COMMUNITY POLICING AND CRIME CONTROL: A THEORETICAL ELUCIDATION

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Abstract

The continuous increase in high rate of crime even in the presence of conventional policing is said to have triggered the call for shift from military-based policing to other democratic-based policing measures to curb crime. The Nigeria police has been under intense criticism over its apparent inability to prevent and control crime. A major factor responsible for this failure is not unconnected with the strength of manpower and equipment of the Nigeria Police force. The inability of the police to protect people, the disconnection between the public and the police in the community has resulted in the initiation of different interventions aimed at mitigating the prevalence of crimes in contemporary societies. The most emphasized intervention is community policing, built on the philosophy of creative collaboration between the police and the public in order to prevent and fight crime. In order to achieve the objective of this research, the study adopts a systematic review of literature using a library research and empirical review, while also employing the situation crime prevention theory to give insight to community policing and crime control. The paper revealed that positive relationship between police and society, and effective community policing practices significantly contributed to the police positive perception on community policing impact on crime control. Overall, police-community partnerships, community policing crime prevention strategies, and police-community problem solving are factors influencing crime reduction in Africa. Based on the findings, it was recommended that for community policing to have an inroad in Nigeria, the Nigeria police force must have a complete paradigm shift from its conventional model of policing to a more community-oriented policing that stresses community partnership, decentralization of powers, and proactive policing. The policing model should be that of partnership with less emphasis on regulatory powers and sanctions with greater reliance upon compromise and cooperation that would serve the public better.

Introduction

The movement towards community policing has gained momentum in recent years as police and community leaders search for more effective ways to promote public safety and to enhance the quality of life in their neighbourhoods. The police are very important in the maintenance of law and order in any democratic society. The police are the closest law enforcement agents to the public, unlike the military and other paramilitary agencies that concentrate on their specific core jobs/roles in the society. Police roles cover every segment of group social interactions in the society (Arisukwu and Okunola, 2013). Community policing has its roots in such earlier developments as police-community relations, team policing, crime prevention, and the rediscovery of foot patrol. In the 1990s, it expanded to become the dominant strategy of policing – so much that new police officers are to engage in community policing.

The ultimate goal of community policing is to improve the quality of life in the community. And some of its objectives are to prevent and reduce crime, reduce fear of crime, improve the physical condition of the community, and increase feelings of safety among community members. The police occupy a vital position in any democratic society and their relationship with the public influences how they are perceived and supported by the public. Policing therefore is everybody's business as the police alone cannot effectively control criminal activities in a society. Community policing, therefore, is a philosophy of policing based on the idea that – if the police and citizens in the community work together in creative ways to fight and prevent crime, then crime-related problems of the community would be solved, fear of crime would be reduced, community residents would feel safer, and the physical conditions as well as the quality of life in the community would be better. Thus, community policing involves collaborative efforts between the police and community members to solve community problems in order to control crime and disorder in the communities across Nigeria.

Community policing philosophy has spread rapidly worldwide, as a result of a shift in emphasis from conventional policing, which is directed towards deterring crime and apprehending suspects, to one that is focused on police-community partnership in solving the problem of crime in society (Dambazau 2011). The concept of community policing was essentially developed in the United State since the early 1970s when findings suggested that individuals and neighbourhood groups were capable of contributing to their own security, through preventive measures such as neighbourhood watch, home security, personal safety training amongst others.

The police play many roles from law enforcement, arrest and investigation of suspected criminals to peace building and maintenance of order in a society. Community policing does not imply that police are no longer in authority or that the primary duty of preserving law and order is subordinated. However, tapping into the expertise and resources that exist within communities will relieve police of some of their burdens. Local government officials, social agencies, schools, church groups, business people – all those who work and live in the community and have a stake in its development – will share responsibility for finding workable solutions to problems that detract from the safety and security of the community.

Under community policing, however, the police must assume new roles and also carry out their duties and responsibilities in ways that are quite different from the traditional model. As stated by Trojanowicz, Kappeler, and Gaines (2002), "In addition to being law enforcers, they must also serve as advisors, facilitators, and supporters of new community-based initiatives. The police must begin to see themselves as part of the community rather than separate from the community". Thus, community policing requires the police to find new ways to promote cooperation between community members and the police in order to facilitate communication and information gathering, as well as effective problem-solving activities that will lead to crime prevention, detection and control.

