

Inter Agency Cooperation in Crime Management and Its Implication on Workability of Community Policing Project in Nigeria

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Abstract

Mamu is one of the communities that are gradually assuming heterogeneity status as a result of steady migration of people for occupation and settlement purpose. Mamu is located in Ijebu North Local Government area of Ogun State. Apart from the influx of settlers, the town has a popular periodic market that always attract people from neighbouring communities as well as people from states like Lagos, Oyo and Ondo States. In spite of high influx of migrants and traders into this community, it is one of the communities that maintain almost zero level of criminal activities. The formal and informal agencies were noted as playing substantial roles in the success being recorded in this situation. Such interactions are the needed requisite for the successful take off of community policing in Nigeria. In view of the constant scenarios of conflicts among the security agencies in Nigeria, the happenings in this community thus become an irresistible issue that needed to be explored for academic purpose. The findings from the community survey carried out in the town revealed that there was strong belief in traditional system hence the resolve of some of them (59%) that they will call on vigilante when in trouble; only 13% agreed to call the police when there is trouble in the community. At the time when some eventually experienced real trouble, only 17% actually called the Police, 55% reported the matter to the Oba-in-council and the vigilante, while 28% did not see the need to report the case. There was strong working relationship between the Police and Vigilante group. Activities of vigilante assisted tremendously in making the act of Policing easier. Those that reported the case to the Police were satisfied with the way the cases were dispensed. The factors responsible for this according to them include thoroughness, adherence to rule of law and the respect for the cooperation the Police is received from the community. This study thus demonstrated the high prospects that with political will, the project of community policing could work in Nigeria

Key words: Security, Crime, Crime management, Community Policing

Introduction

Importance of security as the driving engine for socio-economic and political development cannot be overemphasized. Apart from justice, sense of belonging for the citizenry, good governance, good leadership, qualitative education, healthy politics and strong economy, security is equally an essential ingredient for nation building and development. Therefore, the importance of security as the driving engine for socio-economic and political development cannot be overemphasized. This thus emphasizes the necessity of peace and security as the building blocks for political order and protection of life, liberty and estate as well as precondition for economic investment and growth. The import of this is that absence of development that is beneficial to the populace may lead to exposure of the nation to internal rift and aggression and the growth of criminality, which is antithetical to economic progression. In view of this, it is necessary for clarification of what criminality or crime stands for.

Like any other social disturbance, crime has been referred to as disorder, a breakdown in the norms of the society referred to as anomie by Merton (1961). The concept of crime is embedded in several terms like 'deviation', 'deviant behaviour', 'antisocial conduct' and 'social pathology' (Okunola, 2002). Crime and delinquency rates on one hand are seen as indicators of population turn over, physical deterioration, and economic dislocation, as well as the strength of official and voluntary institutions, which inculcate and reinforce conformity behaviour. On the other hand, they are also seen as manifestations of poverty, ignorance, a repressive environment, and the disruption of the inter-personal networks, which bind families and neighbourhoods.

In some cases the prevalence of crime is tied to emergence of modernization, which brings about development, influx of people and various forms of problem. Within this school of thought, the idea is that development of certain areas encourages migrants (who most often are the younger generation) who are seeking to better their lots within the new promising environment (Andrew and Omuta, 1994; Owolabi, 1994; Salami, 1994). These migrants are often left in disappointment due to unmet anticipated hopes and ambitions hence an innovation on how to survive, which in most cases may be negative. The reason behind unmet hopes and ambitions has been

linked to limited nature of available resources in such community compared to the number of people hoping to benefit from them (O'Connoh 1994). The resultant dangerous living and deviant behaviour by the migrants in the course of managing the situation corroborate the position of R.K. Merton in anomie theory. Talking about migrants in this case does not mean they are solely responsible for increasing crime wave in the society. The reason is that every society has its own sizeable number of miscreants who are at the bottom of its social problems; but the rural-urban migration helps in understanding the prevalence of crime in societies, particularly in urban areas.

