

## Strengthening Community Policing Culture and Practice in Nigeria for Effective Crime Prevention and Detection

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### Abstract

With the growing insecurity in the country, many commentators are beginning to question the provision of the 1999 Nigerian constitution, Chapter 2, Section 14 (2)(b), which stipulates that “the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government”. In Nigeria today, virtually 50 percent of headline news relates to some form of insecurity affecting almost every part of the country. From the Boko Haram insurgencies in the North East, to Herdsmen – Farmers crisis in the middle belt, to banditry and kidnapping in the North West. From South-South region battling militant agitation, to South-East security menace of separatist agitation, kidnapping and armed robbery. Of recent is the issues of kidnapping and banditry surfacing on highways within the South West region, one would rightly say that the centralized form of Policing structure being operated in Nigeria has completely failed. Hence, agitation for institutionalising the concept of Community Policing in Nigeria. Community Policing is a concept that emphasises proactive measures – preventing the act of crime through intelligence and community participation, rather than reactive policing. It is also principled on partnership and decentralisation of powers for effective crime fighting.

**Key Words:** Policing, Community Participation, Crime Prevention, Detection, Partnership.

### Introduction

Community Policing concept has been in existence for over a century in Europe, as some authors have traced it to John Alderson, former Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall Police, in late 20th Century. However, in Nigeria Community Policing began to gain ground in the early 2000. The Nigeria Police Force operated on the traditional British semi-military structure of policing that stresses the centralisation of powers. This principle of centralisation of power is antithesis to the philosophy of community policing that emphasises decentralisation of power. Although, community policing is new in Nigeria, however in the Western world, particularly the United States, the principle has already gained popularity since the late 1970s. The concept stresses partnership, proactive policing and decentralisation of power. It believes that by working together the police and community can accomplish what neither can accomplish alone.

Partnership is a key element of Community Policing because the police and the public must partner together in order to adequately fight crime. This will involve the police relinquishing some of their

powers to the community so that they can become the eye of the police in the neighbourhoods. This can only be achieved if the police earn the trust of the community. A resemblance of the concept of community policing in Nigeria was institutionalised by the Lagos State Government with the establishment of Neighbourhood Watch Corps, the Corps member where recruited and deployed to their locality, and serves as informant to the conventional security agencies. However, their penetration and response to the security challenges bedeviling our community has not been deeply felt. This is as a result of the organisational and historical structure of the Nigeria Police Force. The Nigeria Police who have been used to receiving orders from their superiors find it extremely difficult to share such powers with the community who are very suspicious of police officers. The failure of community policing in Nigeria is also due to the fact that the police are not willing to move away from their traditional policing model which they have been used to for a very long time. This paper therefore examines community policing in Nigeria, its challenges and prospects. It takes a critical look at the history of Nigeria policing, problems of Nigeria police, origin of community policing, philosophy of community police,

advent of community policing in Nigeria, as well as the theoretical explanation to Nigeria community policing.

### Conceptual Clarification

Despite the increasing popularity enjoyed by community policing, one of the basic challenges confronting law enforcement agencies has remained a problem arising from inability to appropriately define the concept of community policing. The reason for the conceptual problem can simply be as result of the philosophical values that underline the concept, which makes it remain different things to different people. Community Policing is an organization – wide philosophy and management approach that promotes community government, and police partnership; proactive problem solving and community engagement to address the causes of crime and other community issues [1]. He also averred that: “the essence of community policing is to return to the day when safety and security are participating in nature and everyone assumes responsibility for the general health of the community – not just a selected few, not just the local government administration, not just the safety forces, but absolutely everyone in the community” (Ibid. 134).

Crime and social disorder is the focus of community policing according to the Office of Community Oriented Policing Service [2]. This is achieved through service delivery which includes aspects of regular law enforcement, prevention, problem solving as well as community engagement and partnership. Community policing model try to strike a balance between reactive responses with proactive-problem solving specifically on the causes of crime and disorder, community policing is essentially about partnership between the police and the citizen.