This paper provides a theoretical discussion of community-policing in crime control, highlighting conceptual, theoretical and empirical evidences. The objective of this study is thus geared towards, highlighting the problems and challenges of contemporary policing and how effective implementation of community policing will aid in crime control and prevention,

Community Policing

Community policing is made up of three concepts, and they include: "community" "police" and "policing". The term "community" means a group of people living in the same place with similar background and interest (Reiner, 2000). That is a group of people that interact through communication media such as newsletters, telephone, email, online, social networks or instant messages for social, professional, educational or other purposes. A community can also be elucidated as a family, an ethnic group or a volunteer organization. Friedman (1992) believes that

communities have got informal networks that are important to support formal institutions and policy makers in the world. Such communities include: Christian community, co-housing communities, commune eco-ark, eco-village, egalitarian communities, housing cooperative-communities, income-sharing communities, resistance communities, spiritual communities and student communities which are fundamental for community policing to succeed. Police, according to Brownson (2008), is a unit of armed forces established for the maintenance of law and order. It is a branch or department of government which is charged with preservation of public order and tranquillity, enforcement of laws, the promotion of public health, safety and morals; the prevention, detection and prosecution of offenders. On the other hand, the term "policing" is an act of executing police duties among others and to the benefit of communities (Docobo, 2005). In other word, it is one of the acts to keep law and order; it is mostly done by the Police Force. Policing combines best techniques in order to combat not only crime and disorder, but also the fear of crime and the likelihood of crime. It allows the police to work with the community and other organizations to address local concerns. As a concept, it aims at empowering the people to resist crime and unsafe conditions, resolve the root issues underlying social ills and create a safe community well-informed on public safety issues (Docobo, 2005).

Community policing emerged out of public distrust and reactions to the inability of the police to protect them and the disconnection between the public and the police in the community. According to Takagi *et al.* (2016), the participation of community members (tied with common values and social bonds or friendship ties) had a positive effect on crime prevention and control. The over reliance on the traditional (professional) policing style neglected the contributions of members of the community in crime prevention and problem solving. It made policing to be reactionary without the effective engagement of the public to proactively prevent crime and solve problems. The main focus of community policing is problem-solving and community engagement through partnership in crime prevention. According to Lee *et al.* (2019), for policing style to be recognized as community policing, there has to be included some type of consultation or collaboration between the police and local citizens for the purpose of defining, prioritizing, and/or solving problems. According to Diarmaid (2018), police partnership with the public is the cornerstone of the contemporary policing. The people present a viable human resource if effectively mobilized for crime prevention and control. The challenge in Nigeria is that the police is a colonial creation, created mainly to enforce colonial laws and not necessarily to serve the security needs of the people. So right from inception, the police in Nigeria were not recruited and trained to serve the people. This deprivation of service to the people has been sustained through police maltreatment of the public in the stations or in the streets as suspects. The public are therefore apprehensive of partnering with the police in crime prevention and control. This growing mutual suspicion between the public and the police is the major challenge affecting community participation in crime prevention in rural Nigeria.

Community policing focuses on making the police and the public efficient partners in crime prevention and control in a community. It pays more attention to service to the people rather than mere law enforcement. It relies on decentralization of police organization, community engagement/collaboration, and problem solving to achieve its goals and focus on the community. Another challenge is satisfying the security priorities of members of the community as victims, suspected offenders, residents, visitors, indigenes, settlers and business owners (Arisukwu, *et al.*, 2020). According to Moore and Recker (2016), informal means of social control prevents property crime more than violent crimes in a society. This is because violent crimes like rape occur in remote and isolated areas. Harmonizing the complex security concerns of members of the community with those of the police and government of the day is a huge challenge in Nigeria.

Components of Community Policing

The growing trend within communities to participate in the fight against crime and disorder has paralleled a growing recognition by police that traditional crime-fighting tactics

alone have a limited impact on controlling crime. Community policing is the synthesis of these two movements. The foundations of a successful community policing strategy are the close, mutually beneficial ties between the police and community members (Arisukwu, *et al.,* 2020). Community policing consists of two complementary core components, community partnership and problem solving. To develop community partnership, the police must develop positive relationships with the community; must involve the community in the quest for better crime control and prevention; and must pool their resources with those of the community to address the most urgent concerns of community members. Problem solving is the process through which the specific concerns of communities are identified and through which the most appropriate remedies to abate these problems are found. The goal of community policing is to reduce crime and disorder by carefully examining the characteristics of problems in neighbourhoods and then applying appropriate problem-solving remedies (Arisukwu,*et al.,* 2020).

Community Partnership

Establishing and maintaining mutual trust is the central goal of the first core component of community policing – community partnership. The Police recognize the need for cooperation with the community. In the fight against serious crime, the police have encouraged community members to come forth with relevant information. In addition, the police have spoken to neighbourhood groups, participated in business and civic events, worked with social agencies, and taken part in educational and recreational programs for school children. Special units have provided a variety of crisis intervention services. So how then do the cooperative efforts of community policing differ from the actions that have taken place previously? The fundamental distinction is that, in community policing, the police become an integral part of the community culture, and the community assists in defining future priorities and in allocating resources. The difference is substantial and encompasses basic goals and commitments (Amadi, 2014).