Crime has traditionally been seen as an urban phenomenon; most often crime is categorised along urban/rural divide with urban crime been regarded as more serious in extent and gravity (Bilal, 2002). Majority of research are been conducted in urban environment with rural places neglected in spite of recent evidence that revealed that crime is causing increasing concern in rural places (Yarwood, nd). Nevertheless, a lot of works have been done on rural crimes and rural policing in developed countries. Okunola (2007) noted that concentration of scholarly works on urban crimes and policing at the extent of rural settings is likely to have been influenced by rural studies that showed that generally rural crimes occur less than urban crimes. It was also reported that some of the studies earlier conducted on rural crime and policing have their concerns on advances in environmental criminology and how these may be applied to rural areas.

It was argued further that lesser rate of crime may no longer hold, as studies have shown that rural-urban differences are shrinking as a result of modern communication and transportation. This reduction in gap between rural-urban settings has potential of making the differences between rural and urban crimes negligible. When this becomes the case, it means a concerted effort at keeping rural crimes at barest minimal level for meaningful development to take place need to be pursued vigorously. Meanwhile the rural settings seem undisturbed by the argument; they are forging ahead with their peculiar problems and peculiar solutions of dual system of crime policing. A typical community with this is Mamu, a rural community in Remo area of Ogun State. The crime situation and policing of this community was first reported by Ganiyu (2007) while follow-up study was conducted within the same community on this issue by Okunola, Lawal and Ganiyu (2011). The outcome of the previous studies thus informed the emergence of this recent effort whose aim is to explore and highlight the prospects of community policing through the existing inter-agency cordial relationship in the course of law enforcement. It equally hopes to find out the efficacy of these methods and appraisal of the strength and weaknesses of these methods with hope of making correction where necessary for positive result-oriented outcomes. In view of the cooperation reported to be in existence between the members of the community and the agencies saddled with policing of crime in the area, this study is an effort at demonstrating that Community Policing is a project that is possible.

Methodology

Two research methods adopted in this study include quantitative method and qualitative method. The quantitative method involved the use of structured questionnaire, while the qualitative method involved the use of In-depth interviews to elicit information from these key figures within the community as well as secondary source of data collection (existing literatures). A total of 100 respondents were sampled for a comprehensive data. The procedure used in reaching the respondents for this study was through multi-stage sampling. The study area was first clustered into 2 parts. The first part consisted of the traditional area; while the second part included the newly developed area. From each of these clusters, equal numbers of households were randomly selected. From each of the selected households, a total number of 40 respondents were picked making 80 respondents altogether. In picking the eligible person for the survey from these households, willingness to partake was considered when the people initially sampled did not show interest in the exercise. Where the number of people selected through this process was more than the number allotted, random sampling method was adopted to choose among them. For the in-depth (oral) interview, purposive sampling method was adopted to pick the respondents in this part of the exercise. Those involved here were the Oba or his representative; the head of Vigilante; Olori Ode (Head of Hunters); the Divisional Crime Officer in the area. The purposive sampling method here involved identification and selection of appropriate respondents either through prior notice or accidentally. However, the cooperation of the representative of the head of the community and Olori Ode was secured through the assistance of a community leader. Some people who have been victim of crime in recent times were equally involved as Key Informant in qualitative study. These people were picked through snowball sampling method. At the end of the day, 10 respondents who are versatile in knowledge by virtue of the experience and positions they are holding within the community took part in the exercise. The data generated through qualitative method were analysed through the use of content analysis. The qualitative data were interpreted with necessary quotations from the interviews to support the issue being discussed. The quantitative data generated in the study were analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The results were expressed in simple percentages.

Findings and Discussion

The data collected for this study revealed that the majority of the respondents in this study (46%) were within the age range of 50 years and above. This was followed by those between 30 and 50 years of age (35%) and those below 30 years of age (19%). The male gender and those that were married constituted 67% and 65% respectively. The data on educational status of the respondents in this study show that the majority of the respondents (45%) have no formal education. Respondents whose maximum educational qualification is primary school (32%); and those with secondary education (18%) follow this. This may be the result of rural nature of the study site and that most people therein are into informal sector for their means of livelihood. The remaining categories are ND/NCE graduates (3%) and HND/University graduates (2 %).

