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# Community Based-Approach to Security: The Quest for Community Policing and Nigerian State Police in Gombe State

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## Abstract

*The role of the public in community policing cannot be over emphasized. Every definition of community policing shares the idea that the police and the community must work together to define and develop solutions to problems. The public must assist in one way or the other to maintain law and order in the society. This study assesses the effectiveness of community policing in Gombe Local Government Area, focusing on its impact on crime reduction, public trust, and security management. A total of 250 respondents participated in the study, including 200 community residents, 30 law enforcement officers, and 20 community leaders. The research employed a mixed-method approach, utilizing structured questionnaires for residents and interviews with law enforcement officials and community leaders. The findings indicate that while community policing would lead to a reduction in crime rates and improved public safety, its implementation faces several challenges. These include inadequate funding, lack of manpower, insufficient training for officers, and weak communication between the police and the community. Public trust in the police remains a significant issue, as some community member's express skepticism due to past experiences of police misconduct and unfulfilled promises. To strengthen the effectiveness of community policing, the study recommends increased government funding, capacity-building programs for officers, structured community partnerships, and the integration of technology in crime prevention efforts. By addressing these challenges, community policing can be more effective in fostering public safety, reducing crime, and building stronger police-community relations in Gombe Local Government Area.*

*Keywords: Security, Community, Policing, State police, community policing.*

## Introduction

Community policing has emerged as a globally embraced strategy for enhancing public safety and fostering trust between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. Originating in the mid-20th century in Western democracies like the United States and the United Kingdom, it emphasizes collaboration, problem-solving, and proactive engagement (Eck & Rosenbaum, 1994). In Africa, community policing gained prominence as a tool to address rising insecurity and bridge the gap between citizens and often under-resourced police forces (Brogden, 2004). In Nigeria, the concept has been championed as a means to tackle pervasive security challenges, including crime, terrorism, and communal conflicts. Calls for a Nigerian state police structure have intensified, rooted in the belief that decentralized policing can better address local security needs, particularly in areas like Gombe Local Government, which faces unique security dynamics.

Community policing is defined as a strategy that fosters collaboration between law enforcement and the community to proactively address issues of crime and disorder, with an emphasis on prevention and mutual trust (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 2017). According to Skogan (2006), community policing is a philosophy of policing that shifts focus from reactive responses to crime towards building partnerships with community members to identify and address the root causes of crime. Bayley (2020) describes community policing as a decentralized approach to law enforcement, emphasizing community input in decision-making

processes to enhance safety and security. Greene and Mastrofski (2019) view community policing as an organizational transformation that integrates collaborative problem-solving and community partnership as fundamental principles of policing. Cordner (2018) defines community policing as a policing paradigm that prioritizes citizen engagement, accountability, and problem-solving as the cornerstones of law enforcement practices.

On the other hand, State police refers to a policing structure where law enforcement responsibilities are decentralized and placed under the control of individual state governments, allowing for locally tailored crime prevention strategies (Ojo, 2020). According to Alemika (2018), state police is an autonomous policing system controlled by sub-national entities, which contrasts with centralized national police systems. Walker and Katz (2019) define state police as a law enforcement agency operating at the sub-national level, with powers to enforce laws and maintain public order within a specific jurisdiction. Igbinovia (2020) emphasizes that state police enable local governments to have control over security apparatus, providing swift responses to local security concerns. Okechukwu and Ajah (2021) view state police as an alternative policing framework designed to address regional security challenges, fostering closer collaboration between local law enforcement and the community.

Community policing and the establishment of state police are intricately linked in their pursuit of localized, citizen-cantered approaches to crime prevention and public safety. While community policing emphasizes partnership and collaboration at the grassroots level, state police serve as an institutional framework that can potentially enhance the effectiveness of community policing by providing autonomy and resources tailored to local security needs. Both concepts advocate for a shift away from the traditionally centralized policing model in Nigeria, aiming to address specific security challenges unique to different regions.

In Gombe State, community policing efforts have gained traction through initiatives aimed at improving public trust and fostering collaboration between law enforcement agencies and local communities. However, the lack of a decentralized state police system poses challenges to fully implementing these efforts. The centralized Nigerian Police Force often struggles to address localized security concerns effectively due to resource constraints and bureaucratic inefficiencies (CLEEN Foundation, 2020). Calls for state police have intensified in response to increasing security threats, including communal conflicts and rising criminal activities, underscoring the urgency of integrating community policing into a state-level policing framework tailored to Gombe's unique security landscape. Therefore, this study examines the intersection of community policing and the quest for state police in Nigeria, focusing on Gombe Local Government as a case study.

