rich are given, rather than being alert to societal social problems Marx, (1884).

It was on this ground that individuals find it hard to report cases of crimes. As a result of ethnic's violence, possession of illegal fire arms is common, giving room for armed robbery, burglary, which destroys life and properties. An incessant attack on farmlands by militia groups has created fears among farmers. This has resulted to low farm produce which many families depend for their livelihood Okonoko, (2005).

Therefore, this collaborate that the Nigeria police and other agencies of securities have not done enough to protect public from this menace and the need for policing in the community becomes necessity to protect the citizens. Akintude (2008) observed that the plight engulfed Nigeria police, youth restiveness was due to poor upbringing, unemployment that have constituted to form body of violence crimes and social disorder in the community.

History of Policing and Law Enforcement Agency.

The concept of community policing on prevention and control of crime began as long as the pre-colonial era, when communities' population started growing high. The need to control and prevents crime become a necessity in the community in order to maintain law and order for peaceful coexistence among members of community Akintunde, (2008). The history of Nigeria policing is related to community protection against theft, rape, violence act against community, and the entire community as a whole. The Nigeria police, as we have it today can be traced to the pre-colonial and colonial era of our nation. Prior to the coming of colonialists, there were institutions that were concerned with law enforcement and maintenance of order, known as "community guards or vigilante group" Ajomo,(2001).

In the pre-colonial period Nigeria, maintenance of law and order was considered the responsibility of the most superior head of the village; head of each family lineage were involved in maintaining security of lives and property. The task of safe guarding public peace and enforcement of order were usually done by the monarch, Glanville, (2006) through the palace eunuchs and sometimes slaves as was the case of some

communities such as Zazzau, Emirates of the Northern part of Nigeria, Quincy (2009).

The British colonialization of different communities that presently constitute Nigeria began it community policing in 1861 from Lagos Crown colony of the British governments. By 1903, the British colonizers had succeeded in colonizing all the nearly four hundred communities in the country Otite, (1999). The British government establishes southern and northern territories for policing, what today is known as Nigeria conventional police force or constabulary for the protection of territories, lives and properties Ahire, (1998). The practices of local police and multiplicity of local communities on crime prevention continued throughout the colonial rule or era, though however, from 1990, there were also a regional security agencies like vigilante group known as (yabanga) or traditional policing Tamuno, (1996).

When Nigeria became independent nation on 1st October, 1960, the independence constitution of 1960 and the Republican constitution of 1963 provided for local police forces and Nigeria police force to combat all kinds of crime, prevent and control violence acts at all level in the community Odekunle, (2000).However, a military coup in January 1966, brought about significant changes, a Decree No.24 issued by the military government stated that "all local government policing shall be placed under overall command of the Inspector General" Alemika, (1996). The military government embarked on further reforms, which saw to the conversion of other police forces into a single Nigeria force, though today we have different agencies combating crimes which includes traditional institutions.

The implication is that the 1999 constitution of Nigeria recognizes only the federal police and constitutionally empowers the federal government to have absolute control of policing in all the 36 states of Nigeria and the federal territory. The absolute ownership and control of police structures by central government should be viewed as a complete paradigm shift in policing apparatus of the country. While bearing this in mind, it is important to remember as earlier demonstrated that at inception of colonial domination in Nigeria polity of 1861, a number of police forces were established for the colon of Lagos and Niger coast and northern and southern protectorates, Alimika (2010). As from 1916, onward, Native Authorities and Local Government police forces were established under the control of traditional rulers respectively in the northern and western parts of Nigeria. The consolidation and transformation of these forces at various times later led to their re-organization into Nigeria Police Force in 1930 with jurisdiction over entire country.

The Inspector-General of police is the operational, administrative head and chief executive of the organization, answerable to the president of the country. Under the office are six Deputy Inspector-General of police in charge of each of the six department of the forces. The six department are operational units of the force in day to day activities, (Danbazzau 2007). Furthermore, the country is subdivided into twelve zones with each under the control of Assistance-Inspector General of the police, which are then responsible to the Inspector-General of police, at the force Head-quarters Abuja. The various state commands are under the headship of the various commissioners of police and being assisted by

Deputy Commissioners of police. The various departments of the organization at the state levels are staffed by Assistant commissioners of police appropriate. Each of the various state commands, under the control of Assistant of police (Danbazzau 2007)

The Roles of Nigeria Police and Community Policing in Crime Prevention.

