

## STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF COMMUNITY POLICING IN CRIME PREVENTION IN NIGERIA

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*Abstract: This study examined assessment of the role of police community relations in crime prevention in federal capital territory, 2009-2020. Community and police relationship stand as a paradigm shift that seeks to focus on constructive engagement with people who are the end users of the police service and re – negotiate the contract between the people and the police thereby making the community co – producers of justice and a quality police service. The research is an assessment of police community relations in crime prevention in the FCT. The spate of insecurity in the FCT is really alarming. The study reviewed relevant theoretical framework and Empirical Review. Descriptive research design will be adopted in this study, the population of study are 2,271 staff. To determine the sample size, Taro Yamane formula was adopted and questionnaire were administered to respondents across all staff of Force Headquarters in Abuja, FCT Police Command. Non-probability sampling technique was used in this study and therefore, simple percentages were used in allocating questionnaire to the sampling units to reflect their population weights. Primary and secondary sources of data were used in this study. The rationale for this is to ensure that adequate data is generated for the study. Quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis were adopted in this study. Quantitative analysis was done using descriptive and correlation analysis. Chi-square analysis is adequate for test of hypotheses because it is appropriate for the test of heterogeneous populations. Simple correlation coefficient is adequate to test hypothesis 1 because it establishes association between two variables. Proportional stratified random sampling is adequate because the sampling units are heterogeneous in character. Therefore, the role of police community relation in crime prevention in Federal Capital Territory cannot be overemphasized. In hypothesis one which is that: there is no significant relationship between police and community in crime prevention in the FCT, the respondents are of the view there is no relationship between the community and police in the FCT. Majority of the responded are optimistic that if the police continues to relate and keep boosting the confidence of the community, the will continuously get the assistance of the community in crime prevention. The Nigeria police are granted enormous powers by law and the constitution to take preventive measures against the commission of all crimes in Nigeria. In this sense, the law allows them to use such reasonable force as may be necessary for the prevention of crimes. In the exercise of this authority, they have in various ways malevolently violated the rights of members of the public with impunity. This practice has earned the Nigeria police different derogatory names, hatred and constant collision with the members of the public to whom they sworn an oath to protect. Government should direct effort at dealing with the cause of crime, that is, correction of the conditions that make crime a valuable alternative to law abiding behaviour. Government should also ensure jobs are made available for the teeming population of school leavers of all categories to forestall the probability of some of these joining criminal gangs.*

*Keywords: Federal capital territory (FCT), Police , Crime, Abaji , Gwagwalada, Community*

## **Introduction**

Community and police relationship is anchored on a systematic relationship between the police and the entire citizenry. Police roles and functions are not simply law enforcement but also include tackling a huge range of community problems. The transition from traditional policing to community policing is a global phenomenon and the Nigeria police cannot be an exception. Indeed, community and police relationship as a philosophy and practice is a veritable vehicle for police reforms (Okiro, 2007; Dirikx, & Bulck, 2020). The Nigeria police, in 2004 embraced community and police relationship as a pragmatic approach to police reforms and it was tagged community policing. The stage was indeed set for a clear departure from traditional policing, that was reactive and incident based, to a problem – solving oriented policing that is proactive with the community as the cornerstone of policing objectives (Abdullahi, 2015; Abegunde, & Adebayo, 2020; Ekong, 2023).. However, the police-community relationship has long been estranged, thereby making mutual supports very difficult to establish between the two social actors. That is, every effort to bring the police close to the public, and for community members to see the police as their friends, who require their assistance in policing the society that belongs to both of them, an end in futility. In essence, there must be a solution to this problem.

According to Siegel (2008, P. 343), “to remedy this situation while improving the quality of their services, police departments have experimented with new forms of law enforcement, referred to as community policing and problem-oriented policing”. From the same source, community policing is a style of policing that requires departments to reshape their forces into community change agents in order to work with citizens to reduce crime at the neighbourhood level. Problem-oriented policing, on the other hand, is a proactive form of policing; rather than responding to crime after it occurs, police identify and respond to potential problems before they occur (Siegel, 2008; Hills, 2018; Fagbadebo, 2020). The art of community policing and problem-oriented policing are complementary, and none of these approaches can succeed in policing the community without the assistance and co-operation of the public. This is so because the most noticeable aspect of crime-transactions usually occurs at the community level where victims and their offenders live together.