### Theories of Community Policing

Community Policing is a concept of police administration and is said to have three core components: citizen involvement, problem solving, and decentralisation. All are related but, citizen involvement is especially crucial because it is the basis of the theoretical foundation of Community Policing. Community Policing literature starts with a basic observation which informs every theory throughout, i.e. in a democratic state run by the people we must understand how common people conceive the nature of crime and role of the police. A cursory review of literature reveals that in spite of its success there is no scientific – logical, predictable, refutable – theory explaining and explicating, predicting and refuting Community Policing practices.

### Social Structural Theory of Community Policing

The book titled Community Policing: Comparative Perspectives and Prospects maintains that from the perspectives of both community and police, community policing signifies that crime is produced by societal factors over which police have relatively little control and therefore crime control needs to focus on those societal factors which cause crime and should focus more on ‘quality of life’ issues that exceed crime. Fear of crime also needs to be attended to in attention to ‘traditional’ crime issues [3].

Social life is governed by certain normative behaviour that is shaped by an understanding of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable to do in a society. Laws are simply the formalisation of social norms without which societies cannot exist. According to

the criminalization or decriminalization of an act reflects society’s reaction to it and what societies will or will not tolerate [3]. It specifies who the victim is, who the offender is, what the offence is, under what circumstance it was committed, where it was committed and what will be the penalty against it. However, the leap, or transition, from informal social norms to formal laws is not clear and while it violates a given law, from a legal standpoint deviant behaviour is to treated as criminal only when it is also important to understand that at least some amount of such deviant behaviour could be handled on an informal level as well to alleviate a conflict before it becomes an official crime. Here underlies the significance of community policing.

The accepted view today, is that crime and delinquency should be viewed not merely as an infraction of law, but more appropriately, as an anti-social conduct, arising from disorientation developments in the individual and disorganization process of the society itself. Social factors like population explosion, inadequate economic growth, and inequitable distribution of opportunities, side by side unplanned industrialization and urbanization, super imposed on ignorance and poverty, have all contributed to higher levels of disorder in the society.

### Broken Windows Theory

The Broken Window theory was introduced by James Q. Wilson and George L. Killing (American criminologists) in 1982 based on the assumption that disorder and crime are linked in a development sequence. If a window in a building is broken and left unrepaired, all the rest of the windows will soon be broken as well [4]. Since the unrepaired window is a signal that no one cares and so breaking more windows will not result in any official sanction. This type of vandalism can occur anywhere once the sense of mutual regard and the obligations of civility are lowered by actions that seem to signal a lack of common concern. Wilson and Killing argue that neighbourhoods where property is abandoned, weeds grow, windows are broken, and adults stop scolding ill-disciplined children cause families to move out and unattached adults to move in. In response, people begin to use the streets less, causing the area to become vulnerable to criminal invasion. The withdrawal of the community leads to increased drug sales, prostitution, and mugging. Broken Windows theory has been a driving force in community policing programmers, because of the belief that unattended behaviour leads to the breakdown of community controls, thus leading to crime. Wilson and Killing, therefore, have called the police to pay urgent and serious attention to disorder and order maintenance policing [5].

### Community Implant Hypothesis

Community Implant Hypothesis is based on the assumption that the main reason for high levels of crime is the lack of informal social control in community areas. Sociologists argue that informal social control can be implanted in a community by collective citizen action in neighbourhoods where social control is naturally weak or non-existent. The term community implant hypothesis was first used by Rosenbaum (1987) in his essay entitled Theory and Research behind Neighbourhood Watch. Mastrofski, Worden and Snipes (1995) have described this hypothesis as ‘community building’. Community building according to them is a process by which police strengthen the capacity and resolute of citizens

to resist crime by building positive relationships with community residents. [6], in his book *The Politics of Community Policing*, argues that innovative police strategies such as educational, recreational and occupational opportunities for youths, can mobilize the informal mechanisms of social control embedded within the community life [5].

Social control generally refers to the capacity of a particular group/ community to regulate its members. It involves the use of rewards and punishments. Formal social control is always derived from certain written rules and laws and is enforced by the courts and police. On the other hand, informal social control is based on customs and norms and is enforced by the citizens themselves through behaviors such as surveillance, verbal reprimand, warning, rejection, and other emotional pressures to ensure conformity. The question for community policing then becomes whether the police, working with the community, can implement informal social control in socially disorganized communities.