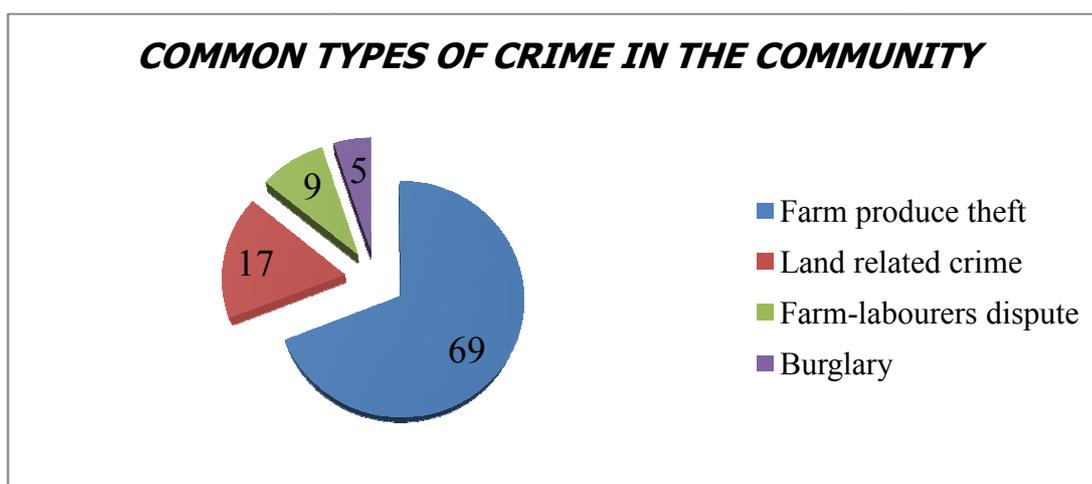
Occupational status of the respondents revealed that 75 percent of the respondents are engaging in farming. Others are traders (18%); civil servants/paid employees (5%). It should be noted that there were respondents who combined farming with trading; as well as civil service work with farming. Since these categories took farming as secondary occupation, the primary occupations of these respondents were reckoned with in the process of computing the data for occupational status.

The data further indicated that majority of the respondents (78%) resided in Brazilian quarters popularly called face-to-face building. Some respondents also live in houses that were makeshift in nature, particularly the types that are not completed, but in which the owners have managed to build only one or two rooms and moved into it with the hope of completing the remaining ones in due course. Most of the respondents (75%) have spent more than 5 years in the community, hence their in-depth knowledge of the security situation in Mamu Community, the focus of this study.

SECURITY SITUATION AND POLICE ACTIVITIES IN THE STUDY AREA

Virtually all the respondents in this study affirmed that crime rarely occur in the study area. The submission is that though crime do occur as it is normal in a community like theirs that is just developing due to influx of people who are running away from hustle and bustle of life in the cities that surrounded this Mamu community, still the frequency of such crime cannot be compared to those of the adjoining cities. Reflecting over crime issues over time, the head of Vigilante has this to say:

....we cannot say the town should not develop, but the unfortunate things about this is that we started to experience progressive increment in crime rate as the community admits more people who migrated to settle down here. Though the increase is not significant, but it can become something substantial if care is not taken. What we know is that we have succeeded in curtailing excessiveness of our children in this community, and we can be categorical on the fact that they are taking to our moral counseling and control, but we cannot prevent them from associating with the children of the settlers. What we note is that the crime rate has been successfully curtailed before, but with steady increase in the population size, the crime rate and level of violence is assuming steady dimension.



The above data revealed that farm produce is the major target of the perpetrators of crime in the community as confirmed by 69% of the respondents. As a step towards affirming this response in another variable in the questionnaire, the respondents revealed in the option marked 'others' that farm produce is the main target of criminals in the study area. This is not a surprise since the study site is an agrarian community. However, the respondents did not see crime as a major social problem in the community. The reason given for this is the available crime management technique in the community.

Only 30% of the respondents confirmed that they have been victims of crime in the community lately. Half of the victims revealed that the crime was perpetrated on their farms. To others, it was burglary case that occurred while they were away from their home (25%) and those who were privy to a case that involved their relatives. For those involved in as victims of burglary, the reason given was that they live on the outskirts of the town and nobody was at home at that time.

