

INSECURITY: RETHINKING COMMUNITY POLICING AND CRIME MANAGEMENT IN IKEJA AREA OF LAGOS STATE

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Abstract

The provision of adequate security is a social pre-requisite for the survival of any society. However, in countries such as Nigeria, the emergence and growth of community policing has thrived on the inadequacies, shortcomings and several inadequacies attributed to formal policing systems. The Nigerian police force have been severely criticised for several atrocities, including its inability to curtail crimes as such many people have turned to community policing. This study therefore examines the community policing and crime management in Ikeja in terms of its forms, roles, efficacy and challenges in the management of crime. The study adopted the survey research design. Data for the study was collected through the quantitative method from a total of 400 respondents selected through the multi-stage sampling technique. Findings from the study showed that the use of community policing as a security agent in Ikeja has led to a moderate decline in crime rates. The study also found that the most profound reasons for the adoption of community policing are police ineffectiveness and increases in crime wave. Other reasons found by the study include lack of police presence. Findings from the study also showed that members of the Ikeja community identify the roles of community policing in crime prevention and perceive it as a positive compared to the roles performed by the NPF. However, as indicated by the study, community policing is beset by challenges that affect its performance, these include; institutional constraints, police perception, god-father-ism and poor funding. Based on the study findings, the study recommends a restructuring of the NPF that considers grey areas such as police public image and the lack of public trust and partnership.

Keywords: Security, Community Policing, Crime management, prevention.

Introduction

Provision of adequate security is a social pre-requisite for the survival of any society. Every society takes appropriate measures to protect the lives and property of people living within its boundaries. Business and social activities may not go on freely without adequate security. This fundamental essence of security may be the reason why societies from time immemorial made efforts to police their neighbourhoods in order to secure them from criminal

victimization. Security has to do with the act of preventing and protecting in order to ensure that certain facilities, equipment, persons or activities are safe from damage, pilferage, destruction, murder or disruption.

The emergence and growth of community policing has thrived on the inadequacies, shortcomings and several immunities attributed to formal policing systems in Nigeria. The establishment of a central police force had been more of a weakness than strength to policing in Nigeria; hence, the emergence of community policing. To make matters worse, the corruption perception of the Nigerian police by the Nigerian people over the years heightened consequently the Nigerian police is perceived as the most corrupt government institution both locally and internationally worsening community-police relation. Under this state of affairs, the Nigerian police has been unable to fight crime let alone prevent it (Ikuteyijo and Rotimi, 2012).

In Nigeria, night guards and vigilante groups have emerged in response to theft and armed robbery. Vigilante groups existed in Nigeria for decades not only under civilian rule, but also during the previous military regimes of Generals Babangida, Abacha and Abubakar. They have traditionally been seen as an extension to the work of law enforcement officers in a country with high level of delinquency and lack of police training, equipment and personnel. Thus, the traditional concept of vigilante in Nigeria exclusively refers to un-armed voluntary citizen or group created in local communities to help the security forces confront common criminality and social violence by arresting suspected delinquents and handing them over to the police. The Nigerian law recognizes the lawfulness of vigilante groups arresting suspected criminals provided that they are unarmed and that the suspect is immediately handed over to the police (Aniche, 2018).

With the corruption in the police, the suspected criminal easily finds their ways back in the streets terrorising people and even in extreme cases unleashing vengeance on those people that handed them over to the police or masterminded their arrest by the police. The police is also accused of revealing the identity of their informants to the suspected criminals after being released by the police in questionable circumstances who later go after the informants. Also, the police have on many occasions failed to redeem the price tag it puts on suspected criminals at large. The police have been accused of bribery and corruption, extortion of motorists, illegal road blocks, extra-judicial killings, intimidation and the use of excessive force on innocent citizens, giving arms to armed robbers, involvement in the armed robbery, mass and illegal arrest, unable to confront the armed robbers, etc. The police officers are sometimes use as private body guards and thugs by rich politicians and plays an ignoble role in election violence. All these perceptions of the people of the police disconnected them from the police (Okafor and Aniche, 2018).

Statement of Problem

Insecurity and the several activities of criminals not only affect the peace and security of a community, but also affects economic and social activities, thereby affecting the livelihood of people and causing great financial costs to the government. Insecurity is also a marker of underdevelopment and also undermines the social and economic development of people and communities. Considering that Ikeja is one of the major business hubs in Lagos State, with a

consistent in and out flow of people from different parts of the country, Africa and the world, such an area is prone to criminal activities.

The inability of the state police to perform its duties up to par is another major problem in Ikeja, like other parts of Lagos. The increase in crime wave and the inability of the Nigeria police to deal with the situation effectively have paved the way for the increasing use of community policing systems such as the vigilante groups in its current form. These vigilante groups are to ensure the safety of both their lives, businesses, properties and families. Eke, (2002) noted that “from time immemorial, ordinary men and women have made several sacrifices to ensure the safety of both their lives and that of their families.

Finally, even though there are several studies on community policing in Nigeria such as Okafor and Aniche (2018), Olusegun (2016), Audu (2016) and others, only a few study (such as Ngwu and Ahuruonye, 2017) have researched something close to this study. Hence, the goal of this study is to examine community policing and its role in the management of crime in Ikeja, one of Nigeria’s foremost business hubs.