### Origin of Community Policing

The concept of Community Policing tenets evolved round “involvement and responsiveness” to the community and are similar to the principle set forth by Sir Rober Peel in 1829 when he opined that the police are the public and the public are the police. However, as the police evolved in the United States, they grew further apart from the public they served. This social distance by the police away from the public was enhanced due to the advent of patrol cars which replaced the traditional foot patrol and horse ride. Community policing started in the United State as a way of shifting police from its traditional reactionary way of policing to a more proactive policing. For decades, the U.S. police followed professional model, which rested on three foundations: preventive patrol, quick response time, and follow-up investigation. Sensing that the professional model did not always operate as efficiently as it could, criminal justice researchers set out to review current procedures and evaluate alternative programmes. One of the first known of these studies was the Kansas City, Missouri, Preventive Patrol Experiment. The study found that preventive patrol did not necessarily prevent crime or reassure citizens. Following the study, many police departments assigned police units to proactive patrol. Another of such significant study was that which introduced the theory of “broken windows” [7]. The theory assumes that a community will be free of major crimes if minor crimes are gotten rid of. They concluded that in order to solve both minor and major problems in a neighbourhood and to reduce crime and fear of crime, police must be in close, regular contact with citizens. That is, police and citizens should work cooperatively to build a strong sense of community and should share responsibility in the neighbourhood to improve the overall quality of life within the community [8].

### Philosophy of Community Policing

The philosophy of community policing is for citizens and police to share responsibility for their community’s safety. It means that citizens and the police will work collectively to identify problems, propose solutions, implement action and evaluate the results in the community. The idea of community policing is quite different from traditional policing that emphasises strict police authority on crime

prevention. In community policing, the police must share power with residents of a community, and critical decisions need to be made at the community level, rather than at police stations [8]. The goal of community policing is to decentralize police decision making authority. To achieve this goal, it requires the successful implementation of three essential and complementary components or operational strategies namely: community partnership, problem solving, and change management [9]. Community policing was intended to address the causes of crime and reduce the fear of crime in affected communities. It employs creative management styles so as to engage responsible members of the public in proactive problem-solving tactics to minimize the level of criminal activities and facilitate law enforcement in the communities. The core elements of community policing are as follows:

- ▶ A broader definition of police work;
- ▶ A recording of police priorities giving greater attention to crime and disorder;
- ▶ A focus on problem-solving and prevention, rather than incident driven policing.
- ▶ A recognition that the “community” plays a critical role in solving neighbourhood problems, and
- ▶ A recognition that police organization must be restructured and reorganized to be responsive to the demands of this new approach and to encourage a new pattern of behavior;
- ▶ A recognition that police services, operation and management must be decentralized for effectiveness, so that local police officers can speedily address problems and needs encountered at the local levels;
- ▶ That the training of police officers must cover the areas of social interactions and problem-solving in addition to traditional policing skills;
- ▶ There must be a partnership between the police and the communities in defining or identifying, local problems and needs and developing solutions to identified problems;
- ▶ Commitment to development of long-term and proactive policies and programmes to prevent crime and disorder [10].

### Intelligence Led Policing, Problem-Oriented and Community Oriented Policing

Intelligence led policing focuses on key criminal activities and crime prevention strategies. Once crime problems are identified and quantified through intelligence assessments, key criminals can be targeted for investigation and prosecution.

Intelligence led policing in the United State has benefited from the recent development of “fusion centres,” which serve multi-agency policing needs. These fusion centres derived from the watch of old provide information to patrol officers, detectives, management, and other participating personnel and agencies on specific criminals, crime groups, and criminal activities. For example, they may support anti-terrorism and other crime-specific objectives. The centres may search numerous public and private databases to gather and analyse information. They may also generate intelligence products of their own, providing overviews of terrorist or other crime groups, analysis of trends, and other items of information for dissemination to participating agencies.