Nigeria returned to democratic rule in 1999 after military interventions. The democratic period in Nigeria has witnessed an increase in the perception of various crime and fear. There was a wide belief among security stakeholders that traditional methods of policing could hardly put the trend of crime and insecurity under control. Consequently, the Nigeria security justice system and growth as overseen by U.K Department for International Development have made some concerted efforts to commence private-public partnership project of the policing institutions in Nigeria.

Nigeria police report 2019 shown progress has been made in the area of trying to reform the police organization in line with global tenets of bringing about democratic principles into the practice of policing in Nigeria. One of these efforts was through implementation of community policing methods. In this context, the practice of community policing and crime prevention balances up the reactive-fast response with proactive problem solving-techniques centered on the cause of crime. This was supported and observed by Igbo (2003) that requires police synergy with the citizens as partners in the course of identifying and effectively addressing these crimes related issues in the community and to enhanced progress and development in the society.

Dickson, (2007) has claimed that the official adoption of community policing and crime prevention by Nigeria Police Authorities in 2003 was aimed at keeping crime and criminality to a minimal level. He believes that community policing and crime prevention program embarked up by the Government of Nigeria has its goal focused on transforming the culture of Nigeria police and its organization through community-based policing and partnership. This emphasis was to engender what was termed as culture of excellence in service provision, a deep sense of accountability on the part of individual officers in terms of performance.

The Nigeria police force perform a variety of functions, in terms of preventing and control of crimes which includes investigation of suspected criminals, detecting crime, escorting residents and other officials on defined duties, prosecuting offenders and charge offenders to court of law, guarding goods and put in cell suspected criminals, Igbo,(2003). Nigeria police are empowered to carry defined functions in preventing and control of crimes of all kinds, to execute with warrant, patrolling and protecting properties and lives of the citizens and, guarding and escorting visiting foreign officials, working with international police to combat terrorism, drug dealers and trafficking of human beings as slaves or under age, Dallaire, (2010). Section 4 of the police Act of Nigeria constitution of 1979 as amended stated;" the police shall be employed for prevention and detection of crimes, apprehension of offenders, the preservation of laws and regulation which they are directly charged with and to perform official duties within Nigeria had

been required of them by or under authority of this or any Act. The police in the country also has statutory power to investigate suspects, prosecute suspects, grants bail to suspects, pending completion of the investigation or prior to court arrangement, police are to serve summon, unlike traditional policing that only report the crime and suspects to constitutional police agency Kirk, David (2009), to regulate or disperse unlawful processions and assemblies.

The Nigeria police are empowered by constitution to search and seize properties suspected to be stolen or associated with crime and to take records for the purpose of identification, measurement, photographs and fingerprints impression of all persons within the community Nigeria constitution, (1999).

Community policing relations is a form of inter-group relations as both the police and the host community regard each other as identifiable groups with specific characteristics as defined based on norms and values system, Samson (2001). Attitude and perception from both police and community policing tend to be collectively influenced by the experiences of other groups which lead to stereotypes being formed to protect the host community against violence crimes. Police derive their information from members of community i.e host community or else there will be difficulties in gathering information which will be the order of the day without cooperation of the host community in combating, prevention and control of crime (Reiner, 2000).

Opinion varies amongst scholars as to what community policing is all about regard to its functions to the general society and traditional institutions participation, (Garba 2001) though conceived community policing in dimensions that is an ideological system based on the cooperation of the police and the traditional community system of prevention and control of crimes. Thus far, it means a programmed that has political intends to restore the relationship between the police and the citizen's dissatisfaction with bureaucracy and impersonal police organization as it emphasizes direct communication with citizens regarding community crimes, Bernard (2006).

Community policing as a philosophy designed to reduce crime and dis-order among members of host community by fostering trust, respect and collaboration between police officers and citizens or members of community in reporting crime either violence or non-violence. This is achievable by identifiable hallmarks, partnership building among police and traditional institutions of the community and essential institutions that help in reducing and controlling crime. The community is in better position to report any disorder in the society with logical and rational strategies, by emphasizing on proactive crime control and prevention using traditional methods of gathering information such as vigilante group. Equally Usman, (2008) argued development of police organization is to responds to community concerns regard to crime prevention and control that in turn will give recognition to the community in promoting trust due to active collaboration and team work with education, housing estate, businesses, charities home other dedicated to community well-being.

Contemporary Policing in Nigeria.