Community partnership means adopting a policing perspective that exceeds the standard law enforcement emphasis. This broadened outlook recognizes the value of activities that contribute to the orderliness and well-being of a neighbourhood. These activities could include: helping accident or crime victims, providing emergency medical services, helping resolve domestic and neighbourhood conflicts (e.g., family violence, landlord-tenant disputes, or racial harassment), working with residents and local businesses to improve neighbourhood conditions, controlling automobile and pedestrian traffic, providing emergency social services and referrals to those at risk (e.g., adolescent runaways, the homeless, the intoxicated, and the mentally ill), protecting the exercise of constitutional rights (e.g., guaranteeing a person's right to speak, protecting lawful assemblies from disruption), and providing a model of citizenship (helpfulness, respect for others, honesty, and fairness) (Audu, 2016). These services help develop trust between the police and the community. This trust will enable the police to gain greater access to valuable information from the community that could lead to the solution and prevention of crimes, will engender support for needed crime-control measures, and will provide an opportunity for officers to establish a working relationship with the community. The entire police organization must be involved in enlisting the cooperation of community members in promoting safety and security (Mwaniki and Maroko, 2020).

The effective mobilization of community support requires different approaches in different communities. Establishing trust and obtaining cooperation are often easier in middle-class and affluent communities than in poorer communities, where mistrust of the police may have a long history. Building bonds in some neighbourhoods may involve supporting basic social institutions (e.g., families, churches, schools) that have been weakened by pervasive crime or disorder. The creation of viable communities is necessary if lasting alliances that nurture cooperative efforts are to be sustained. Under community policing, the police become both catalysts and facilitators in the development of these communities. In this police/community partnership, providing critical social services will be acknowledged as being inextricably linked to deterring crime, and problem

solving will become a cooperative effort (Zikhali, 2019).

Problem Solving

Problem solving is a broad term that implies more than simply the elimination and prevention of crimes. According to Sierra-Arevalo and Rand (2019) problem solving is based on the assumption that crime and disorder can be reduced in small geographic areas by carefully studying the characteristics of problems in the area, and then applying the appropriate resources and on the assumption that "Individuals make choices based on the opportunities presented by the immediate physical and social characteristics of an area. By manipulating these factors, people will be less inclined to act in an offensive manner. The problem-solving process is explained further: The theory behind problem-oriented policing is simple. Underlying conditions create problems. These conditions might include the characteristics of the people involved (offenders, potential victims, and others), the social setting in which these people interact, the physical environments, and the way the public deals with these conditions (Sierra-Arevalo and Rand (2019). A problem created by these conditions may generate one or more incidents. These incidents, while stemming from a common source, may appear to be different. For example, social and physical conditions in a deteriorated apartment complex may generate burglaries, acts of vandalism, intimidation of pedestrians by rowdy teenagers, and other incidents. These incidents, some of which come to police attention, are symptoms of the problems. The incidents will continue so long as the problem that creates them persists.

Emmanuel and David (2020) posit that as police recognize the effectiveness of the problem-solving approach, there is a growing awareness that community involvement is essential for its success. Determining the underlying causes of crime depends, to a great extent, on an in-depth knowledge of community. Therefore, community participation in identifying and setting priorities will contribute to effective problem-solving efforts by the community and the police. Cooperative problem solving also reinforces trust, facilitates the exchange of information, and leads to the identification of other areas that could benefit from the mutual attention of the police and the community. For this process to operate effectively the police need to devote attention to and recognize the validity of community concerns. Neighbourhood groups and the police will not always agree on which specific problems deserve attention first. Police may regard robberies as the biggest problem in a particular community, while residents may find derelicts that sleep in doorways, break bottles on sidewalks, and pick through garbage cans to be the number one problem. Under community policing, the problem with derelicts should also receive early attention from the police with the assistance of other government agencies and community members (Emmanuel and David, 2020). Therefore, in addition to the serious crime problems identified by police, community policing must also address the problems of significant concern to the community. Community policing in effect allows community members to bring problems of great concern to them to the attention of the police. Once informed of community concerns, the police must work with citizens to address them, while at the same time encouraging citizens to assist in solving the problems of concern to the police. The nature of community problems will vary widely and will often involve multiple incidents that are related by factors including geography, time, victim or perpetrator group, and environment. Problems can affect a small area of a community, an entire community, or many communities.