Good policing is good criminal and terrorism prevention. In other

words, professional policing of kind is instrumental in uncovering intelligence associated with both terrorist activities and conventional crimes. Encouraging this perspective enables local police departments to involve line offices more actively and to reinforce the fact that enforcement, crime prevention, and terrorism prevention are interrelated. This approach helps to balance the current emphasis on anti-terrorism activities with traditional anticrime efforts. Many line officers want to define their role in the fight against terrorism. Intelligence-led policing can help clarify their contributions in regard.

- a) **Problem-Oriented Policing (POP)** is a policing philosophy developed by Herman Goldstein. As originally conceived, problem-oriented policing views crime control as a study of problems that leads to successful enforcement and corrective strategies. The model contends that analysis, study, evaluation is at the core of problem oriented policing. POP requires assessing each new problem and developing a tailored response. This approach requires on-going creativity, not simply finding one good idea and applying it unilaterally. The SARA (Scanning, Analysing, Responding, and Assessing) model is sometimes considered to be synonymous with problem-oriented policing, but it is a broader analytic model used in many fields. Nonetheless, the SARA model can be applied to collecting and applying intelligence. Scanning may be viewed as part of the collection process. Analysis and assessment are part of the intelligence process, and response is the outcome of the intelligence process.
- b) **Blending Intelligence and Problem-Oriented Policing:** Intelligence operations are compatible with problem-oriented policing. The problem-oriented policing and SARA models align with intelligence processes; the intelligence aspects associated with problem-oriented policing often have been ignored. Both Community-Oriented Policing (COP) and Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) have been used for crime analysis, which is statistical and incident-based, rather than strategic intelligence is a formal process of taking information and turning it into knowledge while ensuring that the information is collected, stored, and investigative purpose, typically does not meet the same standards as intelligence data even though inferences may be drawn and recommendations may be made based on crime data. Confusion about the distinction between crime analysis data and intelligence data interferes with proper analysis and data handling in the police environment.
- c) **Police-Community Partnership:** The tenets of COP include the following:
- Community policing partnership.
  - Crime prevention.
  - Problem solving.

The fight against terrorism calls for locating and measuring terrorist risks to prevent terrorist actions, and local police have been enlisted in these efforts. How do local police determine potential threats in a given jurisdiction? They must know the community i.e. its makeup, its ties to other countries or particular belief structures, and its potential for containing extremist or terrorist group members. Police officers are particularly familiar with a community and its norms. For examples, while on patrol, officers get to

know among community member's associates with whom; they have first-hand knowledge of people's work and leisure habits. Goldstein recognised the need to make greater use of rank-and-file police officers. He believed that rank-and-file officers should be given daily work and that management should tap their accumulated knowledge and expertise, enabling officers to be more satisfied with their jobs and providing the citizenry with a higher return on their police investment.

Empowerment local officers with decision-making authority and making them aware of terrorist indicators may be the key in preventing a terrorist attack. Community and Problem-Oriented Policing support local awareness and involvement in solving crime problems. This involvement extends to anti-terrorism efforts. However, in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks, some agencies shifted officers from community policing to anti-terrorism efforts, which may be counterproductive in helping to deter a terrorist attack.

Local law enforcement has been brought into the antiterrorism fight and recognised for the role it plays. Alerts and information are being shared with local police more broadly than ever before. Methods for reporting suspicious activity of federal agencies have been created through regional and state links. Private Citizens also have been included in the intelligence matrix through suspicious activity tip lines, working groups with critical infrastructure managers, and other mechanisms to encourage reporting of unusual behaviour that may be related to terrorism or other criminal activities. These models illustrate that community and problem-oriented policing are not at odds with policing against terrorism; instead, they are collaborative and complementary approaches.

### **Crime Reduction Partnership and Its Benefits**

From 1970s, many police services recognised that the existing way of policing were not working: officers were being called to the same address again and again, faster police cars and more effective command and control systems were not reducing crime, detective were overloaded with cases and clear-up rates were not improving or keeping pace with the increasing crime rate. Therefore, the growth of partnership approaches to crime reduction oriented from recognition that the problems of crime require a multi-agency response. Partnerships between police forces and their local government organizations, education authorities, justice system, health, fire and ambulance services allow a more informed view of criminal behaviour to be developed. Data such as census statistics, deprivation indices, land use profiles, housing tenure, noise nuisance, vandalism and so on offer a way to explore the possible causes and links to crime and how an effective response can deliver real and sustainable reductions in crime. One of the main challenges in bringing together and joining up information from a range of partner is to work out how these data can be integrated. Geography and mapping often act as the common denominators that run through these disparate datasets each dataset usually containing some form of location references [9].