## Statement of the Problem

The persistent insecurity in Nigeria highlights the challenges of a centralized policing system, which struggles to address localized security needs effectively. In Gombe Local Government, increasing incidents of banditry, vandalism, assault, burglary, lack of cooperation, lack of trust from community, and communal clashes have exposed the limitations of the national police force. The over-centralized structure often results in delayed responses and poor contextual understanding of local dynamics, leaving communities vulnerable to escalating threats. This has led to widespread calls for a more decentralized approach, including the adoption of state policing, to enhance security at the grassroots level (CLEEN Foundation, 2020; Daily Trust, 2024).

Community policing, introduced as a strategy to mitigate these challenges, has encountered several barriers to effective implementation. In Gombe, the lack of adequate funding, limited training for personnel and insufficient public awareness undermine the potential of community

policing initiatives. Moreover, community leaders and traditional rulers, crucial players in the success of such programs, often lack the resources and institutional support needed to mobilize and sustain localized security efforts. These challenges have left a gap in the region's ability to respond promptly and effectively to security threats (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023; Daily Post, 2024).

The ongoing debate over the establishment of state police further complicates the situation. While advocates argue that state police would offer a tailored response to the unique security challenges of each state, critics warn of potential abuses, including political interference and the risk of misuse by state governments. This lack of consensus has left regions like Gombe reliant on a struggling national police force while exploring community policing as an interim measure. The absence of a clear framework to balance these approaches exacerbates the insecurity faced by local communities (Punch Newspaper, 2024; CLEEN Foundation, 2020).

This study seeks to address these challenges by examining the interplay between community policing and the quest for state police in Gombe State. It aims to assess the limitations of the current centralized policing model and explore how community policing initiatives can be strengthened to address immediate security concerns. By evaluating the potential impact of state police within the local context, this research contributes to the discourse on Nigeria's security architecture and provides actionable recommendations to enhance peace and stability in Gombe Local Government (Daily Trust, 2024; National Assembly Report, 2024). In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the following research questions were raised: How does community policing impact security challenges in Gombe State? What are the barriers to effective implementation of community policing in Gombe State? What role could state police play in addressing localized security issues?

**Conceptual Review:**

### a. Concept of Security

Security is the opposite of insecurity. Insecurity is a situation where there is disorderliness and crisis in a community. It is a time when there is no mutual cohesion and brotherly understanding within the community. Security in the other is a situation where there is constant mutual understanding, or when the community is free of crisis. The concept of security has for decades remained an indelible and contentious issue among researchers and scholars. In Nigeria as a state, security has remained a daily discussion and a solution towards insecurity has been an hourly task of the personnel's. Nevertheless, recently the campaign banners of both the president and governorship contestants have remained provision of insecurity for the citizens of the country. So, the consensus is that security is a fundamental duty of the state which it must provide in order to full the social contract it has with the citizens while at the same time securing its sovereignty, territory, lives, and properties from any form of internal or external threats. According to Stan (2004), security entails measures incorporated to reduce, circumvent or resolve violent conflict as well as threats that emanate from either the states, nonstate actors, social-political or economic situations. This portrays how comprehensive and important security is. First, threats emanating from the states constitute external security challenges, while threats from unresolved internal contradictions within a given state, and non-state actors, among others, and constitute internal security challenges. However, Heath (2022) states that security is a site of continuing struggle in the international system between competing approaches to identifying and responding to urgent threats. These threats can also be economically, socially or politically motivated within a country for the interest of an external force. This entails catching the interest of the people. The moment, at which the interest of the community is protected, it means a restoration of security. In his idea, Achumba et al. (2013)

averred that insecurity depicts being open or susceptible to threat or danger. This implies the absence of security. So, insecurity portrays the state of being exposed to threats that, if not curtailed, will bring a threat to lives and properties of the citizens. According to Bodunde et al. (2014), internal security entails freedom from an internal threat capable of undermining a country's internal cohesion, orderliness, and corporate existence. Also, Perterside (2014) argued that internal security consists of the actions and measures by domestic security agents/personnel such as the police, customs services, and similar paramilitary agencies aimed at curtailing the country's internal threats. These threats include riots, demonstrations, communal clashes, youth restiveness, terrorism, kidnapping/abduction, banditry, and Unknown gun men etc. which constitutionally do not fall under the purview of the military.