Ofole and Odetola (2011) argued that community problems comprise an unusually high number of burglaries in an apartment complex that are creating great anxiety and fear among residents, panhandling that creates fear in a business district, prostitutes in local parks or on heavily travelled streets, disorderly youth who regularly assemble in the parking lot of a convenience store, an individual who persistently harasses and provokes community members.

Kpae and Eric (2017), also assert that a problem-solving process relies on the expertise and assistance of an array of social and government agencies and community resources. A

tremendous amount of leverage can be attained through the collaboration and partnership of this type of far-ranging alliance. Community policing puts new emphasis on tackling the underlying causes of crime by addressing problems at the grassroots level. They further argued that in community policing, the problem-solving process is dependent on input from both the police and the community. Five problem solving strategies in community-policing as enumerated by Wanjohi (2014) are, eliminating the problem entirely. This type of solution is usually limited to disorder problems. Examples include eliminating traffic congestion by erecting traffic control signs, and destroying or rehabilitating abandoned buildings that can provide an atmosphere conducive to crime. Another strategy is reducing the rate of occurrences of such problem. Drug-dealing and the accompanying problems of robbery and gang violence will be decreased if the police and community work together to set up drug counselling and rehabilitation centers. Longer range solutions might include intensifying drug education in schools, churches, and hospitals. The third strategy emphasizes reducing the degree of injury per incident. For example, the police can teach store clerks how to act during a robbery in order to avoid injury or death and can advise women in the community on ways to minimize the chances of being killed or seriously injured if attacked. Another community-policing strategy is improving problem handling. Police should always make an effort to treat people humanely, (for example, showing sensitivity in dealing with rape victims and in seeking ways to ease their trauma, or increase effectiveness in handling runaway juveniles, drug addicts, drunk drivers, etc., by working with other agencies more closely). Lastly, manipulating environmental factors to discourage criminal behaviour is another vital strategy. This can include collaborative efforts to add better lighting, remove overgrown weeds and trim shrubbery, and seal off vacant apartment buildings.

Effectiveness of Community Policing

According to Friedman (1992), community policing is a strategy aimed at achieving more effective and efficient crime control, reduced fear of crime, improved quality of life, improved police services and police legitimacy, through a proactive reliance on community resources that seeks to change crime causing conditions. This assumes a need for greater accountability of police, greater public share in decision making and greater concern for civil rights.

Though community policing remains an important strategy in crimes control in the society, it has never been free from challenges. Critics of the strategy claim that it is difficult to implement community policing because of its two way traffic position. That is, it needs the effort from the police force as well as the community if it is to be successful (Weatheritt, 1983). According to Walker (1993), the failures of community policing in accordance to its definition emanates from the history of the police force which has been interpreted in relation to the past mistakes and it will be very difficult to create a totally new form of policing strategy.

In spite of high expectations and widespread support for community policing, the impact of such approaches on corruption and accountability has not been clearly established. In terms of anticorruption benefits, bringing police forces closer to the community can strengthen and weaken the accountability of the police to the public. For the latter, community policing could create more opportunities for corruption/unethical practices by promoting closer ties between the police and the community and providing opportunities for long-term personal interactions, preferential treatments and the development of corrupt networks (Chene, 2012). It seems pertinent to observe that the dismal image of the Nigeria Police accounts for the non-cooperation by the public who are often reluctant to volunteer useful information to the police. Yet, the tasks of crime prevention and detection as well as prosecution of offenders cannot be successfully performed without the cooperation of the public. Other allegations levelled against the police include arbitrariness in the exercise of their powers of arrest and prosecution, corruption and perversion of justice, use of crude techniques of investigation, collusion with criminals and incessant cases of accidental discharge of lethal bullets (Olujinmi, 2005).

On the nature of community policing, scholars assert that it is not realistic to set objectives for the police and then expect them to establish schemes to meet those objectives and needs of the community (Aropet, 2012). Instead, the police should first consult with the community and thereafter set objectives that can solve the community problems at hand. There also seem to be problems with the rank- and-file police officers, as studies show that they sometimes do not understand what the goals and potential benefits of community policing are to the public as well as the government and the police force in particular (Beavers, 1996). This was also the biggest problem experienced in the past and the failure to motivate the street officers involved in community policing results into bribery, corruption and robbery as the police officers in community policing attempt to reward themselves from the public. Bennett (1993) concludes that in any future implementation of community policing, the problem and the resistance from lower ranking officers must be addressed but he does not sought how to address them.