The respondents also affirmed the occurrence of criminal activities around their neighbourhood in the last three months. However, rather than linking this incident to usual crimes that are accustomed to, they revealed that the crime bothered on political thuggery. This response was corroborated by the submissions of the Oluode of the town who happened to be the representative of the Head of the community in the study. In his words:

....this community is relatively peaceful. We rarely experience brutal criminal or violent activities, except for the occasional political wrangling for which the Politicians are best known. This is usually the case when there is need for another election (either inter or intra-party). What we do in this case is to liaise with the Police to help us curtail their vandalism so that the peaceful coexistence in our community is not jeopardized. Another thing is that when one look carefully at those involving in such violent activities during such Political squabbles you will discover that most of them are either the layabouts from the neighbouring cities and the few ones within our community.

Contributing his own quotas, the Officer in charge of the Police Post in the community equally revealed that:

The community is truly peaceful; though we record occasional criminal activities like stealing of farm produce; fighting over land matters; settling of disagreement between the farm labourers and their employers, but the only case one case classified as brutal so far in this community are political excessiveness that usually occur particularly during the current political dispensation. In such a situation, we are also equal to the task of ensuring that this political party problem does not resort to communal crisis.

Contributing further, the Head of Vigilante asserts that:

The peaceful coexistence of this communities and our control of crime has been attracting people from cities to this place. People have been coming to come and buy lands to build houses in this community. Some have settled down as farmers in our community. We also take extra care here not to sell land to people of doubtful character; and the concern of average community members is peace and security of lives and properties. We don't allow needs for money to override this desire for peace and security.

As part of measures to combat crime within their community, the respondents revealed that there exists neighbourhood arrangement for crime prevention. That is, the usual Local Vigilante Group. According to them, the activity of this Group is somehow voluntary. What is expected of each head of household residing in the community is to either come out to participate as Neighbourhood Watch. This is done on daily, weekly or monthly basis depending on the agreement within each Quarter in the community. Where a head of household is not willing and able to take part or unable to get a nominee to represent his household, such a head, should pay a token amount of money for the upkeep of the Group. The amount to be paid varies according to each quarter. Voluntary donations are equally welcomed. The head of Vigilante Group stressed further that:

The idea of personal involvement in night neighbourhood watch is to let people know the difficulties involved in crime management. This is also an idea towards enabling people to come to the reality that security of the community is an issue that everybody should contribute his own quotas. We encourage voluntary donations, but amount to be paid varies based on the personal status of the individual involved. The nomination of people to take part in this night watch is on rotational basis. One thing is that we could not force the migrants that are commonly found in the newly developing areas of the community to come and involve in this kind of activity. They are allowed to deliberate on security issue of their area in their Landlord/Tenants Association meeting which holds on weekly basis. In their cases, we supply them the Night Watch men to help in the patrol of their areas. The amount they pay for this service is different from the one obtainable in the 'indigenous' area of the community.

Apart from this, the heads of household involve in weekly meeting where the issue pertaining to the welfare and security of their areas are discussed. On the issue of amount being contributed by the respondents for Neighbourhood Watch activities on monthly basis, none of the respondents responded to this. However, all the respondents affirmed the effectiveness of Vigilante as Security Neighbourhood Watch within the community. On the necessity of Vigilante as neighbourhood security watch, the entire respondents affirmed this.