All these community policing agents are duly recognised in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, as amended) and the 2004 Police Reform/Police Act, where the importance of this policing mechanism is acknowledged as a powerful tool for solving crime-problem in the country.

Community and police relationship is a paradigm shift that seeks to focus on constructive engagement with people who are the end users of the police service and re – negotiate the contract between the people and the police thereby making the community co – producers of justice and a quality police service. The most recent attempt made by the Nigeria police force to improve its performance was the introduction of community and police relationship programme in 2004. This was part of the Force’s effort to change policing to a modern and professional policing capable of providing maximum security of lives and property in Nigeria. Community oriented policing is a proactive philosophy that promotes solving problems that are either criminal, affect the quality of life, or increase citizens fear of crime. It involves identifying, analysing and addressing community problems at their source. Police are organized to defend and preserve the interests of the dominant groups and classes in society.

According to Donald (2012), community oriented policing entails community partnership in creating a safe and secure environment for all. It is policing whereby the people take active part in their own affairs. With community and police relationship, the police is not seen as a stranger whose presence stands for danger and imminent hazard, but as partners in development. He further stressed that the unfriendly nature of the relationship between the police and members of the public has enjoyed a wide coverage among scholars. It was in reaction to this development that the concept of community oriented policing was introduced. This is particularly the case in Nigeria where the informal ethnic militia groups contested policing space with the Nigerian police in the early year of the forth republic which began in May 1999.

The police institution is a generic human service establishment saddled principally with the task of safeguarding internal security and safety in almost civil societies. In Nigeria, ethically, the police are officials of government and society, responsible for the prevention and control of crimes and disorders as well as the detection, apprehension and prosecution of perpetrators of crimes and violence in the country (Alemika, 2003; Chene, 2019; Friedman, 2022). As such, there is probably no other security control organization that has an intimate dealing with the large segment of the Nigerian populace as the police.

Essentially therefore, law enforcement or social control is the generally agreed responsibility of the Nigeria police. They must be available in case of need of almost any kind and demonstrate absolute commitment at all times to render the best possible service to the public. Conversely however, the reverse is arguably the case in Nigeria.

Thus, the prevailing belief is that the police is not likely to be effective in crime abatement, prevention and control or at least reduce the incidence of crime in the community at large. On account of these, the Nigeria community is unwilling to cooperate with the police. It is important to also unravel what constitutes a community.

A community is a small or large social unit (a group of people) who have something in common, such as norms, religion, values or identity. Often - but not always - communities share a sense of place that is situated in a given geographical area (e.g. a country, village, town, or neighborhood). Durable relations that extend beyond immediate genealogical ties also define a sense of community. People tend to define those social ties as important to their identity, practice, and roles in social institutions like family, home, work, government, society, or humanity, at large. Although communities are usually small relative to personal social ties (micro-level), "community" may also refer to large group affiliations (or macro-level), such as national communities, international communities and virtual communities. The category of people that fight crime within a community usually, are the youths who have constituted themselves to vigilante groups. Vigilante is a private individual who legally or illegally punishes an alleged law breaker, or participates in a group, which metes out extralegal punishment to an alleged lawbreaker (Reiss, 2017; Cheurprakobkit, & Puthongsiriporn, 2019).

Presently, Nigeria is suffering from a growing crime-problem, which is progressively threatening its sovereignty, security and development (Alemika, 2012; Innes, 2021; Miachi, 2022). Despite the constitutional powers granted the police to maintain general security, public safety and peace, the quality of security provided by them has nothing to be proud of. Their roles in many cases denigrate the law, endangering the citizens and blotting the institutional reputation of the police that they represent. This paper therefore

intend to showcase the impact of community policing on crime prevention in the federal capital territory with a focus on more crime prime zone of abaji and Gwagwalada

**Methodology**

Descriptive survey design was adopted in this paper. This study is focus on part of the the Federal Capital Territory specifically Abaji and Gwagwlada area council.