Community policing appears to impose a new responsibility on the police to create appropriate ways of associating the public with the law enforcement and the maintenance of order. It is said to define how the police should sensibly and appropriately respond to citizens and communities. According to Dambazau (1999), it is factual that the core function of the police is to control crime, this function can however be greatly improved by diagnosing and managing problems in the community that produce serious crimes, fostering closer relations with the community to facilitate crime solving and building self-defence capabilities within the community.

Theoretical Review

Situational Crime Prevention Theory

This theory is credited to R. V. Clarke (1980), and looks to develop greater understanding of crime and more effective crime prevention strategies through concern with the physical, organizational and social environments that make crime possible. The crux or major assumption of this theory is concerned with (the immediate physical and social settings, as well as wider social arrangement). Clarke summarizes his theory as the science and art of decreasing the amount of opportunities to crime, using measures directed at highly specific forms of crime that involve the management, design or manipulation of the immediate environment in a systematic and permanent way.

The foundation of the situational crime concept relies also on the assumption that more opportunities lead to more crime, easier ones attract more offenders and such existence of easy opportunities makes possible for a life crime. The theory goes further to propose that crime prevention or the intervention to prevent a crime from occurring can be achieved in two ways: (1) changing the offender's disposition or (2) reducing his or her opportunities. This is based on the premise that crime can be reduced effectively by altering situations rather than the offender's personal dispositions.

Clarke (1980) primarily divides crime prevention approaches into three categories of measures namely: degree of surveillance, target hardening measures and environmental management. These approaches are further summarized into sixteen (16) opportunity-reducing techniques as seen below: (Target hardening, Access control, Deflecting offenders, Controlling facilitators, Entry and exit screening, Formal surveillance, Surveillance by employees, Natural surveillance, Target removal, Identifying property, Reducing temptation, Denying benefits, Rule setting, Stimulating conscience, Controlling dis-inhibitors, Facilitating compliance).

The situational crime prevention theory is relevant and fits well into the community policing context of crime control. This is so because the theory presents assumptions that best explain and propose pathways to community policing such as taking control of the physical, organizational and social environments that make crime possible. The theory also proposes approaches and modalities of crime control by changing the offender's disposition to crime and reducing the opportunities to crime. These assumptions are very much in-line with the philosophy

of community policing which also seeks to reduce and prevent crime through a holistic engagement of the community structures, institutions and stakeholders towards tackling crime. According to United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the contemporary concept of community security includes both group and personal security; it supposes to bridge the gap between a focus on the state and on the individual, and to promote a multi-stakeholder approach that is driven by the analysis of local needs. The need to adopt a second theory is pertinent to help provide a holistic explanation and insight to the concept of community policing.

Structural Functionalist Theory

Functionalism first emerged in the 19th century and is credited to scholars and proponent such as August Comte, Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons. The functionalist perspective derives its famous assumptions from the following core concepts or principles; structure, function, functional prerequisites, value consensus and social order to derive its theory.

Functionalism begins with the observation that behaviour in society is structured. This implies that societies are organized in terms of "rules" which stipulate how people are expected to behave be it formal or informal, "norms" specific guides to action and "values" providing general guidelines to behaviour (Holborn and Haralambos, 2008).

Having established the existence of structure, functionalist analysis turns to look at how that structure functions. This involves an examination of the relationship between the different parts of the structure and their relationship to society as a whole. Furthermore, in determining the functions of various parts of social structure, functionalists are guided by the idea that societies have basic needs or requirements that must be met if they are to survive. These requirements are known as functional prerequisites. The functionalist perspective further analyses society as a system, analogizing it as an entity made up of interconnected and interrelated parts. This assumption follows that each part will in some way affect every other part and the system as a whole. This integration of parts is based on "value consensus".

The last component which is "social order" explains how social life is possible, it assumes that a certain degree of social order and stability is essential for the survival of social system. Functionalism is therefore concerned with explaining the origin and maintenance of order and stability in the society.

Justifications

From the above functionalist assumptions, we can deduce that the theory explains explicitly the phenomenon of community policing and crime control. The concept and philosophy of community policing advocates and calls for a holistic approach towards crime control and prevention. Community policing focuses on making the police and the public efficient partners in crime prevention and control in the community. This it seeks to address by engaging all stakeholders through effective mobilization of community support. It is just like the assumptions of functionalism which see society as a system with interconnected and interrelated parts, each part having a functional prerequisite. That is, each part contributing its quota to the general wellbeing of the system in order to maintain stability and social order. Similarly, this theory is likened to community policing and crime control principle, that seeks to accommodate and bring to the fore all necessary parties towards policing its community and preventing or controlling crime.