According to the United States Community policing consortium, community policing is a joint collaboration between the police and the community problems. Within the concept, all the member of the community becomes active allies in the effort for the safety

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and quality of neighbourhood living. Mapping crime has been one of the most important trends and has grown considerably over the last few years. Crime data and modeling through internet is an unavoidable tool in community policing.

Community crime prevention programmes or strategies target changes in community infrastructure, culture, or the physical environment in order to reduce crime. The diversity of approaches includes neighborhood watch community policing, urban or physical design, and comprehensive or multidisciplinary efforts. These strategies may seek to engage residents, community and faith-based organisation, and local government agencies in addressing the factors that contributes to the community's crime, delinquency, and disorder as reported in 2018 by National Institute of Justice.

International center for the prevention of crime described the 2002 UN guidelines and refer to as "strategies and measures" which meet three important criteria of transversality, partnership, and knowledge-based action [11]. A transversal or multidisciplinary approach responds to the multiple causes of crime. Prevention cannot be based on police or judicial assessment alone, but needs to be multidisciplinary and integrate information from a range of sources and disciplines, including social, health, education, urban and other sectors. This diversity allows for a richer and more complete understanding of the causes of crime. Partnerships between local government bodies and civil society members have been developed at the municipal level in a number of developed countries, such as Germany (named local advisory boards (Sicherheitsbeirat).

England and Wales (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership), and so on. Vertical and horizontal partnership from a second "pillar" of prevention policies. Vertical partnership includes the importance of links between the different territorial levels. Horizontal partnerships refer to collaboration between a wide variety of institutional actors and stakeholders. Not only is it necessary to mobilize professionals in various fields – police, justice, education, health, social services, urban planning and management, transportation – but it is also important to work with community groups and NGOs. They often have deep roots in the community and with the business sector which may be victims of crime, but can also contribute to positive and creative environments.

### Benefits of Partnerships

In addition to the advantages describe above, other derivable benefits in Crime Reduction Partnerships includes:

1. **Overcoming Frustration** – For example, if a local crime problem originates from the conditions on a local housing estate, the ineffectiveness of the correction systems, poor inclusion levels at local schools and landscape design flaws will only help to encourage crime rather than curb it, then there can be frustration on the part of police working alone [9, 6].
2. **Knowledge of the Local Terrain** – The prior knowledge of the terrain is very crucial to the arrest and control of crimes. The need for topographical information, the landscape and the ruggedness of the environment is very crucial to police patrol, arrest and control.

3. **Overcoming Ego-centric and Bigotry Attitude** – In developing economy, the narrow-mindedness of our security officials, especially government security agencies, believing that they are "alpha and omega" makes them feel "on-top of the world" and above the law. The keeping of information to themselves and not willing to collaborate and divulge such information to similar government security agents let alone to the populace has brought a great setback to security and safety of lives and properties. Also, the grandiloquence feelings of superiority above other security agencies is often the major reasons for non-cooperation among the security agencies i.e. lack of inter-agency collaboration. Individual's government security agency wants to be seen and appreciated at the expense of collaborative or joint achievement.
4. **Overcoming Lack of Institutional Memory** – Senior government officials are appointed at will without following procedural ranking. A government can appoint a junior officer to head an organization while all his seniors are immediately retired forcefully. Similarly, officers are transferred or posted impromptu to new locations. All these often lead to loss of "Institutional memory" as there is no proper handling over to the new officer. There is no information building structure put in place [6].
5. **Overcoming Corruption** – As a result of poverty in most developing nations, there is high level of corruption that does not spare any citizen including government security agents. There is lack of transparency, trust and loyalty among professional colleagues leading to hoarding of information. In most cases, there is betrayal, disloyalty and arm-twisting which have affected proper adjudication of criminal cases.
6. **Achieving Sense-of-Belonging** – When there is collaboration between members of the local community and the police, the members of local community will see themselves as partners-in-progress with the police. They will see security and safety as joint tasks to be achieved by all and will be willing to divulge any information to the police once their security can ensure. There will be mutual trust, confidence and collaboration to promptly arrest crimes in the locality.
7. **Obtaining Precise Criminal Information** – Criminal bio-data details such as correct name and alias, residence, trade/occupation if any, associates and so on can only be obtained from local chiefs, co-tenants, association leaders and others who are locally based.
8. **Obtaining Crime Generating Information** – Some crime generators such as local alcohol drink sellers, unlicensed drug sellers and roadhouses are often the hidey-holes to criminals. Information about these security threat elements is only available at local levels.
9. **Economy of Scale** – Benefits of open sourced data is very crucial as it saves funds that would have been wasted in gathering the same data supplied willingly by the local community.
10. **Obtaining Better Crime Analysis** – Crime is location/space