*Population of Study*

The population of the study comprises all the staff of Police division from the studied area council ie Abaji Police division and Gwagwalada polica division as well as the raditional rulers in the two Area Councils and Civil society . The population is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Sample Frame showing Population of the Study**

Name of Organisation	Population
Abaji Police Division	75
Gwagwalada Police Division	40
Traditional Rulers in the two Area Councils	125
Civil society in the two Area Councils	160
Total	400

Source: Field Survey, June (2021)

Therefore, the population of study = 400 staff.

*Sample Size*

To determine the sample size, Taro Yamane (1967 )formula was adopted. According to Biereenu-Nnabugwu (2006), the formula is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where n = actual sample size

N = the total population of the study (400)

e<sup>2</sup> = error limit/ level of significance (0.05)<sup>2</sup>= 0.0025

Substituting the values of the total population of the study and the significant level into formula, the actual sample size for the study becomes:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{400}{1+400(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{400}{401(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{400}{1.00} = 400$$

Therefore, a total of four hundred copies of questionnaire will be administered to respondents across all staff of Force Headquarters in Abuja, FCT Police Command, which handle issues of crime in the FCT and other Federal criminal matters in Nigeria. Similarly, the population of all the staff in Abaji Police Division, Bwari Police Division were studied, respectively. Others are Kuje Police Division, Gwagwalada Police Division, Kwali Police Division, traditional rulers in the six Area Councils and Civil society in the six Area Councils under focus, with a view to eliciting their views on the activities of their organisations in police community relations in the study areas.

*Sampling Techniques*

Non-probability sampling technique will be use in this study. Non-probability sampling in this study involved the use of purposive or judgmental sampling technique. In this regard, Gwagwalada and Abaji were used. Therefore, simple percentages were used in allocating questionnaire to the sampling units to reflect their population weights as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Showing Allocation of Questionnaire to the Sampling Units**

Organisation	% of Questionnaire in relation to Sampling Units	Number of Questionnaire to be Distributed to the Sampling Frames
Abaji Police Division	$\frac{75}{400} \times \frac{100}{1} = 18.75 \%$	$\frac{18.75}{100} \times \frac{400}{1} = 75$
Gwagwalada Police Division	$\frac{40}{400} \times \frac{100}{1} = 10 \%$	$\frac{10}{100} \times \frac{400}{1} = 40$
Traditional Rulers in the two Area Councils	$\frac{125}{400} \times \frac{100}{1} = 31.25\%$	$\frac{31.25}{100} \times \frac{400}{1} = 125$
Civil society in the two Area Councils	$\frac{160}{400} \times \frac{100}{1} = 40 \%$	$\frac{40}{100} \times \frac{400}{1} = 160$
Total	100 %	400

Source: Field Survey, June (2021)

Non-probability sampling was equally adopted in this study. Using this technique, purposive sampling was adopted in the study, which involved a process of choosing respondents on the basis of some prearranged characteristics. Therefore, purposive sampling was designed to be used in interviewing eight (8) respondents from the post of DPO cadre upwards from each of the population units (Police Formations). These are the people the researcher assumed to have deep knowledge of the activities of police community relations in crime prevention.

*Methods of Data Collection*

Primary and secondary sources of data were used in this paper . The rationale for this is to ensure that adequate data is generated for the study.

*Primary Source of Data Collection*

Instruments of data collection adopted are questionnaire and interview.

Questionnaire: The study adopted structured questionnaire which involved the use of 5-Point Likert questionnaire. Likert scale is ordinal scale because it shows that the value of a particular scale is more or less in relation to the value of different scale. The questionnaire instrument was divided into five sections, ranging from sections A to E. Section A was used in collection of socio-economic data of the respondents, while sections B to E were used in the collection of data necessary for the examination of research objectives 1 to 4.

A total of four hundred questionnaire will be administered to the respondents who will be drawn from staff of the FCT Police Command and all police formations in the six Area Councils of AMAC, Bwari, Gwagwalada, Kuje, Kwali and Abaji respectively. The questionnaire will be administered on a face-to-face basis to determine their opinions and perceptions on police community relations on crime prevention in the study areas. One research assistant who is a university graduate was employed to assist in questionnaire administration in order to speed up the process.