Empirical Review

The following empirical studies both locally and globally are reviewed. Arisukwu, *et al.* (2020) explored community participation in crime prevention and control in rural Nigeria. The general objective of this study was to examine community participation in crime prevention and control in rural Nigeria. This study adopted survey research design in studying community participation in crime prevention and control in rural Nigeria. Ethical approval was obtained from Landmark University's Ethical Committee before the commencement of the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. The study purposively selected two rural communities (Omu Aran and Ilofa) from Irepodun and Oke Ero local governments in Kwara state Nigeria. One hundred and ninety-six questionnaires were gotten back from both study areas out of two hundred that were randomly distributed in selected areas. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency count and percentage were used to analyze the demographic data and personal information of the respondents. Likert scale was developed and used to scale responses from respondents on the objectives of the study. All the analyses were done using SPSS 25 version. The paper found that Crime management in rural areas in Nigeria was negatively affected by poverty, youth unemployment, lack of sufficient police presence and lack of socio-economic infrastructures. The absence of good governance and accountability makes government at the rural level incapable of solving these problems and harnessing the potentials in youth population to drive sustainable development plans in rural Nigeria. The paper recommended that rural community members must form vigilante groups, neighbourhood watch and partner with the police through community policing in preventing crime in their area.

Amadi (2014) conducted a study on A Qualitative Analysis of Community Policing in the United States. The article examined whether community policing has led to police effectiveness in serving and protecting the American people. The article also examined the impact of community policing on traditional police functions and strategy focusing on three key elements of community policing that are believed to have led to changes in traditional police functions and strategy under community policing. The paper was a descriptive paper that reviewed extant literature. The paper found that community policing is an effective policing strategy in the United States partly because of its emphasis on dealing with the underlying causes of crime rather than attacking the symptoms of crime. The paper recommended that the police must be concerned with social problems in the community and must pay special attention to individuals in the community that are at risk of being victims of crime or being involved in criminal activity.

Audu (2016) conducted a study on community policing: exploring the police community relationship for crime control in Nigeria. The research paper assessed the impact of community policing as overseen by the UK-Department for International Development in Nigeria. The

research paper adopted an interpretative framework to access the meaning attached to community policing from the perspectives of the stakeholders themselves. The empirical part of the study adopted a qualitative approach and engaged the police and community in focus group discussions and individual in-depth interviews in Kogi State of north central Nigeria. The data obtained from field work was analyzed. The paper found that there is a negative impact in the implementation of community policing policy. The paper recommended that there should be strong and well-coordinated improved police community relations, welfare and provisions of logistics for the police and drastic stoppage of their corrupt tendencies. Also, there is need tosensitize the community to improve their awareness on the urgent need to cooperate with the police, removal of multiple leadership and control structures and decentralization of police operations in line with the principles and practices of community policing and democratic form of policing are recommended.

Mwaniki and Maroko (2020) conducted a study on Community Policing and Crime Prevention in Kirinyaga County, Kenya. The research paper assessed the role of community policing on crime prevention in Kirinyaga County Kenya. The researchers adopted quantitative and qualitative research methods to conduct the study through descriptive and survey research design. Data was collected using primary source. Questionnaires and interviews schedules were used to collect data from the 200 respondents randomly selected from 600 respondents. The quantitative data was analysed using ANOVA while qualitative data was analyzed using content data analysis method. The paper found that so many residents from Kirinyaga County take active part in community policing as they believe that if they work together, they can achieve crime prevention. In addition, community policing is highly effective in reducing crime rate and preventing crime if the process is well organized through clear information and awareness process. The paper recommended that efforts should be made to create awareness on community policing to all stakeholders. Also, structures should be put in place to explain the process of accessing the services to community leaders and stake holders. This will help the communities and the police to bond and build trust.

Zikhali (2019) conducted a study on community policing and Crime Prevention: evaluating the role of traditional leaders under chief Madliwa in Nkayi district, Zimbabwe. The study evaluated the role of traditional leaders in community policing and crime prevention. The study was premised on a qualitative research approach, and primary data obtained using interviews. The paper found that traditional leaders mobilize villagers to work with the police. The study concluded that community policing is effective in facilitating the prevention and reduction of crime. The study recommended that the police should incorporate strategies that promote sustainable, consistent and enduring cooperation with traditional leaders if community policing is to continue to be effective.