and time based. When all other information is available but the real-time geospatial map of the locality is not available, then the adage “a picture speaks more than a thousand words” will be contravened and this will affect deployment of security apparatus to the right location at the right time. The integration of data from crime prevention partnerships (residence, city council, hotel and nightclub managers, schools, census information, etc.) must be integrated together in order to achieve better spatial analysis (Ratcliffe, 2004) that will assist in taking informed decision by all stakeholders in any locality.

### **Advent of Community Policing in Nigeria**

As a result of the public distrust of the police, the former Inspector General of Police, Tafa Balogun, in 2003 undertook a number of measures to improve the police and citizen relationship. He established in all state commands the Police Complaints Bureau and the Human Rights Desks, and with the help of the British government, he introduced a pilot community policing project in Enugu State. Tafa BALOGUN’S eight point’s agenda as recorded by Ibeanu (2007) in a nutshell shows focus on:

1. Massive onslaught against robbers, gruesome murder, assassination and other crimes of violence against the backdrop of which operation “Fire for Fire” was adopted as a methodology.
2. Fast decisive crime/ conflict management.
3. Community partnership in policing, the modern approach all over the world.
4. Serious anti-corruption crusade, both within and outside the force.
5. Comprehensive training programme conducive for qualitative policing.
6. Improved conditions of service and enhanced welfare package for officers, inspectors and rank and file.
7. Inter-service/ agency cooperation at all levels down the line.
8. Robust public relations necessary for the vision of people’s Police.

When Mike Okiro became Inspector General of Police in 2007, he introduced a “9-way test”. The high points of these programme were: transparency and accountability, war on corruption and crime, crime prevention, upgrading intelligence and crime database, improved training, improving the public image and public relations of the police, improving human rights record of the police and interagency cooperation. Since 2004, when the Community Policing pilot project was introduced in Enugu State, it has also been implemented in other states such as Ogun, Ondo, Kano, Jigawa, Anambra, Sokoto, Cross River and Edo States.

Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Corps: Perhaps the concept of Community Policing was instrumental in the institutionalizing the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Corps, which metamorphosed from the Neighbourhood watch created by the then Military Administrator of Lagos State, Brigadier General Buba Marwa, in 1996. The initiative to create the security outfit was conceived by the Community Development Associations for the purpose of securing the community. It is an organised group of local residence in a community that is devoted to preventing crime, criminality, vandalism and hooliganism within the neighbourhood. The establishment of the Neighbourhood Watch marked a turning point

towards institutionalising the concept of Community Policing in Nigeria, and marked the formal and first legalized Community Policing outfit with far reaching legal and government support. No wonder, the Mission statement of the outfit reads:

To partner with the community, police and other relevant security agencies in gathering, collating, sharing of information as well as intelligence for the purpose of ensuring safety of our neighbourhood. To engender an efficient, effective, well trained and highly motivated workforce committed to improving the capacity and welfare of all officers and men of the corps. To enhance public safety through community participation.

### **The Challenges of Community Policing in Nigeria**

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 institution in Nigeria. The philosophy of community policing emphasises partnership, decentralisation 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 public 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 brutalise 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.