The alarming brutality melted by police on innocent citizens has led to structural change and repositioning of Nigeria police and traditional community policing relations. The removed of un-necessary check-point has brought a great relieve to road users due to extortion of money done by the police force Clancy, (2001). The bails period has been reduced to twenty-four hours without substantial evidence; advanced technology like c.c.t.v is used to monitor locations believed to be criminogenic in nature and structure. These substantive change recorded has won back the confidence of the community back to the police community relation, though lapses are still recorded regard to human rights abuse done by police in their area of duty, to law abiding citizens, due to their use of AK47 gun, to intimidate innocents citizens. Structural reposition of police is a global agenda to restructure the police to meet up their responsibility in the prevention, reduction and control of terrorism in the global community, this is achievable as a result of informer policing in communities. It is becoming a global issue to protect the global community against terrorism and all forms of crime against humanity in the world Arase, (2005).

United Nations organization reported (2009), the common enemy of mankind today is terrorism, is in every country of the world, without repositioning the police to meet up global challenges in creating conducive environment for, economic prosperity, political stability, religious tolerance, socio-cultural development and promotion of global peace among countries, the world will be doom by crimes committed against humanity (Bohm, 2002).

In the face of rising crime rates and increasingly diverse and complex society, the traditional model of policing has come to be viewed as an ineffective approach to fighting crime. In the light of this, an approach to policing that places great emphasis on police-community relations, and on the usefulness of engaging the community in problem identification and solving efforts, has emerged under the banner of "community policing". Most countries, especially those in the advanced democracies of the world, have adopted the community policing model of law enforcement as an effective strategy for fighting crime and criminality.

Traditionally, police outfits have responded to crime after it had occurred and, therefore, are structured to support routine patrols, rapid response to calls for assistance from danger, arrests, and follow-up investigations. Community policing, on the other hand, calls for a more strategic and thoughtful incorporation of all these aspects of police business into an overall broader police mission focused on the proactive prevention of crime and disorder. In a nutshell, community policing rests on the belief that law-abiding citizens in the community have a responsibility to participate in the police process. In 2004, community policing was introduced in Nigeria under IGP Tafa Balogun (2005). The Endeavour was an attempt by the Nigeria Police Force to improve on its performance. It was the Force's effort to change crime prevention and control to a modern and professional policing capable of providing maximum security to lives and property in Nigeria. Unfortunately, community policing culture has failed to make any meaningful impact in the Nigerian environment due largely to corruption, institutional constraints

(police officers' resistance to community policing), inadequate manpower (both in strength and expertise), insufficient education and training, inadequate equipment, and poor conditions of service of the average policeman.

No doubt, the ultimate success of community policing in Nigeria will depend on the effective implementation of the following program; (i) Weeding out corrupt elements in the police force; (ii) implementing a comprehensive strategy to overcome the challenges that may militate against instituting community policing by addressing issues like community participation in community policing, community policing as an anti-corruption tool, human resource development for community policing and decentralizing policing duties and responsibilities. It also includes restructuring police formations and computing the actual cost of executing community policing operations in Nigeria. Other aspects of the program must include a comprehensive training and re-training of the entire police force on the philosophy and culture of community policing, as well as the education, counseling and sensitization of the citizenry on the practice of community policing, including their roles as participants in the fight against crime and criminality in the society.

There is no doubt that Suleiman Abba is on the right track as far as the quest to put a handle on crime and criminality is concerned in Nigeria. His vision for community policing is spot on. Community policing has the capacity to break down the barriers separating the police from the public in crime prevention and control matters, while inculcating in police officers a broader set of community service ideals. As a matter of fact, community policing will promote and support organizational strategies to address the causes of crime, to reduce the fear of crime and social disorder through problem-solving tactics and community-police partnerships, (Nigeria police force,(2005)

The Police Force and Community Policing.

The Police Force is a group of government employees who enforce law and maintain order. The police force work to prevent crimes, to protect lives and property of the people. In Nigeria, the power of the police force emanates from 1999 constitution that outlines the roles of police. The police patrol the streets, guards against commission of crime, assist the people with various social problems and in doing so, find itself engaged in community policing. To the police force, community policing is a means of achieving effective and efficient crime prevention in the community. The fundamental basis for community policing is the law of the land, especially in democratic society, Horowitz,(1995)

Apart from investigating the crimes, the police have responsibility to prevent its re-occurrence, investigating are done by expert, professional and responsible police constables and their success depends mostly on their own training, equipment at hand and competence aided by public cooperation whenever it is possible. However, in regard to prevention of crimes, the police cannot do much by itself without the community since many factors that because crimes are beyond their control. It is therefore the duty of the police to create good condition that can lead the public to reveal all occurrences of crimes. In such circumstances, the police must use the effort

from public or the community to prevent crimes, Cutcliffe (1994).