Interview: In-depth interview will also be adopted in the study because it will allow only those versed in the issue under discussion to be interviewed. Eight senior staff will be interviewed from the FCT Police Command and Police Force Headquarters in the FCT, which control all their stations in the FCT. The in-depth interview instrument will be structured to ensure that all the respondents will be asked similar questions in order to avoid bias.

*Secondary Source of Data*

Secondary data were generated from journals, textbooks and internet materials on police community relation in crime prevention. Also, similar data were generated from past FCT Police Command and Police Force Headquarters documents on crime prevention for improved security of the people of FCT. Data were equally generated from official websites of NPF.

*Technique for Data Analysis*

Quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis were adopted in this study. Quantitative analysis was done using descriptive and correlation analysis.

*Quantitative Analysis*

Simple percentages, absolute frequencies, chi-square and correlation analysis were used in quantitative analysis of data that were generated from the respondents. Simple percentages and absolute frequencies were used in the analysis of all data generated from questionnaire instrument. Majority opinions were accepted in all cases while analysis was done from ascending to descending order of opinions.

Chi-Square: Chi-square is a measure of discrepancy between observed and expected frequency. According to Bunyard (2010), formula for chi-square is as follows:

$$X^2 = \frac{\sum(O-E)^2}{E}$$

Where  $X^2$  = Chi-square

$\sum$  = summation (sigma)

O = observed frequency

E = expected frequency

Decision rule: Accept  $H_1$  if C.V. < T.V. .... (1)

Reject  $H_0$  if C.V. > T.V. ....(2)

Where C.V. = calculated value of Chi-square text ( $X^2$ )

T.V. = Table value/critical value.

Chi-square was used for the test of hypothesis 1-3.

Correlation coefficient: This is used to determine the relationship existing between two or more variables. Correlation coefficient could be simple correlation or multiple correlations. This study adopted simple correlation because it involves only relationship between X and Y. Correlation coefficient was used in texting hypothesis one. Otu, & Aro, (2013) gave the formula for correlation coefficient as follows:

$$r = \frac{\sum(\bar{X}-\bar{X})(\bar{Y}-\bar{Y})}{\sqrt{\sum(X - X)^2\sum(Y - Y)^2}}$$

Where X = independent variable

Y = dependent variable

$\bar{X}$  = mean of the independent variable

$\bar{Y}$  = mean of the dependent variable

$\Sigma$  = summation sign

*Qualitative Analysis*

Data generated from structured in-depth interview were analysed qualitatively using textual analytical method, while data from secondary source were analysed using trend analysis. Trend analysis requires analysis of past documents on the activities of FCT Police Command and her relation in crime prevention in FCT with a view to understanding the security situation in the study areas today and making predictions into the future.

**Result and Discussion**

This section shows the results of the retrieval of the questionnaire distributed and the outcome is shown in table 3.

**Table 3: Number of Questionnaire Retrieved**

S/N	Institution	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Retrieved	Questionnaire Not Retrieved
3	Abaji Police Division	75	75	-
	Gwagwalada Police Division	40	40	-
	Traditional Rulers in the two Area Councils	125	125	-
8	Civil society in the two Area Councils	160	156	4
	Total	400	396	4

Source: Field Survey, June, 2021

The Table explains that all thirteen (13) for Abaji Police Division also returned questionnaire distributed to the division and all the seven (7) shared to Gwagwalada were also retrieved.

All questionnaire distributed to Traditional Rulers in the two Area Councils, were retrieved. Civil society in the two Area Councils also returned all questionnaire distributed to them.

*Data Presentation and Analysis*

The part “A” which is the respondents’ personal data is represented in the table below.

**Table 4: Sex of Respondents**

Sex	No	Percentage
Male	279	71.2%
Female	113	28.8%
Total	392	100%

Field Survey, August, 2021

In the table above, 71.2% of the respondents are males, while the remaining 28.8% are females. It may be noted that the percentage of male respondents in the sample is higher than the female respondents.