Research Questions

1. What forms of community policing are available in Ikeja?
2. What are the roles of community policing in crime management in Ikeja?
3. How efficient is community policing in crime management Ikeja?
4. What are the challenges of community policing in crime management in Ikeja?

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine community policing and crime management in Ikeja. To achieve this aim, the study is guided by the following specific objectives;

1. To identify the forms of community policing available in Ikeja.
2. To examine the roles of community policing in crime management in Ikeja.
3. To examine the efficacy of community policing in crime management in Ikeja.
4. To scrutinise the challenges of community policing in crime management in Ikeja.

Scope and delimitation of the Study

The study is however limited to Ikeja area of Lagos, a growing business hub within the state.

Significance of the study

This study is important for several reasons. First, it fills a knowledge gap. Many studies have been conducted on community policing, including such studies as Ngwu and Ahuruonye (2017) on the “efficacy of community policing in Nigeria”, Olusegun (2016) on “community policing in South-West Nigeria: finding a nexus between the police and the people”, “community policing: exploring the police/community relationship for crime control in Nigeria by Audu, (2016) and “perspective on community policing: a constructive and comparative analysis” by Chavez (2012) among several others. Among these studies, only a few such as Ngwu and Ahuruonye (2017) have examined the role of community policing in crime management and control. However, this was not done in regards to growing commercial hub like Ikeja. Hence, this study fills this knowledge gap.

Asides the forgoing, the study also provides insight into the importance and roles of community policing and provides recommendations for concerned stakeholders on improving police community relationship and exploring the untapped benefits of community policing to enhance the management of crime and security situations in Ikeja. The study also informs members of the public on the role of community policing while encouraging them to take active parts in support of community policing. The study highlights grey areas in the formal policing structure and the need to improve these areas for a consequent improve in the conditions of security in Ikeja and the state generally.

Community Policing: Community policing in this context is defined as service-oriented style of law enforcement that focuses on order maintenance, crime prevention and fear reduction in the community as opposed to the traditional focus on prosecution of serious street crimes (jungle justice). Community policing represents a merger of community oriented and police-oriented policing. In other words, it is the forging of partnership with residents, business owners, community leaders, government departments and agencies in order to solve community problems.

Crime management entails the anticipation, recognition and appraisal of crime risks and the initiation of actions to remove or reduce it. It entails the efforts geared towards reducing crime and criminals in society.

Literature Review

Community policing encompasses a variety of philosophical and practical approaches and is still evolving. Community policing strategies vary depending on the needs and responses of the communities involved; however, certain basic principles and considerations are common to all community policing efforts. Nevertheless, community policing is one of the concepts with a lot of misconceptions and wider scope in definition, as it is often conceptualised according to the needs and aspirations of where it is adopted. Be that as it may, it has been argued that many definitions appear phlegmatic to considering various properties of community policing as they often "seem to ignore some aspects" of community policing while they also fail to "... provide clear operational terms that allow comparative implementation and testability" (Friedmann, 1992: 3). In fact, community policing has remained a problem-solving approach to security management in many countries of the world. For instance, in the United States, community policing approach has nevertheless "gone a long way toward preventing crime" (Holland, 1994: 12). It is no exaggeration that if people are afforded the opportunity to be involved in the policy and decision-making process of the police, there may be no need of having large state police (see Bittner, 1970; Gaskill, 2002).

Community policing is widely regarded as one of the more significant recent developments in policing around the world. The concept has been widely discussed and applied in various countries and in a range of contexts, thus raising questions about what exactly it involves, what in particular is so attractive about it, and what difference has it made vis a vis other approaches to policing? Intriguingly, despite the widespread interest in the concept, it seems there is no clear agreement on its meaning and, as various scholars have indicated, it appears to be understood by different people in different ways and invokes both acclaim and criticism in roughly equal measures.

In the search for clarifying its meaning, several authors have commented on the difficulty of defining both the terms 'community' and 'policing' (e.g. Lyons, 2002; Buerger, 1994; Waddington, 1999). Others have tried to identify common defining characteristics (Oliver, 2008; Goldstein, 1990), while others again have sought to highlight the contradictory elements (for example, Seagrave, 1996; Lyons, 2002). Manning (1984 p. 206) suggested that "community policing can be seen as a metaphor based on yearning and the wish for personalization of service which contrasts with bureaucratic professional policing". He considered community policing in Great Britain and USA to fit well with this general definition and later in his article he developed a fuller analysis of the term. Skogan and Hartnett (1997) defined community policing as "an organisational strategy that redefines the goals of policing, but leaves the means of achieving them to practitioners in the field. It assumes a commitment to broadly focused, problem-oriented policing and requires that police be responsive to citizens' demands when they decide what local problems are and set their priorities".

According to Merrit and Dingwall (2010 p. 389) three defining characteristics of community policing can be identified:

- a) police-community partnerships,
- b) a problem-solving approach, and
- c) organisational decentralisation and local accountability.

In their article, they proceed from this categorisation particularly to examine and contextualise the operation of community policing in rural areas, arguing that some notions of community policing, while perhaps suitable for urban areas are quite unsuited for rural areas.

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) has positive effect on crime prevention and control.

Forms and Strategies of community policing

Olusegun (2016) identified the forms of community policing in Nigeria to include; Police community relationship committee (PCRC), Vigilante Group of Nigeria (VGN), Civilian Joint Task force and Community Development Association (CDA).