Igbekoyi and Dada (2019) carried out a study on public perception of community policing and crime control in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was adopted in the study. The study adopted purposive method in which three local government areas namely: Ado local government area (Ekiti Central), Ikere local government area (Ekiti South) and Ikole local government area (Ekiti North) were selected. The study made use of quantitative methods of data collection and as a result, three hundred (300) copies of questionnaire, out of which one hundred (100) copies were distributed to each local government areas were used to elicit information from the respondents. The study revealed that 62.7% have heard about community policing while 37.3% of respondents have not heard of community policing before. Also, majority with 36% of the total respondents believed in involving the community or local people in policing their community through the use of local vigilantes. On the effect of community policing, 30% of the majority believed that it helped in controlling crimes with the aid of information and supporting agencies. The study therefore concluded that controlling crimes in Nigeria is a daunting task for law enforcement agencies and as a result, community policing will be an

effective mechanism in controlling crimes. The study thereby recommended that, to achieve the desired full impact, relevant stakeholders need to revisit the program, address the weaknesses, work against the threats and utilize as best as possible the available opportunities. Also, Government needs to support and promote community-oriented policing style as well as create more enlightenment to the public and inform the police of any criminality.

Ofele and Odetola (2017) conducted an assessment of the impact of community policing on crime control in Ibeju-Lekki Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was adopted. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire titled Perception of Police Personnel on Community Policing and its Impact on Crime Control, administered on a sample of 50. It was developed and validated by the researcher for the purpose of the study. Six research questions were raised and answered using descriptive statistics, while multiple regression was adopted to compute the relative contributions of the variables to police perception. The results revealed that the police's perception of the impact of community policing in crime control was positive. It also indicated that working conditions and community policing practices significantly contributed to the police's positive perception on community policing impact on crime control. The findings of this study have implications for policy makers to design activities and programme capable of strengthening the synergy between the community and the police personnel. The need for Counsellors to institute therapy to enhance assertiveness and negation skills of both the police and community for better partnership is also implied in the study as a recommendation.

Wanjohi (2014) carried out a study on the influence of community policing on crime reduction in Kenya: a case of Machakos County. The study reviewed previous studies through library research with a view to establish academic gaps. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and targeted households benefiting from community policing services in Machakos Sub County. The sample size was 196 households living 200 meters around the Machakos Police Station and Administration Police (AP) Posts in Machakos Sub County. Systematic sampling for the households living around the police stations and posts was done for the study and a questionnaire used for data collection to gather information from the respondents. The study found that there exists a positive association between police-community partnership and crime reduction in Machakos County; community policing crime prevention strategies and crime reduction in Machakos County, and police-community problem solving and crime reduction in Machakos County. This positive association suggests that when one factor increases, crime reduction in Machakos County, Kenya increases. The study concluded that police-community partnership, community policing crime prevention strategies, and police-community problem solving are factors influencing crime reduction in Kenya. The study recommended there is need for more funding; police community forums; more police posts; accessible police posts; using patrols; using contact persons for information; using watch programmes; use sharing of information; effective use of door to door contacts; increasing patrols; improve hotline responses; employ familiar police officers; reduce response time to crimes; better detection techniques; employing more police officers; better equipment; use technology; use of detection equipment; and make proactive arrests, in efforts to ensure community policing has a positive effect on crime reduction in Kenya.

Methodology

In order that the objective of this paper is achieved, the research design for this study was library research; the study adopted a systematic review of literatures. The purpose of this method is to provide several comparisons of existing theories. This was done through the use of online libraries, while also exploring the empirical evidence present in previous works, relating to the association between community policing and crime control. A total of eight (8) papers where empirically reviewed for this study, these were sourced as follows: Zikhali (2019), Wanjohi (2014), Ofele and Odetola (2011), Mwaniki and Maroko (2020), Audu (2016), Arisukwu, Igbolekwu, Oye,

Oyeyipo, Asamu and Oyekola (2020) and Amad (2014).

Discussion of Findings

The findings of Arisukwu,*et al.* (2020) on community participation in crime prevention and control in rural Nigeria conform to the objective of this study, as findings indicate that crime management in rural areas in Nigeria is negatively affected by poverty, youth unemployment, lack of sufficient police presence and lack of socio-economic infrastructures. Thus, explains the study objective, community policing having a far reaching impact in addressing some security challenges in rural areas.

Similarly, the findings of Amadi (2014), focus on the Qualitative Analysis of Community Policing in the United States and whether community policing has led to police effectiveness in serving and protecting the American people. The paper found that community policing is an effective policing strategy in the United States partly because of its emphasis on dealing with the underlying causes of crime rather than attacking the symptoms of crime. These findings agree with the study objective on community policing as a means of crime control.

The objective of this study correlates with that of Audu (2016) on community policing: exploring the police/ community relationship for crime control in Nigeria. The paper found that there is a negative impact in the implementation of community policing policy. Thus the need for government and other necessary agencies to address the importance of community policing as a tool for crime control when well utilized.