**Table 5: Age of Respondents**

Range	No	Percentage
18-40	286	72.9%
41- 60	106	27%
61and above	0	0%
Total	392	100%

Field Survey, August, 2021

Table 6 shows those 18 to 40 years of age bracket are more because 72.9% responded as against 27% of 41 to 60 and 0% of 61 and above. The 27% of the respondents which were between the ages of 18-40 fall into the age bracket of the youths.

**Table 6: Educational Qualification of Respondents**

Qualification	No	Percentage
None	87	22.2%
FSLC/ SSCE	264	67.3%
ND/NCE/ HND/B.Sc	32	8.1%
M.Sc & Above	9	2.3%
Total	392	100%

Field Survey, August, 2021

Table 7 shows that the respondents with FSLC and SSCE qualifications are more because they represent 67.3% as against ND/NCE/HND/B.Sc that has 8.1% and those with no qualification with 22.2% and the lowest respondents in terms of percentage is M.Sc and above because they represent 2.3%. From the table, it is glaring that majority of the respondents who from the table before this above are youths have the FCLS/SSCE qualification.

**Table 7: Occupation of Respondents**

Occupation	No	Percentage
Farmer/Artisan	233	59.4%
Student	22	5.6%
Public Servant	59	15%
Politician	12	3%
Unemployed	66	16.8%
Total	392	100%

Field Survey, August, 2021

In table 8, the highest respondents' occupation is the Farmer/Artisan because they represent 59.4%, followed by Unemployed with 16.8%, then Public Servants with 15% and Politician with 3%. The Students has 5.6% which makes them the least in number.

Part "B" is the structured questionnaires. It shall be presented in the tables below. Item Response Analysis Key

- SA = Strongly Agree
- A = Agree
- NAND = Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- D = Disagree
- SD = Strongly Disagree

Hypothesis One



H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between police and community in crime prevention in FCT

H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant relationship between police and community in crime prevention in FCT

Question 5: With the help of community, the police has prevented crime to an extent in the FCT

**Table 8: Community Assistance to the Police in Crime Prevention in the FCT**

Options	No of Respondents	Percentage
SA	200	51%
A	110	28%
NAND	30	7.6%
D	17	4.3%
SD	35	8.9%
Total	392	100%

Field Survey, August, 2021

From the above table, it clear that many people agreed that communities assist the police in crime prevention in Nigeria particularly in the FCT. Majority of the responded are optimistic that if the police continues to relate and keep boosting the confidence of the community, the will continuously get the assistance of the community in crime prevention. The table clearly shows that 51% of the respondents strongly agreed that the community helps the police a great deal in crime prevention. 28% agreed and 7.6% were indifferent because they responded neither agree nor disagree. 7.3% out rightly disagreed and 6.5% strongly disagreed that the community helps the police a great deal in crime prevention.

Question 6: The police-community relation is yielding a positive result in Nigeria particularly FCT

**Table 9: The Positivity of Police-Community Relations in Nigeria**

Options	No	Percentage
SA	290	74%
A	30	8%
NAND	2	0.05%
D	20	5.2%
SD	50	12.8%
Total	392	100%

Field Survey, August, 2021

From the table above, it is obvious that the police-community relations is yielding positive fruits in Nigeria. That is why 74% of my respondents strongly agreed that if the police can leverage on the already robust relationship they have with the community, they will have a great deal of positivities from the police-community relations in the area of crime prevention. 8% agreed that there should be stronger relationship between the police and the community, 0.05% was indifferent because the neither agreed nor disagreed but 5.2% disagreed and 12.8% strongly disagreed.

**Table 10: Strategies Put in place for Effective Community Policing in the FCT**

Options	No of Respondents	Percentage
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SA	200	51%
A	150	38.2%
NAND	20	5.1%
D	15	3.8%
SD	7	2.8%
Total	392	100%

Field Survey, August, 2021

From the above table, it is clear that the strategies put in place for police and community relation in crime prevention in FCT has been very successful. The table clearly shows that 51% of the respondents strongly agreed that the strategies put in place for police and community relation in crime prevention in FCT has been very successful. 38.2% agreed and 5.1% were indifferent because they responded neither agree nor disagree. 3.8% out rightly disagreed and 2.8% strongly disagreed that the strategies put in place for police and community relation in crime prevention in FCT has been very successful.