With community policing, the police department become members of the community, cities and villages embracing community policing trend to involve the police much more into community work and this will create social bond and trust, reliance between the police and the community. In the process, police officers find themselves open to the community, unbiased and sensitive to the concern of the community. Such policing is a new paradigm where officers try to listen to complaints and community social problems and their view point. The police also display empathy and compassion with sincerity not in a rehearsed way but holistic way. Such situations enable the police to develop skills in planning problem solving organization and perhaps critical thinking that make community policing effective tool for prevention of crime, Baker (1995).

At the heart of transition to community policing by the police, there is the question; how do the police identify and deliver high quality services to the community? The answer is based on efficient delivery of the police services that require a systematic process to assess the needs of the community and to translate such needs into police services and programs that can efficiently delivered to the community. In this way, the police becomes more sensitive to the needs of the community rather than their own needs. They develop a better understanding of how their work affects the social environment and community perception, Bayley (2001)

It is believed that when the police officers move around the community for patrol, the generate much interest in public perception towards their activities. In Finland for example, since 1995 the police have conducted local survey about the views of the community concerning police service and the feelings of security. These surveys have revealed that the goal of community policing is to apply a preventive problem solving methods to tackle crime and to develop the relationship between the police and the community, to achieve better cooperation, Whissel (2000). With community policing philosophy, the police image from a predominantly crime fighting police into more co-operative serving and consultative police, Verta, (1999)

Challenges of Policing and Crime Prevention

While community is an important tools in crime prevention in the world, it has never been without challenges. Critics of this methods claimed that is difficult to implement community policing because of its two way traffic position. That is, it needs the effort from police force as well community if it is to be successful, McDonald (1993). According to Weatheriff, (1983), very little research evidence is available to prove that community policing and crime prevention works in terms of definition, while Walker, (1993) believed that the failures of community policing in accordance to its definition emanates from the history of police, which has been interpreted in relation to the past mistakes and it will be very difficult to create total for of policing the community.

The fact that the police is regarded as an institution to prevent and fight crimes, it will remain hard to justify anything to do

with law enforcement activities and cooperation with the community. Many of police activities have been regarded as nuisance demands to the service of the community, Bernnet (1994), indicated that not all police departments and officers make community policing and crime prevention part of their occupational culture but tend to use community police and crime prevention for their own gains while disguising to be keeping the law and order. He added, in doing so, some police constables and officers involve themselves in bribery, robbery, and corruption practices yet at the same time claim be carrying out community policing.

Alexander, (1995), argued that community policing and crime prevention programs give little power to the host community. He added that community policing and crime prevention program seldom serve as a handle for real reform of brutal accusation of police departments in most cases of cosmetics operation. Community policing and crime prevention, is no different from other police tools that aim at shaping and manipulating community. Since the police controls all information about crime and disorder, they will remain rhetoric political drama to manipulate the community through corruption and bribery. This assertion is supported by Wycoff (1988), when he noted that once the police and members of community work closely, there can be an increase in police corruption since the community does not investigate what the police has in records.

Critics point out some challenges of some foot patrol by the police such as Alexander (1995), added, in attempt to reduce crime rate and use of the city preventive patrol experiment. Although these can reduce crimes, the propensity created between the police officers and the community makes the police common before individuals by losing respect before the community. Ericson (1993) noted that patrol experience are also dangerous because the exposed true characters of police which have remain unrevealed to the public had it not been community policing and crime prevention.

In attempt to overview the policing, Friedman (1992) believed that much of the resistance against community policing and crime prevention is rationalized on the basis of high cost effectiveness and efficiency issues. He noted that long term benefit might offset the startup costs and pointed out that not even the critics are sure on how to measure police effectiveness accurately. Some simple and basis services that the police departments might provide to the community cost very little and require limited personnel while others require many personal. He noted in circumstances, it remains hard for critics to understand the cost and the effectiveness of community policing and crime prevention.

Community participation is the cornerstone according to Brown (1989), success of community policing to which police involve the community has remained negligible. Initiatives to community policing and crime prevention are developed based on assumption that community members will be both willing and able to respond to initiatives, yet evaluation of Nigeria initiatives revealed that responses are very considerably.