Police and Crime Control in the Neighbourhood

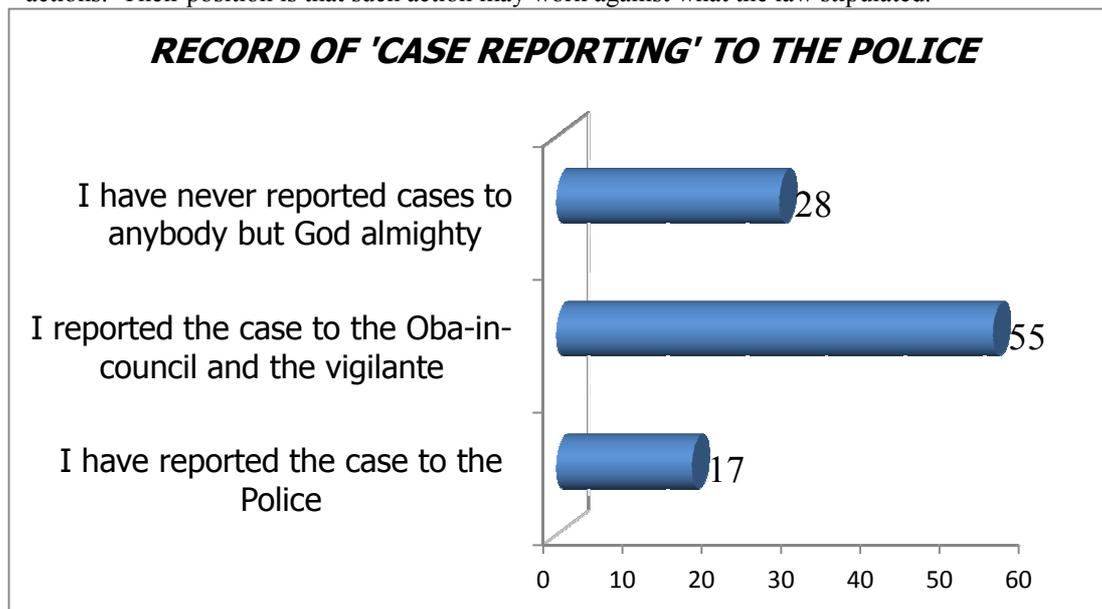
The respondents revealed that there exists a Police Post within the community. They couldn't estimate the distance of the Police Post to their respective house. However, all of them show that the Post is strategically

positioned for easy accessibility. That in relation to the population of Mamu Community, the distance is never a barrier to accessibility of Police services when needed.

Another interesting issue is the Police patrol of the community. All respondents revealed that Police patrol takes on weekly basis; and this usually coincides with the Community's weekly market day. The Officer in charge of Mamu Police Post also contributed to this. In his words:

It is true that we patrol the town during the community's weekly market day, but members of the community themselves are very vigilant. They know one another. The only time when such internal monitoring may not be successful is one this market day. On such day, people from neighbouring communities and neighbouring states usually troop into the community. At this period, Police need to intensify its efforts since the community members themselves are usually involved in buying and selling on such day. The Police will have to double its efforts to ensure that criminals do not use such situation to perpetrate criminal activities. In his own contribution, the Oluode of the town revealed that:

We seldom go to farm on market day; or let me say the rate of work on farm on such day is usually minimal when compared to other days. It is on such day that those that steal on our farm usually carry out their nefarious activities. In the years gone by, what our forefathers used to do was to insulate their farms against intruders. We have also practiced such before but our problem is that we are being cautious in view of Yoruba adage that says, 'when you are digging a pit for your enemies, don't make it deep because your blood relations may fall victim'. You know the young ones of today are rascals; they can be funny at times. It is the outcome of this 'stay of action' that led to infiltration by the robber to come to our farm to come and rob us of our farm produce. Also we are afraid of being 'labeled' as a community that harbours criminals. You may be wondering whether our children are involved in such stealing; that is not the case; we have mechanism of determining whether the robbers are from within or without. We have discovered that the robbers come from the adjoining communities and we have perfected a mechanism at ensuring the safety of properties. Our problem now is the Police. The Police have been preventing us from taken certain actions. Their position is that such action may work against what the law stipulated.



Only 17% of the respondents have reported cases to the Police Station; 28% have never reported cases to anybody. They believe only God almighty is worthy of being reported to when offended. The significant proportion (55%) reported cases to the Oba-in-council and the vigilante. The nature of cases reported to the Police was civil cases that involved misunderstanding between two people and personal assaults. It was revealed that in view of close knitted nature of the community; criminal cases are usually handled through Vigilante Group and Police Forum. This to them, is a semi-formal way of saving people from the usual agony people usually dread in the course of reporting cases to the Police. These respondents revealed that the cases reported to the Police are usually treated to their satisfaction. The Police Officer in his contribution to this revealed that:

We ensure that cases are not delayed in order to ensure that the members of the community repose their confidence in the system. It is the belief of the Police that when people are confident of our services that they will be willing to report cases to us without fear of molestation, biases, and so on.