For community policing to succeed in Nigeria and perhaps in any society, three essential practical strategies are strongly advocated. These strategies as indicated in the work of Ordu and Nnam (2017) include police-community partnership, police-community information sharing, and police involvement in community affairs.

Police-community partnership programme is a strategy for making the public a serious partner in policing the community. This works by establishing the citizen advisory committees, which open channels of communication between the police and the public. These committees are usually composed of well-established members of the society who are charismatic and have the interest of the general community at heart. Ren, Cao, Lovrich and Gaffney (2005) are of the view that this programme permits the police to meet with local residents in order to discuss crime in the neighbourhood and to use personal initiative to solve

problems. Ordu and Nnam (2017) acknowledged the significance of police-community partnership programme. For instance, police and community members establish "citizen advisory committees that would open up channels of communication between police and the community" (Sykes, 1978, p. 394).

In Nigeria, for instance, true representatives of citizen advisory committees are traditional rulers and members of their cabinet, town union and opinion leaders, and youth leaders. The committees meet regularly with police to discuss their welfare, crime related problems, police-community relationships, and then work out modalities on how to combat crime to the barest minimum. By implication, the committee members are equally security agents who pull their resources together with that of the conventional police in the fight against crime and criminals. When this synergy is formed, the general public "may find that officers are more respectful of citizenry; a condition that helps lower the number of complaints and improves community relations" (Davis, Mateu-Gelabert & Miller, 2005, p. 231).

Although, whatever might be the need to ease tensions resulting from crime and criminalities in the community, the State retains the ultimate power to deal with offences and offenders while negotiating both compliance and co-operation with the community. Beyond this, the creation of citizen advisory committees paves way for the police system to succeed in the war against crime. The poor are more likely to suffer disproportionately for breaking the same law than the rich. The realisation of this ideal is important, particularly when there are disparities between the rich and the poor in the police treatment patterns (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2000). In criminal investigation, corruption is said to be present in most cases and is usually determined by the extent of bribe given by either parties to a case. The party that gives more is likely to influence the direction of investigation in his or her favour (Dambazau, 2007). Fortunately, police-community partnership programme has been instituted to remedy the situation. This programme always strives to maintain a balance and equilibrium, and democratic social order which are vital approaches to effective community policing in Nigeria. Under this programme, the police are expected to be fair in their enforcement of the law and also accountable to the citizenry instead of preying on them. The police are not expected to impose themselves on the community or become autonomous agents, driving the community as an entity by 'force' or 'fire' as tenable in Nigeria. The police are expected to act as public servants and civilised agents of peace, securing the society in a uniformly, morally and socially acceptable, democratic manner (Ordu and Nnam, 2017). This should be done without recourse to partiality and perverting the course of justice based on socioeconomic status and social background to subject(s) or parties involved.

Police-community information sharing is the second significant strategy for effective community policing. In community policing, information sharing helps the police to establish the identity of crime suspects. When there is discrepancy between individuals' actual social identity and their perceived identity, it leads to error and social control agents are not immune to error (Kelly & Clarke, 2003). Information sharing provides the facts necessary for bringing violators before the court, which is an approach that enhances community policing (Quinney, 1974). Perhaps, on the basis of this, it is established that people seek information for different needs and from varying sources. Their needs and reasons could range from educational, research, professional, recreational, security to pecuniary, or for personal development.

Man by nature is security conscious, and are pushed to seek information so as to answer the 'why', 'what', 'when' and 'how' questions which are tied to police-community information sharing (see also Okogwu & Nnam, 2013). Therefore, citizens' participation in sharing information with police will assist in gathering socio-demographic data that could help to control the errors and difficulties sometimes encountered in the course of identifying law violators. Maintaining a good relationship between the police and community remains the primary means of overcoming the barrier in information gathering and dissemination, which gives rise to effective community policing (Ordu and Nnam, 2017).

The police-community information sharing tends to provide police with vital crime information about a suspect and his or her activities and whereabouts. This development, undoubtedly, is useful in solving multitude of challenges confronting community policing in Nigeria. The essence of information sharing in community policing is to either deter crime before it occurs or tracks down offender and at the long-run achieve huge success in crime reduction.

Finally, the police involvement in community affairs is another strong strategy that allows the police to display themselves as both private citizens and State agents of social control. Community policing under this programme or strategy presents the police as servants of the society who, should in a reasonable manner, enforce law and order and ensure public compliance with policies. Ordu and Nnam (2017) attest that the involvement of police in community affairs has actually yielded fruitful results. For instance, Quinney (1974) affirmed that when the community collaborates with police personnel in maintaining social order, it helps the legal system also to be increasingly used in criminal justice administration. The police are viable instrument for building an inclusive and organised community policing in Nigeria.

Police involvement in community affairs facilitates rapid and timely control of persistence rebellion, whether in outright political processes or behaviour that otherwise, violates the rules of the society. Community policing also helps the State policing actors to exercise its repressive force on the people in order to achieve compliance with the law (see also Kelly & Clark, 2003). This technique can be employed only in a physically and socially disorganised community. In more disorganised areas, some experts pointed out, police use aggressive tactics to reduce crime and 'take back the streets' before building relations with community leaders (Siegel, 2008 citing Nolan, Conti & McDevitt, 2004).