Theoretical Framework

Structural Functionalism

Structural functionalism by Durkheim, (1858) examined the functions of social institutions such as family, religion, economy, politics, education and how the interact and interrelate with one in solidarity for stability of the society. He saw the society as functional guided by certain norms and values that checkmate the existing institutions to maintain social order. Though he saw society as evolutionary with social changing, invention and innovation continues to determine pattern of behaviors in the social structure. Society has social fact they are external and coercive to individuals. They not only represent behavior but also the rules that govern behaviors and give it meaning. Social facts have not been only accepted but adopted by society as rules to which they choose to follow. Laws, language, morality and marriage, criminality are all examples of ideals formed through individual thought that have manifested into concrete institutions which we must now abide by or fight against.

This theory emphasizes on the relationships between the various institutions that make up society such as politics, education, religion, economy, family etc. it asserts that our lives are guided by social institutions, which are relatively stable pattern of social behavior. Social institutions give shape to our lives for example family institutions are unit of procreation, while religion is about belief systems. Thus one of the key contending issues in structural functionalism is that the society is made up of groups or institutions which are cohesive, share common norms and have common norms and have a definite culture.

There are number of assumptions in structural functionalism theory. One of these, believed societies strives toward equilibrium. Another assumption looks at society as institutions where by behaviors are dealt with individually regardless to class or strata. This is erroneous, as institutions are interlinked and employed relationships that exist between institutions.

Structural functionalism is the most valuable ideological justification for community policing and crime prevention. It promotes humanizing belief in the notion that offenders can be saved and not simple prosecuted. This theory recognizes the reality of social fact, social inequality and its functions in communities. Base on the rules that regulate society, every community deals with offenders while arresting suspects understanding that circumstances can constrain or compel and lead to criminality. Though it rejects the idea that individuals regardless of their social position in the social order, exercise equal freedom in deciding whether to commit crime and should be punished equally according to their offence irrespective of their social background (Danbazzau 2007).

Furthermore, this theory is relevant to the study as it tries to establish the justification or rationale behind the treatment of community policing and it victims by changing the attitudes and behaviors of offenders so that they will be able to choose lawful means, in satisfying their needs as well the police perception about suspects treatment with global standard of human rights principles. Structural functionalism emphasizes the need to see social facts and its evolution as crime escalates

in the society with laws made to punish offenders as well rewards good behaviors. Policing the community and retraining of its personnel will increase the efficiency of community policing which shows social solidarity to crime prevention in the society. As crime specializes in the society, policing the community becomes more complex to understand; with advance technologies society has made crime an open door, the need to train and retrain police become inevitable as the society becomes more functional and complex in rules and regulations. Community policing has become one of the functional institutions of fighting and combating crime at local levels, this brings about solidarity and sincerity amongst community and the police to share information that are vital to arrest and prosecute criminals.

Though this theory has its critics, such as not considering economic factors that determine social status in the society. That crime is only punishable without considering the inequality in material accumulation and distribution in the society.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used social survey techniques for its findings. The design involved data collection through the technique of questionnaire application. The questionnaire method of sourcing data was employed as it is time saving and less expensive in drawing information from larger population available for the study. It also gives the respondents a great level of confidence being anonymous in their decision making because; some of the respondents cannot have face to face contact with researcher due to schedules. The researcher choose 95% confidence level for study.

For the purpose of this work, both primary and secondary data was used. The primary data was collected through the use of questionnaires was in two fold. One for the targeted communities and the second part was for the police personnel, while the secondary data was collected from literature, magazines and other sources.

This study collected data through the use of questionnaires which consisted of closed and opened ended questionnaires bothering on the objectives of the study and research questions. Furthermore, the study used descriptive survey methodology using questionnaires as the major instrument for data collection and analysis.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected using questionnaire instruments. The research administered two hundred and fourteen (214) questionnaire, representing 3.56% from the targeted population but was able to retrieve two hundred and one (201) of the responses. Therefore the unit of analysis of this was based on (201) filled and returned questionnaire.

This section also highlights some of the social-demographic characteristics of the respondents has the relate to the subject of the study. In this regards the study highlighted and analyzed the distribution of the respondents on the basis of their sex, religion, marital status and educational qualification, using descriptive statistical analysis.

Percentage distribution of public assessment of policing and crime prevention

Assessment	Frequency	Percentage
Very effective	46	29.48%
Effective	41	26.28%
Ineffective	38	24.35%
Very ineffective	31	19.87%
Total	156	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

From the table above, 29.48% of the responding public evaluated the effort of policing the community, crime prevention and community policing as very effective in combating crimes, 26.28% effective, 24.35% ineffective and 19.87% very ineffective.