When this is the case, it will engender very drastic reduction of crime in our societies. For those who have never reported cases to the Police, their actions were based on the non-seriousness of the case. Others within this group are afraid of what may come out of the case. This the Police see as a barrier towards effective crime management. According to the Officer in charge (OC) of Mamu Police Police:

Most of the cases the community members see as not being important often turn run to come and put them in trouble. We have been telling them that we stood better chance to know the gravity of every case. That cases that are committed by somebody who is not first time offenders can never be classified as minor. Though some are taking to our advice by coming to report cases rather than limiting it to their community level, but on a serious note, substantial proportion of the population is not taking to this advice. We hope one day they will reason with the Police.

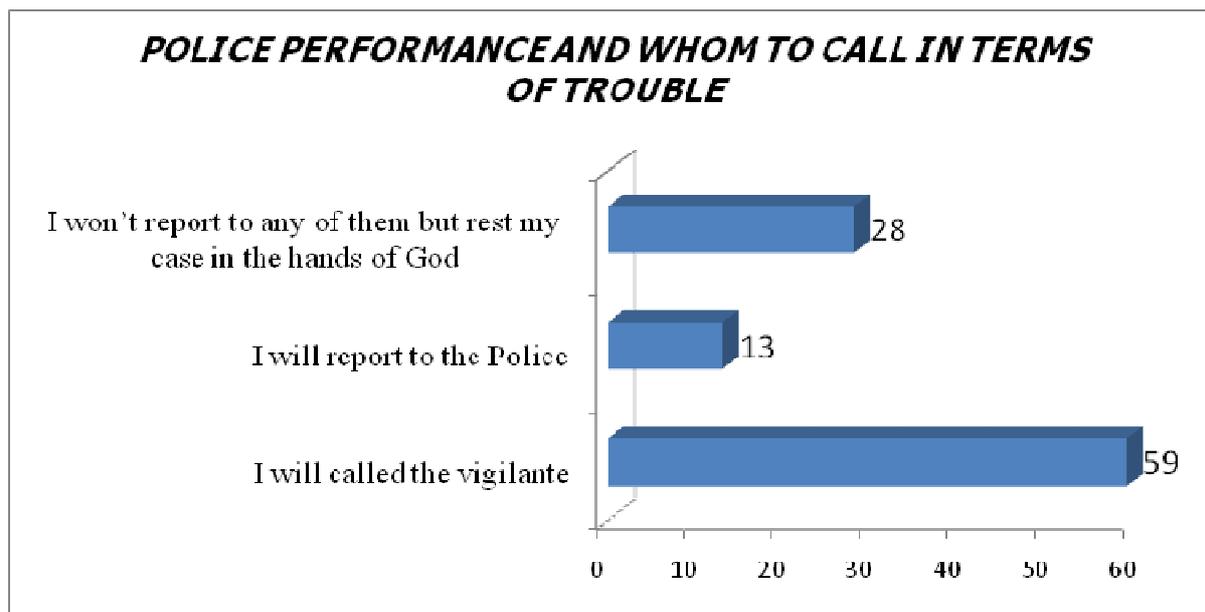
The respondents affirmed that the Police have been able to treat cases reported to them by the members of the community to the satisfactions of all parties. If at all there is a group of people who are not satisfied, they could not tell.



Factors responsible for satisfaction being derived from the way Police handled the case reported include the thoroughness brought to bear on the cases reported (42%). Some (33%) believe the Police adhere to the dictate of the law in the course of handling the cases. The rest (25%) were of the view that the Police will not do otherwise in the course of treating the cases reported so as not to lose the community supports they are enjoying. Most of the cases being reported usually come occasionally and in some instances, such cases usually come to them when they could not be resolved by the community leaders.