To underscore community policing approach, we ought to measure success in a community policing framework, which requires that the police capture much more information about communities, social control, and local dynamics and link their efforts to community stabilization and capacity building (Greene, 2000: 314). The impact of community policing on disorder, minor crime, incivilities, and signs of crime has not been subjected to careful testing as frequently as its impact on crime and fear (Cordner, 2014:165). Thus, it is correct to argue that the reliance on self-policing alone for the maintenance of social order would be unfair because some communities are less able to police themselves than others, and these tend to be ones that are poorer and suffer more from problems of crime and disorder (Scott, 2002). In the

end, this proves the ineffectiveness of community policing which justifies the need to find solutions to these menaces.

Efficacy of Community Policing in Crime Management

The efficacy of community policing in Nigeria has been examined by Ngwu and Ahuruonye, (2017). The authors believe that the major effects of community policing are the reduction of the threats and fear of crime, improved citizens' involvement and satisfaction, improved police-community relationship, enhanced quality of community life and the improved flow of communication from citizens owing to their trust in the system. Another efficacy of the community policing as indicated by Ngwu and Ahuruonye, (2017) is the provision of support to the formal police force and amending the loopholes insecurity that has been created by years on inadequacies and impunity by the Nigerian Police Force. The efficacy of community policing also includes restoring the confidence of the public in the police and this would inevitably result in a more responsible and efficient policing of the various communities, streets and towns.

Adoption of problem-oriented policing to effect community policing, is desirable i.e. the gap that already exists between police and community members need to be closed. This is because, while community policing has a broad community-building mandate, problem-oriented policing is more focused and, as its name implies, problem specific. However, the former is not the opposite of the latter but a complement. The central thrust of problem-oriented policing is to make the police more thoughtful about the problems they address and their methods of intervention (Greene, 2000). In addition, a crucial component of community policing strategy is to create some degree of geographic accountability at all levels in the police organization, but particularly at the level of the patrol officer who delivers basic police services and is in a position to identify and solve neighbourhood problems (Cordner, 2014). Additionally, it is evident that self-policing (initially referred to as neighbourhood-watch scheme) 'can be enhanced by bringing police and residents closer together, particularly through police-resident collaborations or partnerships (Renauer, 2007) Without denigrating the importance of efficient administration, community policing emphasizes that the primary focus of police executives should be on the accomplishment of the police mission. This requires that police executives spend more time looking outward toward the substantive problems in the community and that they worry as much about effectiveness as about efficiency (Cordner, 2014). More so, there is a concrete body of evidence that suggests that key conditions for intervening include not only having trust in one's fellows and in the authorities"...but also having a certain social status or reputation in a community and responsibilities associated with that status (Somerville, 2009).

Challenges of Community Policing in Crime Management

According to Arisukwu et al. (2020) community policing is faced by several attitudes in the management of crime. Some of these challenges include attitude problems, lack of facilities and equipment, lack of proper training, infrastructural problems and the problem of god-fatherism.

The debate about the appropriate balance in policing—good enough or optimal—is much more than a theoretical one for criminologists (Neyroud, 2017). Despite claims and

counterclaims, what is actually known about the efficiency and effectiveness of community and problem-oriented policing is rather small in comparison to what is not known, although literature and practice in this arena are growing exponentially, (Greene, 2000). However, several people, their experiences or choices, in as much as they have them, are based on 'what is available', 'what works best' and 'what can I afford', more than issues of who controls the policing body and to whom are they accountable. Indeed, familiar security terminology becomes problematic as popular understanding gives different shades of meaning or different applications, (Baker, 2005b:19). Despite its widespread popularity, this police concept has attracted much scepticism and criticism, which raises the question of its practical value, (Terpstra, 2009).

Self-policing (neighbourhood watch) is also inherently limited to the extent that it is dependent upon policing by others to deal with problems that cannot be ordinarily solved by members of the public going about their everyday business, (Somerville, 2009). There is also contrasting evidence to suggest that community members feel themselves over policed by such approaches and that it results in little change to actual neighbourhood crime levels, (Telep and Weisburd, 2012). It is important to recognize that most police departments have long used geography as the basis for daily patrol assignment.

Many of these departments, however, assign patrol officers to different beats from one day to the next, creating little continuity or permanency, (Cordner, 2014). For example, Terpstra (2009: 64) identifies two problems that come with community policing application. One is the increasing emphasis on 'core business' tasks meant that the police were asked to spend more time on 'crime fighting' as 'the real police work' at the expense of community policing activities. Secondly, the rise of new management which implies that police accountability is increasingly based upon measurable performance targets. This has affected the core targets of community policing and thus weakened its results. Moreover, within both informal and formal police cultures, crime solving and criminal apprehension are usually more highly valued than crime prevention. An individual officer is more likely to be commended for arresting a bank robber than for initiating actions that prevent such robberies. To many police officers, crime prevention work is simply not real police work (Cordner, 2014).

Understandably also, people are prepared to challenge strangers, step forward as witnesses, and so on, only where they feel confident of their own safety and a reasonable level of trust in criminal justice institutions (Somerville, 2009). The limited amount of time police officers have is a cornerstone for the failure of community policing. For example, community police officers with areas of about 20,000 inhabitants under their care, who also have other tasks, may be forced to minimize their presence in the neighbourhood and the time spent meeting citizens (Terpstra, 2009:67). These drawbacks occur where publics or communities are dominated by criminal gangs, whose rule is typically reinforced by an 'anti-grassing' culture (so that criminal activities such as drug-dealing go unchecked or even condoned, (Somerville, 2009). The view that a few members unrepresentative of community needs are participating is of great concern and hampers the very motives of community policing. Take a view for example the view that, 'All the evidence on community policing forums is that they tend to reflect only a minority view of the locale, that members increasingly see themselves as acting on behalf of community police (implying that community policing is a joint project between the police and

the community members), and that other minorities as well as some majorities are rarely involved in the forum deliberations.’ (Brodgen and Nijhar, 2005: 54).