**Table 11: The Relationship Between Community and Police in the FCT**

Options	No of Respondents	Percentage
SA	15	3.8%
A	90	23%
NAND	10	2.6%
D	17	4.33%
SD	260	66.3%
Total	392	100%

Field Survey, August, 2021

The table above indicates that there is no relationship between the community and police in the FCT. No wonder, evaluating the reactions on the question, the researcher discovered that a whopping 66.3% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the assertion that there is a relationship between the community and the police in FCT. 23% agreed that there is a relationship while 2.6% is undecided, 4.33% disagreed and 3.8% strongly agreed that there is relationship between the community and police in the FCT.

**Table 12: The Proliferation of weapon and Challenge of Community Policing in the FCT**

Options	No of Respondents	Percentage
SA	22	5.6%
A	7	1.7%
NAND	18	4.6%
D	52	13.2%
SD	293	74.7%
Total	392	100%

Field Survey, August, 2021

The above table shows that a good number of the respondents are of the view that one of the challenges of community proliferation of weapon in the FCT because 74.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the assertion that one of the challenges of community proliferation of weapon in the FCT. 1.7% agreed that proliferation of arms is a major contributing factor to increase of crime and a challenge to community policing in the FCT,

while 4.6% was indifferent. 13.2% disagreed and 5.6% strongly agreed that there is proliferation of weapon in the FCT.

**Table 13: The Police and Community in Crime Prevention in the FCT**

Options	No	Percentage
SA	290	73.9%
A	63	16.0%
NAND	3	0.7%
D	11	2.8%
SD	25	6.3%
Total	392	100%

Field Survey, August, 2021

From the table above, it can be deduced that there is a strong synergy between the police and the community in crime prevention in the FCT. This is because judging from the responses of the respondents, 73.9% strongly agreed that there is a strong cooperation between the police and the community in crime prevention in the FCT, 16.0% agrees with that stand point, 0.7 were indifferent, 2.8% disagreed and 6.3% strongly disagreed.

**Table 14: The Police and Community in Crime Fighting in the FCT**

Options	No of Respondents	Percentage
SA	153	39%
A	157	40.4%
NAND	8	2%
D	10	2.5%
SD	64	16.3%
Total	392	100%

Field Survey, August, 2021

Table 14 addresses the issue of best ways to tackle security challenges. There is an overwhelming agreement among respondents that the best ways to tackle the challenges of community policing in the FCT is to review the security strategy within the territory. Respondents who strongly agreed accounted for one hundred and fifty-four (153) or thirty-nine percent (39%), while those who agreed stood at one hundred and fifty-seven (157) or forty point four percent (40.4%). Those who strongly disagreed stood at sixty-four (64) or sixteen point three percent (16.3%), those who disagreed recorded ten (10), representing two point five percent (2.5%), while those undecided stood at twenty-two (8) or two percent (2%). Therefore in conclusion from the above data analysis, the best ways to tackle the challenges of community policing in the FCT is to review the security strategy within the territory.

**Table 15: The Police and Community in Crime Fighting in the FCT**

Options	No of Respondents	Percentage
SA	34	8.7%
A	104	26.5%
NAND	2	0.6%
D	1	0.3%
SD	251	64%
Total	392	100%

Field Survey, August, 2021

On the view that the strategy to tackle the challenges of community policing in the FCT is to strengthen the local laws on civil and criminal cases to prosecute and provide stiffer penalty for criminals, respondents who strongly disagree are in the majority having recorded the highest numbers of two hundred and fifty-one (251) or sixty-four percent (64%), agree had one hundred and four (104) or twenty-six point five percent (26.5%). Those who disagree is one (1) or zero point three percent (0.3%), two (2) or zero point six percent (0.6%) went for neutral while thirty-four (34) respondents went strongly disagree. This indicates that the strategy to tackle the challenges of community policing in the FCT is not just to strengthen the local laws on civil and criminal cases to prosecute and provide stiffer penalty for criminals but disentivise crime and criminality in all ramifications.