Mwaniki and Maroko (2020) conducted a study on Community Policing and Crime Prevention in Kirinyaga County, Kenya. The study found that so many residents from Kirinyaga County take active part in community policing as they believe that if they work together they can achieve crime prevention. In addition, community policing is highly effective in reducing crime rate and preventing crime if the process is well organized through clear information and awareness process. This finding conforms to the research objective on community policing and crime control.

The objective of the study is in line with the findings of Zikhali (2019) on community policing and Crime Prevention: evaluating the role of traditional leaders under chief Madliwa in Nkayi district, Zimbabwe. The study evaluated the role of traditional leaders in community policing and crime prevention. The study found that traditional leaders mobilize villagers to work with the police. The study concluded that community policing is effective in facilitating the prevention and reduction of crime. This finding affirms our assertion that community policing if well harmonized has the propensity to prevent crime.

The study carried out by Igbekoyi and Dada (2019) on public perception of community policing and crime control in Ekiti State, Nigeria adopted the descriptive survey design. Findings indicate that controlling crimes in Nigeria is a daunting task for law enforcement agencies and as a result, community policing is an effective mechanism in controlling crimes, thus, affirming the objective of this study.

The studies of Ofele and Odetola (2017) on the assessment of the impact of community policing on crime control in Ibeju-Lekki Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria, and Wanjohi (2014) on the influence of community policing on crime reduction in Kenya: a case of Machakos County, indicate that community policing positively aaffects crime reduction and prevention in the researched areas.

From the above assertions and findings of previous studies, it is evident that community policing can effectively lead to crime control in contemporary times. However, for community policing to have meaningful impact and result, all stakeholders must be ready to play a role. These include government, police institution, community leaders and non-governmental organizations.

Summary and Recommendations

Establishing public safety is among every government's fundamental obligation to its citizens. The safety of people and security of property are widely viewed as basic human rights and are essential to the community's overall quality of life. When the citizenry is not, and does not feel reasonably safe, other critical government functions such as economic development, government finance, public education, stable housing, and basic local government services become that much more difficult to provide. In short, a community's reputation for public safety heavily influences its appeal as a place to raise a family or open a business, and community policing is thought of as a strategy for safety.

Despite its introduction, Community Policing has failed to achieve any meaningful success in Nigeria. The public perception of the police is worse than ever. The public still view the police as corrupt and people never to trust. The police do sometimes aid and abet criminals, and have been described as one of the most corrupt institutions in Nigeria. The philosophy of community policing emphasizes partnership, decentralization of authority, and proactiveness. The structure of the Nigeria police is very central and their approach to crime fighting is still reactionary rather than proactive. The partnership between the pubic and police in crime fighting is still unrealistic because of the poor public perception of the police. More importantly, the Nigeria police force is built on the traditional culture of force which is used to brutalize the same people that they are expected to protect. This culture of brutality and use of force makes it difficult for the Nigeria police to embrace community policing.

For community policing to make an inroad in Nigeria, the Nigeria Police Force must have a complete paradigm shift from its traditional model of policing to a more community-oriented policing that stresses community partnership, decentralization of powers, and proactive policing. The policing model should be that of partnership with less emphasis on regulatory powers and sanctions with greater reliance upon compromise and cooperation that would serve the public better rather than the traditional model of policing (Iwarimie-Jaja, 2006). More importantly, the police must improve their public image so that they can earn public trust. This can only be achieved when they show a caring attitude towards the public rather than the use of brutal force on them and demanding for money before services are delivered.

The paper recommends that police agencies should not allow political leaders and the public to develop unrealistic expectations for community policing in terms of crime deterrence or speed of implementation. Community policing calls for long-term commitment; it is not a quick-fix. Achieving ongoing partnerships with the community and eradicating the underlying causes of crime will take planning, flexibility, time, and patience. Management can measure progress by their success in meeting interim goals and must reinforce the concept inside and outside the organization that success is reached through a series of gradual improvements. Local political leadership may be eager for fast results, but police leadership must make it clear to city and county officials that implementing community policing is an incremental and long-term process. Political and community leaders must be regularly informed of the progress of community policing efforts to keep them interested and involved. It is very important too that the police improves its public image so that they can earn public trust, thereby enhancing a healthy police-community partnership or relationship.

Also, the police organization must stress that the success of community policing depends on sustained joint efforts of the police, local government, public and private agencies, and members of the community. This cooperation is indispensable in deterring crime and revitalizing our neighbourhoods.　The close alliance forged with the community should not be limited to an isolated incident or series of incidents, nor confined to a specific time frame. The partnership between the police and the community must be enduring and balanced. It must break down the old concepts of professional versus civilian, expert versus novice, and authority figure versus

subordinate. The police and the community must be collaborators in the quest to encourage and preserve peace and prosperity.

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