Obstacles to Community Policing in Nigeria

Quite naturally, every social system or subsystem is confronted with a number of challenges that hampers its operational and management performances, and community policing is not an exception. Community policing is awash with obstacles, namely, bribery and corruption, selective enforcement of law, community negative perception of police, public loss of trust and confidence, inadequate manpower, poor community relations, ‘godfatherism’, lack of visionary schemes, among others. Bribery-cum-corruption is particularly systemic in the Nigeria police formation; a situation which some observers in the country referred to as an intractable problem (see Alemika, 1999; Karimu, 2015). In specific terms, graft has been implicated as police officers’ major flaw that makes them not to gain public support, confidence and co-operation needed for effective community policing in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the police organisation in Nigeria is facing serious obstacles which have continued to affect its legitimacy and the performance of its functions of crime prevention, control, or management. These challenges include poor funding by the government, systemic corruption and internal decadence, inadequate manpower, partisanship, ethnicity, lack of accountability, defects in constitutional provisions, and apparent lack of public confidence, further leading to weak or low legitimacy (Otu & Aro, 2013).

In community policing, the community tend to control the police and get them corrupt in the process. The implication is that when the police are controlled by the community, the police connive at their illegal activities (Carter, 2002). This auspicious security measure or programme has suffered for many years under the taint of corruption. The crime of graft is getting something of value through dishonest or unfair means, especially using political connections or community relationships. On this note, the police may deliberately use illegal or unconstitutional means to make arrests and, in the process, ensure that the charges are thrown out of court. Police corruption is indeed multidimensional and complex; it takes various forms within and outside the police organisation. The rot and decadence in the police subsystem are: include kickbacks, favouritism, recruitment malpractice, partisanship, complicity, whitewash and cover-up, and romantic exuberances and compensation. All these shortcomings, we must admit, are inimical to effective community policing in Nigeria.

One of the major setbacks in community policing is the selective enforcement of law syndrome that is commonplace in Nigeria. The poor and minority groups in the community tend to alienate themselves from the police because most of the law enforcement operations focus on the behaviours of the poor, minorities, downtrodden and underprivileged members of the society. The problem centres on widespread favouritism to a group of politicians and privileged upper-class community members. Hess, Markson and Stein (1992) admitted that politicians, business elite and community leaders are not policed as the poor and underprivileged are being policed; the former group is granted virtual monopoly in crime as they are connected with criminal gangs and syndicates (as well as policymakers themselves). This situation is more pronounced in Nigeria where selective enforcement of law is the norm rather than the exception. Here, the police connive with organised criminals who are mainly

political leaders or highly placed public office holders to exploiting the citizenry and undermine their plight at will.

Expectedly, the populace may not be comfortable with the police unholy alliance and allegiance with community members whose source of affluence is perceived or traceable to crime or other corrupt practises. This unholy alliance is anchored in the philosophy of 'familiarisation', which Hess et al. (1992) succinctly defined as a medium through which the police (and disgruntled stakeholders in a society) conceal the amount of money they amassed through illegal means. On that score, the community has negative perception of the police. Alemika (1988) argued that the negative community perception of police has impacts on their job performances. The community sometimes turns against the police when they (police) use coercion to secure social control. The police may use all the available forces or violence to sustain its political authority. The negative attitudes of the public towards the police tend to clash with the power of the State to maintain peace and order.

The community negative perception of police affects their ability to remain focus and maintain professionalism. In community policing, police retain its power to exercise force in any situation. According to a notable Foundation, the Centre for Law Enforcement Education in Nigeria (CLEEN), the police play important roles without which the sustenance of order, legality, development and democracy may be difficult. Understanding the fact that police act as representatives of the State and legitimate users of force whenever it is necessary, helps to explain the corresponding negative character and attitudes of police officers in many situations (Alemika & Chukwuma, 1999). Despite the success, police managers still face resistance from some experienced officers who hold traditional law-and-order values and question the utility of community policing model. It is unlikely that this innovative programme can enjoy long-term success unless veteran officers form a commitment to the values of community policing (Ford, Weissbein & Plamondon, 2003 cited in Siegel, 2008).

Another significant obstacle to effective community policing is again the public loss of trust and confidence in police work. The community has lost confidence in police due to police brutality, bribery and corruption, coerciveness, and lack of proper channels of communication. As a result, the community no longer sees police as valuable instrument for the maintenance of peace and orders. When the police alienate themselves from the community, the relationship becomes blunt, and this presents police to the community as aliens invading the society. When crime occurs in the community, the community alienate themselves from the police, and it becomes very difficult to locate or identify the perpetrators without the help and cooperation of the community. This situation is pathetic to police operations and capable of infiltrating frustration on police duties.