### **Discussion of Findings**

In hypothesis one which is that: there is no significant relationship between police and community in crime prevention in the FCT, the respondents are of the view there is no relationship between the community and police in the FCT. Majority of the responded are optimistic that if the police continues to relate and keep boosting the confidence of the community, the will continuously get the assistance of the community in crime prevention. Corroborating with the assertion made by the respondents above Alemika (2003); He, et al., (2020) declares that community policing in Nigeria is a security strategy being adopted as an alternative or supplementary effort from the immediate community to buttress the efforts of police force in combating crime and criminal activities. As a matter of fact the police in Nigeria cannot sustain or maintain crime free communities without voluntary local efforts to complement theirs. It is also believed that the people residing in a particular community can easily identify those people perpetrating evils in their immediate milieu and will be easy for them in tracking them down. They have adequate knowledge of geographical settings of their areas. Community policing in the FCT takes different forms ranging from community development association (CDA). Peace and security committee, landlords and tenants security harmony in which certain able bodied men in the community are grouped to watch over the community rotationally, civilian joint task force (in the northern region) Vigilante service group etc. Alemika and Chukwuma (2012); Newburn (2023) further asserts that community policing in Nigeria has aided the Nigeria police and other security agencies in crime prevention in each areas as a result of the cordial relationship between the community people on security and security agencies which has aided the security agencies to cut down evil perpetrators/criminals in various societies. In spite of these conscious efforts it is still noticed that there is no harmonious working relationship between the police and the communities in the south west Nigeria.

From the second hypothesis, there are established strategies put in place for effective police and community relation in crime prevention in FCT. From the analysis above, it is obvious that the police-community relation is yielding positive fruits in the FCT because of the established strategies. That is why majority of the respondents strongly agreed that if the police can leverage on the already robust strategy and relationship they have with the community, they will have a great deal of positivities from the police-community relations in the area of crime prevention in the FCT.

Strengthening the points made above by the respondents, Iwarimie-Jaja (2006); Walklate (2021) asserts that for community policing to have an inroad in Nigeria particularly FCT, the Nigeria police force must have a complete paradigm shift from its traditional model of

policing to a more community oriented policing that stresses community partnership, decentralization of powers, and proactive policing. The policing model should be that of partnership with less emphasis on regulatory powers and sanctions with greater reliance upon compromise and cooperation that would serve the public better rather than the traditional model of policing. 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.

From the third hypothesis which states: There are challenges of the community and the police towards sustainable community policing in FCT, it is clear that many respondents strongly agree that the police and the community is not doing enough in the fight against crime in Nigeria particularly in FCT because of the myriad of challenges.

Agreeing with the proposition above, Onyeozili (2022); Wycott, & Skogan, (2019) argues that, firstly, the attitude of the Nigeria Police force and the opinion of the people about the police is one of the major threats to community policing in the FCT, the “*wetin u bring*” attitude of the police has caused lacuna between the stake holders involved in community policing. The second challenge of community is facilities/equipment. Adebayo & Ojo (2009) says, aside the bad attitude of police to public, there are indications that the Police lack sophisticated and modern equipment’s like ICT, armory to combat crimes as there are cases where police claimed that arm Robbers possessed sophisticated weapons than they and thereby led to police running/escape from crime scenes. Another challenge of community policing in the FCT is lack of proper training. The six months training avail to police cadet is relatively not enough to be trained as Police as Plato (in Platonian state) believed police should be exposed to gymnastic and music to enables them know appropriate pattern of behavior for various situations, on the contrary, there have been cases of Police brutality, accidental discharge, shooting of commuters who refuse to pay #50 bribe, all these resulted from inadequate training of the police officers in Nigeria.

Abdullahi (2015) asserts that one other challenge of community policing is infrastructural problem. In situations where the police ready to move to crime scene, there are problem of infrastructural deficiency like bad roads, bad layout, poor house numbering, bad road networks among others. One other challenge is God-fatherism. God-fatherism 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. Many highly placed public officers in FCT are known to pervert the course of justice by the virtue of their closeness to the seat of power, often, police get sucked in, and this account for their complicity in several unresolved crimes across the country particularly FCT.