The research revealed that majority of the respondents in the communities evaluate the functions of policing the community, and assessing community policing as effective as well in some cases is ineffective. This may be as a result of ethnic violence, robbery, bribery, rape that varies from one community to another.

Tables above revealed percentage distribution of public on whether they ever reported crimes to police department.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	97	62.17%
No	59	37.82%
Total	156	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table shows that 62.17% of the public have reported to the police department, while 37.82% admitted that they have never reported to the police.

The study also shows that members of communities are fully aware of traditional policing in line with community policing a gender to combat crimes due to the confidence confided on the police department.

percentage distribution of public on whether they have been helped during policing the community.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	112	71.79%
No	30	19.23%
No response	14	8.97%
Total	156	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 4.15 shows that most of the public that is, 71.79% have been assisted by the police in terms of crime report and prevention when in trouble, 19.23% indicated that they have

never received help from the police. While 8.97% indicated that they have never reported or assisted by the police department.

Discussions of Findings

The study investigated community policing and crime prevention Though two hundred and one (201) that is 3.56% from the targeted population of six thousand (6000) (population census 2006) residents in the three communities. These responses were used for analysis on community policing and crime prevention. However results from the study showed that community policing and crime prevention has been an effective tool on combatting crime and enforcing law and order. The study revealed the respondents social status were married, attained academic certification, religious beliefs, and views of criminality.

The study revealed community policing and crime prevention as classified according to crime report, Odekunle (2000) noted the justice system is structured to produce law and order to guild individuals behaviors regardless to social class. This serves as enhancing community relations, serves as deterrence, repentance and reconciliation of attitudes.

The study further revealed on table 4.13 the impartial coordination between police department and the community in terms of confidence, reliability of sharing sensitive information, as well delays in arresting crimes. It also noted community policing is effective in generating information about suspects and modalities of arresting crimes, this agreed with the view of (Arnold 2009) that community should be responsible for their securities directly or indirectly

The study revealed as long as community are united against crime, there will be safety in the community through sharing information and a proper communication channels on table 4.15. The major obstacle to community policing and crime prevention is inadequate funding and advance technologies to detect crimes and suspects table 4.17. Also half of the responses accepted community policing and crime prevention as a good model of tackling crimes in remote places, table 4.18 the believed security is the responsibility of all members of society, not just the police but all reasonable persons.

In addition, the police remain burdened with legacy of brutality and abuses resulting to public skepticism of their actions. This makes individuals to be skeptical about releasing information that will lead to arrest or expose criminal activities in the community. The police should continuing in training and sensitizing key personalities on detecting and addressing early signals of crime in their respective community is on table 4.20.

The questionnaires responses show community policing has proven to be very effective on crime prevention and educating individuals on law and order table 4.22. Responses of respondents has proven that community policing and crime prevention can be a tool of stability, understanding and development for community advancement table 4.23. Though the nature of social stratification has brought harmony to the community with improved perception of neighborhood watch.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study examined community policing and crime prevention program were not adequately funded and the will power to provide logistics for executing the program. The findings

showed community policing and crime prevention has achieved stated objectives of combatting and prevention of crimes, Police Report (2004) which said community policing is about reforming the society for good.

The study revealed that all structure of the institutions must work together in sharing information concerning the community safety and goal attainment on community policing. However, negligence of providing necessary information and communication has discouraged many law enforcement agents from carrying their statutory functions. This is evidence on the findings as responses indicated proper policing can guarantee quality and sanity of community. More pressing is the obvious attitudes of communities, it inferred that there are factors militating against successful community policing and crime prevention as recidivism continues to be in existence; if not on increase except correctional measures are taken to address the issue of poverty, unemployment and policy that emancipate communities and maintain, sustain security strategies in our community.

Though responses shown that the police have inadequate funding to perform their duty as stated in the constitution and meeting up on community policing and crime prevention. This is the biggest challenges which the police are complaining for effective community policing, logistics problems, time delayed for functional vehicles and mobile phones and other technologies that will assist on detecting culprit.

RECOMMEDATIONS

i The study recommended the way of administering justice has brought about breeding and enhancing community policing.

ii The study recommended that community policing is an effective tool in maintaining stability and safety of the community.

iii The study recommended that communities should fight against crime. This will enhance safety and stability in the community and social development.

iv There should be adequate funding and logistics in order to hamper effective community policing and crime prevention

v There should be a modern gadget information technology and tracking system to curb crime and criminality in the community and policing as a whole.

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