For the police to surmount the identifiable enormous community policing challenges in Nigeria, the system must have sufficient qualified manpower. Unfortunately, inadequate manpower has been a major obstacle confronting effective community policing in the country. Akuul (2011) stated that inadequate manpower and poor deployment of personnel are the stumbling blocks to effective community policing in Nigeria. The Nigeria police experience endemic problems with recruiting, training, inefficiency and indiscipline, and lack of expertise in specialised fields. Corruption and dishonesty are widespread, thus engendering a low level

of public confidence, failure to report crime and tendencies to resort to self-help policing (Dambazau, 2007), rather than true community policing. This problem is compounded as recruitment and promotion of police personnel, and application of law and justice are in the hands of political godfather.

While Adebayo & Ojo (2009) suggested that poorly developed manpower resources and management weaken effective community policing, Uma & Eboh (2013) argued that poor staff promotion, poor incentives and weak operational strategies demoralise the police and weaken their functional capabilities. An organisation such as police need carefully selected personnel for the execution of its critical duties in the community (The Guardian, 2000). The police personnel are the bedrock power of the State's political instrument, capable of securing the safety, peace and order in the society. Essentially, where the police system is understaffed, overworked and overstressed, they would eventually appear weak, stressed out, fatigue and sleepy on duty posts or in their patrol vehicles (Reiner, 1993; Odinkalu, 2005). Shortage of manpower, inadequate salary structures, irregular payment of salaries and lengthy hours from one duty post to another with stagnant salary payment have significant negative impacts on Nigeria police officers (Dike, 2010).

According to the Nigeria Police Annual Report (NPAR), police personnel are unable to meet professional and family commitments owing to poor remuneration, poor working environment and poor accommodation, and many of them seem not to understand their roles and responsibilities as a result of inadequate training (NPAR, 2008). According to this report, when a workforce suffers from lack of funding and poor condition of service, it will cause personnel to lose motivation and morale support. Poor and meagre salaries destroy their moral; a situation which Aluko (2005) explained that it invokes sociological and psychological effects in community policing. We re-emphasize in this project that poor police-community relations also hamper effective community policing.

Uma and Eboh (2013) assented to this view when they stated that the police have communication glitch with the community while trying to maintain some degree of social control. With this gap in communication, the Nigeria police become ineffective in meeting the demands of the general public and in fulfilling their own 'contract' in community relation approach. As a result, effective community policing is weakened, as the public perceive the police as wicked, rude, and unprofessional in dealing with community problems and therefore withdraw their supports.

Apparently, 'godfatherism' in Nigeria is an Achilles' heel in community policing. The community policing and other activities of the police are influenced by meddlesome political godfathers, who direct the pendulum of policing, law, security and justice in the country—this process or activity is referred to as 'godfatherism'. To some observers like Onyeozili (2005, p. 41), 'godfatherism' is the "funding and abetting of vices and shielding connected criminals from justice by government agents and highly placed officials entrusted with the power and authority to investigate and prosecute such vices". When some powerful Nigerians nurture and incubate criminals, the police are presented with the situation of not being successful in removing the criminals from the community. The godfathers thwart police investigation, perverts justice, and short down prosecutions of murderers by exercising their closeness to

the power-house. Many godfathers sponsor social vices through immoral action and shield many criminals from successful prosecutions (Black, 1980).

Lack of or ill-influenced visionary schemes are serious hindrances to effective community policing in Nigeria. The policies of police, including reforms, seem not to be moving forward and decisive. Such visionary programmes as police-community partnership, police-community information sharing, police involvement in community affairs are, in the real sense of it, but grossly lacking in the Nigeria police system. The consequence of this observable weakness is stagnation or unprofessionalism in police mode of operations. Like the Nigeria police, many public officeholders in the country (appointed or elected) do not have clear and in-depth knowledge of the vision, mission, ethical, technical and functional demands and inner workings of the position they are occupying or the authority they represent. Even as routine operations and management appear stagnant, little or no attention is given to them (see also Dike, 2010). Hence, many significant visionary schemes (e.g. the said strategies for effective community policing) that are imperative for 21st century community policing are overlooked and/or ignored in Nigeria. Emphatically, suffice to say that lack of objective visionary programmes is a major obstacle to an ideal, sustainable community policing in the country.

Theoretical framework

There are many existing theories being used to explain the concept of community policing. Some of them are briefly stated below

The Gap Theory: This emphasizes the gap between the people (public) and the police. Perhaps the gaps arise as the way people are treated by the police. Based on this, people withdraw their cooperation and never eager to help the police. The theory equally emphasizes the “90 – 10 principle” i.e. in every community 90% of the people are believed to be honest, hardworking, law abiding etc. while 10% are crooks, lazy, law breakers, etc. Unfortunately, the police usually have contact or relationship with these crooks. Therefore, the police see the entire community as bad thereby creating the gap. However, community policing training will therefore promote trust and confidence between the people and police (George, 2006)

Contingency theory: Contingency theory places emphasize on the fact that different environments place different requirement on any society/organizations. Environments are marked by uncertainty and rapid change. Different environments present different demand both positive and negative than relatively stable environment. The theory suggests that design decisions depend on environment conditions which means that societies/communities will need to match their internal arrangements including security to the demands of their environment in order to achieve the best adaptation- (Lawrence and Jay, 1967) However, the ultimate goal of community policing is not to arrest offenders but to reduce crime and sexual disorder problem and enhance trust in policing, though most efforts to reduce crime and social disorder will involve apprehending for arresting offenders but it should not be confused with the ultimate public safety and public sense of security.