The fourth hypothesis states: The police and the community can overcome the obstacles of community policing in the FCT. Majority of the respondents strongly agreed with the assertion that one of the ways the police and the community can overcome the challenges and prevent crime in the FCT is have a strong link with the community.

In justifying the hypothesis four above, Qadri (2005); Reiner (2020) asserts that community policing as a profession, community policing agents must demonstrate to the society that the law which they are enforcing is contemporarily valid. The law enforcers must ensure that law was broken; or else, the enforcement attempts would be ineffective and undemocratic. For instance, if plying dual-carriage roads by motor cyclists in State capital

territories was generally prohibited in the Edicts (State laws in Nigeria), and later amended as non-prohibited act, law enforcement agents must be validated with such laws in order to be effective and knowledgeable about their profession. Akuul (2011); Onyeozili (2022) asserts that indeed, both the Nigeria police and community members should keep abreast of development and ever-changing trends in political reconstruction, social engineering and legal dynamics to enable them unite to achieve sustainable community policing in the country. This is not far from the stance of the International Code of Enforcement Ethics earlier cited in this paper: as a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to serve mankind and property; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception; the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence and disorder; and to respect constitutional rights of all the men to liberty, equity and justice.

#### Conclusions

The Nigeria police are granted enormous powers by law and the constitution to take preventive measures against the commission of all crimes in Nigeria. In this sense, the law allows them to use such reasonable force as may be necessary for the prevention of crimes. In the exercise of this authority, they have in various ways malevolently violated the rights of members of the public with impunity. This practice has earned the Nigeria police different derogatory names, hatred and constant collision with the members of the public to whom they sworn an oath to protect. So far, it can be inferred from the data gathered in this study that the relationship between the police and the public in Nigeria particularly FCT is not cordial. The police are more accountable to the government rather than to the members of the public whose interest they were statutorily established to protect. In the FCT, the public perception of the police is warped based on the misuse of powers vested in them. This misuse of powers which creates negative police image and police-public relations is manifested in police corruption and brutality which had been their regular hallmark.

From the foregoing, the findings of this study have led to the following recommendations: The public image of the police can be changed if and only if the police are reoriented towards adequate care and respect for human dignity, citizen's fundamental human rights and privileges. The police should work relentlessly towards redeeming their public image of underperforming, immodest brutality and use of predatory force and ineffective policing strategies. Nigeria as a nation cannot hope to become one of the best leading economies in the world, if it cannot develop and implement policies and programmes that will abate both the causes and effects of crime and general insecurity in the country. There is already a big gap between public expectation and police actual performance in crime prevention and control. The public view shows nothing but a loss of confidence in police ability to prevent crime in the country.

The government should be more prominent in the formal crime prevention activities. The underfunding of the Nigeria Police has reduced their state of preparedness and level of performance to prevent crime. The acute shortage of accommodation and welfare of the policemen made the coordination of their activities difficult and these have adversely affected their performance. The end-result is that the Nigeria Police Force is not adequately equipped for the statutory function of crime prevention. As a structured security institution, the police should be adequately equipped to enable them be combat ready to prevent and control crime.

The preservation of the safety of the citizenries and security of their properties are the primary reason for the existence of the police. There is thus, the utmost need for continuous and impactful training especially in the areas of security, intelligence and human relations for the policemen especially at the middle and lower echelon to be able to effectively discharge their onerous responsibility of crime prevention. Also, efforts are needed on the part of police management to be more proactive in developing, just and moral consensus to partner with the community at large in order to build an efficient and effective crime detection and prevention system in the country and thus change the negative image of the force in public mind.

However, as with all research studies, this study is not without its limitation. Data were collected on perceptual scale from participants. Future research should look at more objective data collecting techniques to ensure precision and avoidance of bias. Despite this limitation, the study has not only offered a good insight into the understanding of public perception of the police and crime prevention in the FCT, it has also provided very much penetration into the issue of public/police partnership and crime reduction in a reforming and developing nation like Nigeria.

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