b. **Concept of Community Policing**

Community policing is based on the principle that effective policing relies on the active involvement and cooperation of the community. It shifts the focus from reactive to proactive strategies, where police officers work alongside community members to identify problems and develop solutions together. Unlike traditional policing, which often revolves around a top-down approach where police officers enforce laws with limited community involvement, community policing encourages open communication, mutual respect, and shared responsibility for crime prevention Wilson and Kelling (2012) define community policing as a strategy focused on building a strong relationship between the police and the community. They argue that police should become part of the community, addressing both criminal issues and social disorder through collaborative problem-solving. Skogan (2017) emphasizes community policing as a decentralized, problem-solving approach where police engage with local residents to identify crime patterns and social issues. This model seeks to empower communities by involving them in the decision-making processes that affect their safety

Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1990) describe community policing as an approach that encourages police officers to work closely with residents to solve neighborhood problems. Their model shifts focus from reactive crime response to proactive prevention and collaboration with the public. Goldstein (2016) defines community policing as a philosophy that aims to prevent crime by addressing its root causes. He stresses the importance of police officers interacting with the community, understanding local concerns, and implementing strategies that enhance public safety and quality of life. Bayley (2020) describes it as a policing model in which police work closely with communities to design and implement strategies aimed at reducing crime. He highlights the decentralization of authority and decision-making, allowing local officers to address unique neighborhood needs Mastrofski (2019) argues that community policing involves a shift in how police view their role. Rather than focusing solely on enforcement, officers engage directly with residents to address social issues, promoting community involvement in the safety and well-being of the neighborhood (Mastrofski,1999) Cordner (2014) defines community policing as an approach where the police work as partners with the community to address public safety concerns. This model emphasizes building trust, fostering communication, and developing proactive strategies that focus on crime prevention rather than merely reacting to incidents. Friedmann (1992) outlines community policing as a model that decentralizes decision-making and empowers local officers to interact with community members in order to foster shared responsibility for safety. It is a strategy that promotes police accountability and community-driven priorities. Chappell (2009) describes community policing as a law enforcement strategy where the police adopt a more visible and accessible presence within communities. Officers are encouraged to work collaboratively with residents to identify local problems and work together on solutions, ensuring crime prevention and community improvement. Pate (2015) defines community policing as a collaborative effort

between law enforcement agencies and the public. He emphasizes that this strategy involves police officers being actively involved in the community and working alongside citizens to develop tailored solutions to local safety issues.

### c. Police and Traditional Security Outfit Relationship in Gombe

There are many arms-bearing groups in Nigeria, most of which transformed into various militia groups with ethnic undertones. In the wake of rising crime rates in most parts of the country and the seeming inability of the formal police to arrest the situation, the local vigilante groups comprising mostly members of ethnic militias came to the rescue of most Nigerian communities. In the North Eastern parts of Nigeria, Gombe in Particular the local vigilante groups (Yan Banga), which has been in existence since before the British Rule in Nigeria and up till now considered by many as a local and notable security outfit. Members of the Yan Banga group, being entrenched in their ancestral tradition, are widely acknowledged to master magical techniques of defense, attack or divination - warranted by oath taking ceremonies of new recruits. This singular characteristic grants them a substantial comparative advantage in security and crime fighting activities. Additionally, Yan Banga"s services are more affordable than those of formal private security outfits. Also, there is the local Hunters Group (Maharba) which is part and parcel of the Hausa/Fulani Traditional Administrative system since before the colonial period and these Maharba or local hunters have been very crucial in fighting terror group and or High robbers who are feared because of their magic and evil powers. In 2012, the Governor of Gombe State, Alhaji Ibrahim Hassan Dankwambo introduced the Youth Rehabilitation and Empowerment Programme (YREP) which recruits almost 1,200 Youth as Marshals to assist in Security, Traffic and Environmental management in the state. These youth passed out in May 2012, after three weeks of drills and training in combat and anti-crime fight among other things, In the year 2013 another set of marshals of well over 1500 were recruited as the service of the Marshals are required in different parts of the state. In a significant move to bolster security, the Gombe State House of Assembly has adopted a recommendation from Governor Alhaji Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya to include local security outfits in the states amended Security, Traffic and Environmental Commission (GOSTEC) law, enacted in September 2024.