Research Design

The study adopted a survey research design. The choice of this design is informed by the aim of this study which is to examine community policing and crime management in Ikeja.

Study Area

Ikeja local government area is a large component of the Lagos metropolis, located inside the heart of the capital of Lagos State and is one of the twenty local government areas within the state. Lagos itself is the largest city in Nigeria, located at 6°34'60"N, 3°19'59"E along the West African coast and the former capital of Nigeria before its replacement on 12th December, 1991. However, Lagos remains the commercial nerve centre of Nigeria.

In 1976 Ikeja replaced Lagos Island as the administrative capital of Lagos State. Ikeja Local Government Council Area is located in the north-central part sharing boundaries with Ifako-Ijaiye, Agege, and Alimosho Local Government Council Areas in the western perimeter; Kosofe, and Mushin Local Government Council Areas in the eastern side, while Oshodi-Isolo Local Government Council Area forms the boundary in the southern part and Ogun State in the north.

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Data for this study was collected from personnel of security agencies and members of the Ikeja community. Participants for the study were selected through the multistage sampling technique. This sampling technique is a combination of several sampling techniques that the researcher adopts for proportionate sample selection within a large study area by dividing the study areas into clusters. The researcher considered the multistage sampling as an appropriate sampling technique because the study area is large and so that every cluster of the study area can be represented in the sample.

Instrument and Method of Data Collection

The instrument of data collection is the questionnaire. The questionnaire was semi-structured, allowing for both open and closed ended questions. In section A, the questionnaire collected data on the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of respondents, in section B, on the forms of community policing available in Ikeja Local Government, in section C, it examined participants on the roles of community policing in crime management in Ikeja Local Government, section D collected responses on the efficacy of community policing in crime management in Ikeja Local Government and section E to identify the challenges of community policing in crime management in Ikeja Local Government.

Methods of Data Analysis

Quantitative data generated from completed semi-structured questionnaires entered into and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data analyzed was presented using simple descriptive statistics such as frequency tables and percentages.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1. Percentage distribution of the socio-economic and demographic information of respondents

Variable		Frequency (N=15)	Percent (100%)
Sex	Male	257	67.4
	Female	118	32.6
	Total	375	100
Age	15-19	142	36.7
	20-24	167	42.9
	25-29	47	12.9
	30-35	17	5.6
	35 and higher	2	1.8
	Total	375	100
Marital Status	Single	242	62.8
	Married	111	29.7
	Ever Married	22	7.5
	Total	375	100
Religious Affiliation	Christianity	220	57.2
	Islam	139	36.8
	Traditional religion	16	6
	Total	375	100
Ethnicity	Yoruba	159	41.5
	Igbo	104	27.5
	Hausa	86	22.9
	Others	26	8.1
	Total	375	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

As shown in table 1 above, 36.7 per cent of respondents were aged between 15-19 years old, 42.9 per cent were aged between 20-24 years, 12.9 per cent were aged between 25-29 years, 5.6 per cent were aged between 30-34 years, 1.8 per cent were aged between 35 years and above. This implies that more participants are very young people who fall between age 20-24. The table also shows that 53.7 per cent of respondents were males while 46.3 per cent were females. Hence, more males took part in the study than females. This is probably due to the nature of the study and the fact that males are more willing to narrate their experience with the police than women. By marital status, the table shows that most respondents (62.8 per cent) were single, 29.7 per cent were married, and 7.5 per cent were ever married (either divorced or separated). Majority of the study participants are single. This is partly explicable by the fact that most of the participants are young people between age 20-24.

By religion, the table shows that most respondents (57.2 per cent) were Christians, 36.8 per cent were Muslims, and 0.9 per cent was traditional religious practitioners, implying that most of the respondents belong to the Christian faith with lesser percentages belonging to the other religions. Finally, the table shows that 41.5 per cent of the respondents were from the Yoruba ethnic group, 27.5 per cent were Igbo, 22.9 per cent were Hausa, and 8.1 per cent were from other ethnic groups. This also implies that majority of the participants are Yoruba. This is

partly explicable by the fact that the study area is a Yoruba populated area despite also accommodation people from other ethnic groups.

Forms of Community Policing Available in Ikeja

Table 2. Percentage distribution of the forms of community policing available in Ikeja

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Effects of community policing on crime reduction in Ikeja	High	78	20.8
	Medium	247	65.9
	Low	50	13.3
	Total	375	100
Factors responsible for community policing in Ikeja	Police ineffectiveness	172	46.0
	Lack of police presence	66	17.5
	Increase in crime wave	127	34.0
	I don't know	9	2.5
	Total	375	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 3. Percentage distribution of the forms of community policing available in Ikeja

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Forms of community policing	Local Vigilante groups	126	33.5
	Hired night guard	227	60.6
	Individual on-lookers	22	5.9
	Total	375	100
Strategies used by the community to combat crime	Neighborhood watch	15	7.5
	Foot patrol	112	56.0
	Stop and search	68	34.0
	Others	5	2.5
	Total	375	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4. Percentage distribution of the roles of community policing in crime management in Ikeja

S/N	Statement	SD %	D %	U %	A %	SA %
1	Community police detect crimes that the police do not	33 8.7	79 21.2	54 14.4	87 23.1	122 32.7
2	Community police pay more attention to people	18 4.8	65 17.3	54 14.4	108 28.8	130 34.6
3	They are always available to control problems	18 4.8	65 17.3	51 13.5	80 21.2	162 43.3
4	They keep businesses safe while people are away	18 4.8	87 23.1	50 13.4	105 27.9	116 30.8