Highlighted hereunder are some of the challenges affecting Community policing in Nigeria:

- ▶ Lack of understanding as to the precise nature of Community Policing;
- ▶ Vested interest on the Part of those benefiting from the status quo;
- ▶ A fatalistic attitude involving a belief that change is not possible whilst the police “rank and file” (i.e. junior personnel, continue to be poorly paid);
- ▶ Unwillingness to abandon practices that are familiar in favour of the unknown or uncertain (i.e. feeling threatened by the different operational and managerial competencies required for modern policing);
- ▶ Many police officers and other stakeholders tend to view Community Policing as the development of better community relations managed through a departmental function, rather than a policing philosophy that is focused upon providing best quality service and therefore should inform each and every police activity; and
- ▶ Community policing being mistakenly considered by some as an import from a former colonial power and therefore irrelevant to policing in Nigeria. [12].

### **Future of Community Policing in Nigeria**

There is no thought that the future of solving crimes in Nigeria lies within the concept of Community policing, as such concerted effort must be made to institutionalize Community Policing in Nigeria. The recent declaration by the Federal Government to

establish a forum for community policing must not be allowed to die naturally, just like other noble ideas in the past. The Nigerian Police Force must not be seen to have a mind-set that community policing would abrogate or reduce their enforcement power. Likewise, for community policing to have 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 police 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 [13]. More importantly, the police must improve its 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 use of brutal force on them and demanding for money before services are delivered.

### Conclusion

Without mincing words, there was increased effort by Nigeria Police authorities under Tafa Balogun to promote community policing in Nigeria especially by creating awareness about the relevance of this security approach to crime control but the leaderships after him paid lip-service to community policing. Consequently, the country became more enmeshed in insecurity as crime situation has now reached a very abnormal level since the nation's independence in 1960. Making the matter worse, information that is so critical to community policing practice is largely missing as evident in various intelligence flaws recorded by the Police in the prosecution of crime suspects as reaffirmed by a former Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Mr. Ahmed Adoke. In fact, the recent fiasco in the inter-agency cooperation in the public security sector has further exposed the mammoth incompetence and inept that has dominated police administration in Nigeria.

Generally, community policing has failed to attract any tremendous progress in the control of crime not as a result of ineffectiveness of the approach but misapplication of the concept and poor implementation. Studying the attitude of police toward the citizens, it appears that the police authorities are yet to realize that the implementation of community policing largely depends on better understanding of community policing among police personnel, so that they can support the policy and make it a success.

In actual fact, the training of men and officers of Nigeria Police needs to expand beyond arrest procedures to include building effective inter-personal skills, anger-management, emotional intelligence, and adequate community orientation. In addition, in order for police to achieve better relationship with the community, various commands, area offices and, Zonal offices and stations need to become and operate more like open systems. This will have huge implications on the organization of Nigeria Police. The structure of police departments needs to be more decentralized to allow better deployment in the community and more effective use of officers and response to citizens and in building the network relations with citizens. It is important to have a more flat rank structure; this will allow officers to continue good performance without necessarily aspiring for command positions, and it will improve the quality of police personnel in the field. The use of more civilians in auxiliary

and liaison functions will general closer ties with the community as well as free officers for more technical assignments.

Apart from the foregoing, internal communications need to be exchanged at the lower level to break the relatively rigid chain of command and to improve the flow of information. Police supervision should enhance interaction at all levels (officer-supervisor and officer-community) in order to expand the spans of responsibility of officers. Officers should have greater discretion to empower them in their decision-making and to encourage more flexibility in non-law enforcement situations. This will make police work far more efficient and will enhance performance of the part of officers who are expected to do more in a position of trust. Police deployment should be proactive, preventive and community-oriented, to complement the traditional policing strategies. Recruitment of people into Nigeria Police should emphasise higher educational levels and seek people oriented, service/ mediation-centered officers. Finally, inter-agency cooperation should be improved among various agency levels (not only between department heads). They should develop a better understanding as to what constitutes overall community needs and how they can, by working together improve their response to those needs [14-17].

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