The respondents rated the performance of the Nigeria Police in relation to crime control in their community as being 'fair'. The reason given by some of them is that most of experienced Policemen are either retired or transferred to another part of the state or other part of the country. They believed the current crops of Policemen in the community are just learning the art of their profession. The current level of performance though rated fairly was seen as a fruit of collaborative efforts between the Police and the Community security management outfit (Vigilante Group). In his own words, the Officer in Charge Mamu Police Post said:

The Vigilante group in this community is trying its best possible when it comes to crime management, but the issue here is that the law did not permit them to treat cases on their own. When crimes are committed, it is the Police that are empowered by law to treat such cases. But in this community as it is expected of every African community, many cases are treated and disposed of within the community. In some instances, cases reported to the Police are withdrawn in the name of peaceful coexistence. Meanwhile Police need to pursue such cases to a logical conclusion for it to act as deterrent for the would-be offenders.



Given the present level of the performance of the Nigeria Police in crime management in the community, most of the respondents (59 percent) said they would rather call on the Local Vigilante Group than relying on the Police since most of the works are performed at local level before reporting the case to the Police. Some (13 percent) felt it is better every crime (case) is reported to the Police for one to be on the safer side. It is noted that this category belongs to the highly educated group of the respondents. The remaining 28% though declared that they won't require the service of the Police if they become a victim of any crime, but refused to give reasons for their answers.

Discussion

The study has established that both formal and informal security sectors can collaborate effectively in crime management. This manifested in the revelation of the existence of Neighbourhood night watch to ensure excellent security network, and to complement the efforts of the police in crime management within the community. The data also showed that the community members have collaborative efforts with the Police in the area. This according to them have been yielding fruitful results and even accounts for the lower level of crime and the credibility one can give to the Police in the area in the course of crime management.

The usual attitude of poor rate of crime reporting as commonly found among the people in developing world was also the case in Mamu Community. This was seen as antithetical to effective crime management by the Police. However, the Police officer engaged in this study however pointed out that people are taking to their advice on prompt case reporting though the rate of this was not encouraging. The fact that substantial proportion of the people still don't see the necessity of reporting cases to the Police shows that a lot still needed to be done to correct the situation.

The data on existence of cordiality between the community members vis-à-vis crime management is a confirmation of what previous authors have done on related issue. Information from one of the Key informants in this study revealed that there exist a cordial relationship between the police and local security networks. This relationship manifested in the success over crime control recorded in the town so far. The study revealed that personal and property crimes are common in the area. This further confirmed O'Sullivan and Reynolds (1986) classification of crimes into two namely personal and property crimes.

In the works of Daropale (2006) and Denlade (2007) violence is seen as social problems through which people are deprived of their belongings and inflicting pains and injuries on such people. The study revealed the stakeholders understanding of this issue particularly in relation to political violence that occur occasionally within the community. It is the appreciation of potential problems in this that made all stakeholders in security system in the common device a means of curtailing this through formal (Police duties) means.

The findings of this study support the position of Smith (1980) that existing informal controls in rural areas is responsible for lower rate of crime in rural areas. The tracing of increment in rate of crime in the area to influx of people from cities to the study area is another affirmation of the exposition of existing literatures. For instance Smith (1980) revealed based on a study carried out in rural Scotland that intensified policing of urban area has led to shifting of crime to rural area. This also applies to Mamu Community where the probable cause of current level of crime is being attributed to the influence of interaction between the immigrants and local residents.

Another interesting thing is the submission of Bilal (2002) that rural dwellers are rather taking rural crime as community problems that should not be allowed to go outside the community not that the level of crime is lower in rural areas. A deduction from this study to fit into this is the assertion by the Officer from Mamu Police Post that certain cases are being regarded as community issue and not reported to the Police for necessary action. The findings also point to the belief of Barclay et al. (2004) that high cohesiveness within communities is a factor that favours the commission of crimes (in rural areas) due to increased tolerance and techniques of neutralization; the implication of which is a situation whereby people will develop a set of justifications that allow them to excuse their neighbour's deviant behaviour. The findings of this work also point affirmed the cohesive nature of relationship among the residents of Mamu Community. The submission of the Police Officer also revealed that certain cases are being classified as 'family affairs' thus supporting the view of Barclay et al (2004).

Though in some communities, inadequate public transports is noted as part of the factors influencing the victims of rural area's willingness to report and respond to incidence of crime. When this is related to Mamu Community the reverse is the case as the population is not all that large, at the same time the Police Post is located in strategic area of the community for easy accessibility. Therefore the submission of Lawtley and Deane (2000) contradicted what was on ground in Mamu Community.