5	Community police handle situations while the police are not available	7 6.7	20 19.2	14 13.5	23 22.1	40 38.5
6	They are easily accessible compared to the police	21 5.5	43 11.4	59 15.6	88 23.4	165 44.1
7	They are more reliable	24 6.3	66 17.5	47 12.6	99 26.4	139 37.2
8	They control crimes in the neighborhood as well as business area	16 4.3	80 21.3	43 11.4	95 25.3	141 37.7
9	They prevent thieves from operating in communities	18 4.8	76 20.3	54 14.3	80 21.3	147 39.3
10	They handle minor to major disagreement	27 7.2	62 16.4	57 15.3	84 22.3	145 38.8

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Challenges of community policing in crime management in Ikeja

Table 5: Percentage distribution of the factors that affect community policing in Nigeria

S/N	Statement	SD %	D %	U %	A %	SA %
1	Corruption	164 43.7	79 21.1	65 17.3	47 12.5	20 5.4
2	Institutional Constraints	24 6.3	42 11.2	69 18.3	9 25.4	146 38.8
3	Police Perception	21 5.7	42 11.3	62 16.4	80 21.2	170 45.4
4	Godfatherism	26 6.8	48 12.7	70 18.6	111 29.5	122 32.4
5	Poor funding	31 8.3	54 14.5	76 20.3	90 24.1	123 32.8

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Discussion of Findings

The study found that the use of community policing as a security agent in Ikeja has led to a moderate decline in crime rates. The study found that the most profound reasons for the adoption of community policing are police ineffectiveness and increases in crime wave. Other reasons found by the study include lack of police presence. This finding is consistent with the study of Salami, Believe and Jerry (2019) who also found lack of police presence, police ineffectiveness and increase in crime wave as the factors responsible for the introduction of community policing.

The study found that the most profound form of community policing in the study area is the hired night guard. Other forms of community policing in the study area as identified by the study include; local vigilante groups and individual on-lookers. The study identified four (4) strategies used in community policing in the study area and these include; neighborhood

watch, foot patrol, stop and search and others strategies. This is consistent with the study of Salami et al. (2019) who also found similar strategies used in community policing in their study.

The study also found that members of the Ikeja community identify the roles of community policing in crime prevention and perceive it as a positive compared to the roles performed by the NPF. This finding is consistent with the study of Nnam, Agboti and Otu (2013).

In addition, the study found that community policing is beset by challenges that affect its performance, these include; institutional constraints, police perception, godfatherism and poor funding. This is consistent with the study of Ordu and Nnam (2017) who found that community policing in Nigeria is beset by several obstacles that affects its operational and management performances. Some of these obstacles as Ordu and Nnam (2017) indicated include bribery and corruption, selective enforcement of law, community negative perception of police, public loss of trust and confidence, inadequate manpower, poor community relations, 'godfatherism', lack of visionary schemes, among others.

Conclusion

Community policing is both a philosophical and practical approach to crime prevention and control, which entails the involvement and participation of community members. It is an art of policing that helps in crime detection, prevention and control. In the study area, community policing was found to play a huge role in crime management (prevention, detection and control). Contrary to the notion of community policing that illustrates a working relationship between the community and the police towards crime detection, the introduction and use of community policing in the study area are due to the negative attributes of the Nigerian Police Force such as police ineffectiveness, lack of police presence and increases in crime wave. The relationship between the public and the police in the study area is also sour as most respondents do not trust the police.

Community policing plays positive and significant crime management and the protection of businesses and communities in the study area. It fosters orderliness, reduction in crime rate, peaceful coexistence and is readily available to check or combat insecurity and threats to public order at the neighbourhood level. People prefer community policing because it is readily available, easily assessable and less corrupt compared to the Nigerian Police.

The public perception of police is still very negative and much needs to be done to positively change the trend. Most of these negativities observed in the police formation by the public revolve around moral and social turpitudes: bribery and corruption, police brutality, dishonesty and criminal tendencies, improprieties and inadequacies, complicity and perversion of justice, etc. Generally, the Nigeria police have image problem, which makes members of the society to withdraw their trust, support and co-operation; disrespect them; cast aspersions on their competence and integrity; and dishonour their position as both bonafide fellow community members and certified law enforcers.

Despite the perceived effectiveness of community policing, the study identifies certain impediments that diminishes its capacity to adequately combat crime. These include; institutional constraints, police perception, god-father-ism and poor funding.

Recommendations

The study shows that the police public image is poor and this results in lack of public trust and partnership and also affects the efficiency of the NPF in crime management. Hence, it is important first, to work on restructuring the NPF and revitalise its image. When this is done, police will be in a better position to carry out the expectations of the community, and in the process earn or get back the lost reputation, respect, recognition and co-operation they deserve as law enforcers of the new era. Police brutality and their involvement in bribery and corruption have particularly earned them the worst reputation and notoriety. This development, coupled with widespread violation of the fundamental rights of citizens with impunity, has led to public distrust and poor police-public relationship.

Security is an important feature of a healthy society and the role of the police in this regard is by no means little. However, where the police is out of touch with the public, crime detection, prevention and control are undermined. Hence, the police must work with the public to ensure public participation in policing.

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