It should be noted that crime prevention initiatives in the community is contributing significantly to provide a focus for community organization and bring people together to raise awareness of specific crime prevention measures just like the observation of Williams (1999). The existence of Vigilante (a neighbourhood Watch outfit) as it was revealed in Scottish Farm Crime Survey (Laird et al., 1999) has helped in reducing fear of crime and improve feelings of security in Mamu Community.

The Implication on Community Policing Project in Nigeria

As a new set of procedures for making sure that traditional objectives of police are accomplished better, community policing as a philosophy seeks to engage the community as co-producer of law and order, from consulting the community, to involving them in solving crime and related social problems within the community (Trajanowicz et al. 1987). Though, the happenings in Mamu community in Ogun State were products of necessity of ensuring harmonious living, the way by which these were carried out without conflict of interests between the local vigilante and formal Police outfit justified the position of Jerome and David (1998) that when the police and the communities become 'co-producers of crime prevention one can talk of community policing being practiced in such community.

Mamu experience is therefore akin to the central premise of community oriented policing, which harps on the need for the public to play a more active part in enhancing public safety. In line with the position of Paul et al. (1995), crime management procedures like what was available in Mamu provide an avenue for the amelioration of unrealistic expectations for law enforcement through involvement of citizens in decision making and neighbourhood improvement. This policing style thus allows resources to be adequately utilized in targeting specific crime problems together with the people. As a result of the contradictions and social crisis generated by professional policing style, the police authorities therefore embraced police-community partnerships to address the causes of crime and fear as well as other community issue by improving their relationship with the community. By this, the police officer assigned to a specific neighbourhood sees him/herself as much a part of that neighbourhood as any other citizen residing there. The police should also consult with and take account of the wishes of the public in determining and evaluating operational policing and that they should collaborate with the public in identifying and solving local problems (Bennett, 1994).

Conclusion

The corroboration of most of the research findings in some of the foreign countries cited in the literature review with the findings of this study is a confirmation of the universality of solidarity among the people in rural areas across the globe. This also points to the fact that though cultural settings may vary, but one is bound to arrive at a meeting point in whatever issue being discussed across the globe. The success being recorded in Mamu is an affirmation that lack of political will and poor commitments are the only impediments in the way of virile community policing in Nigeria. It equally showed that partnerships between the police and members of the community on one hand and among the security agencies on the other hand will go a long way in enhancing public safety and reduction in crime rate. Existence of local arrangement or vigilante groups that are securing the environment as a matter of priority should be improved upon through provision of further training of this local arrangement and supervision by the police. Assimilation of these efforts by other communities is equally necessary for successful policing of the environment. Taking from the words of Bucqueroux (2011), the success of this project called community policing at the end of the day will inspire optimism that the criminal justice system, including law enforcement, prosecution, courts and corrections could begin to function as a seamless whole. The possibility of this lies on the situation where all elements working as partners with the people who have the most to gain or lose in making their neighbourhoods better and safer places in which to live and work

(Ogadinmma, 2012 and Bucquerou, 2011)

Recommendations

Though it has been said that it is not possible to do this since crime can only be reduced not totally eliminated (Okunola 2002). In line with this the following recommendations are being made as a way out for peaceful coexistence where meaningful development can take place:

- There is need to provide job opportunities or employment for young school leavers and graduates. This will go a long way to reduce poverty and crime wave in the societies.
- Some preventive measures should be adopted to remove all the factors that call for criminal disposition.
- A medium should be developed through which the police and public relation could be improved. This will ensure effective interaction and understanding between the public and police. This will help in restoring the confidence of the public in the police, thereby reducing the crime wave in the societies to the lowest level.
- The government should equip the Nigerian police with all they lack in terms of logistics, human resources, communication gadgets and finance in order to be able to curb or control crime in general.
- There is the need to recruit more hands into the Nigeria police to ensure optimal coverage of the populace and utilization of resources available. It should not be a matter of recruiting just for its sake, but recruitment of capable hands that are of high integrity. The Nigeria police personnel should be mandated to attend in-service or refresher courses after their basic training to update their knowledge.

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