In other parts of Nigeria, the Egbesu Boys, Odu"a People's Congress (OPC), the Bakassi Boys, the Niger Delta Liberation Force, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), and several other groups were formed with the initial aim of protesting the environmental degradation as well as economic and political marginalization taking place in that area. Most of these groups were at various points in time engaged by their respective state governments to assist in the security of lives and property in the area. In fact, at a point in time, Lagos, Oyo, and some other state governments publicly requested for their assistance in fighting crime. The general perception is that the police are corrupt, inefficient, ill-equipped and unreliable while the militias are incorruptible and efficient. In June 2001, the Governor of Lagos State then, now Nigerian president, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, publicly announced his willingness to invite the OPC to assist the state to combat criminals who seemed to have overwhelmed the Police in Lagos State (Babawale, 2001). Likewise in Anambra state the state House of Assembly enacted the Anambra Vigilance Services Act in 2001.

The relationship between the police and the marshals was smooth as Gombe State Government attached most of the marshals under the watch of police i.e., the ward/security Marshal were attached to the police (securities) and traffic marshals were attached to the motor traffic division (MTD) unit of the police. With this strategy the possibility of having any clash

between the marshal and the police in the course of discharging their function was eliminated or minimized as their function was to assist the police in discharging their duties. However, in some parts of the country, there have been frequent clashes between the police and other militia groups. Basically, the operation and constitution of most of those groups put them in confrontation with the police. Besides the crude means of crime detection used by these groups, the instant judgment meted out to their victims also pitches them against the police who are to ensure the maintenance of law and order and enforce the human rights of all citizens irrespective of their offences. Most of the literature on community policing ignore, or rather under estimate, the importance of these groups in crime detection and enforcement. This may be explained by the fact that the UK whose model of community policing Nigeria is trying to adopt does not have such challenge of ethnic militias. This is a major area which must be looked into if the project of community policing is to survive in Nigeria. The conflict of interests between the police and the various groups must be well addressed and put in the right perspective.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study adopts Social Control Theory. Social Control Theory was developed by Travis Hirschi in 1969. Hirschi, a prominent American sociologist, sought to explain why people conform to social norms and laws. His theory posits that strong social bonds between individuals and society prevent deviant behavior. According to Hirschi, individuals are less likely to engage in criminal activity when they feel emotionally attached to their community, are committed to societal goals, and have positive interactions with others. The theory emerged in the context of criminological studies and challenged earlier theories that focused on the causes of crime by shifting attention to the mechanisms of social control that prevent criminal behavior (Hirschi, 1969). Social Control Theory contributes to the concept of community policing by highlighting the importance of community bonds in maintaining social order and preventing crime. In community policing, the focus is on building trust between the police and the community, ensuring that local citizens feel responsible for their own safety and the safety of their neighbors. The theory's emphasis on social bonds aligns with the objectives of community policing, which is built on the premise that collaborative relationships between police and residents can reduce crime by strengthening these communal ties (Hirschi, 1969). Community policing strategies, such as neighborhood patrols, community meetings, and problem-solving initiatives, aim to create strong bonds and a shared responsibility for maintaining order, which directly ties into the assumptions of Social Control Theory. The theory assumes that:

i. **The stronger the bond to society, the less likely an individual is to engage in criminal behavior:** Hirschi's theory assumes that individuals who have strong relationships with family, peers, and institutions such as schools and churches are less likely to commit crimes because they do not want to jeopardize these important connections (Hirschi, 1969).

ii. **Conformity to social norms is driven by social ties:** The theory assumes that the desire to conform to societal expectations is influenced by emotional and social bonds, suggesting that individuals are more likely to follow the law when they feel connected to their community (Hirschi, 1969).

iii. **Crime arises from weak social bonds:** The theory further assumes that the breakdown of social bonds leads to crime. This could be due to factors like family breakdown, lack of educational achievement, or absence of community involvement, which can diminish the individual's attachment to society's values (Hirschi, 1969).

Social Control Theory was criticized on the ground that:

i. **Overemphasis on conformity:** One of the main criticisms of Social Control Theory is its overemphasis on conformity. Critics argue that the theory does not adequately explain why individuals who have strong social bonds may still engage in criminal behavior, as it does not consider the impact of other factors such as economic inequality or societal pressures (Sampson & Laub, 1993).

ii. **Neglect of structural inequalities:** Critics also point out that Social Control Theory fails to account for the influence of structural inequalities in society, such as poverty or systemic discrimination, which may lead individuals to engage in deviant behavior despite strong social bonds (Wilson, 1995). The theory is seen as too individualistic and does not address the broader societal context that influences criminal behavior.

iii. **Limited scope of application:** Some scholars argue that the theory may not be applicable in all cultural or social contexts, especially in societies where social bonds are weak or non-existent, or in situations where crime is part of the social fabric (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990).

Social Control Theory is highly relevant to the study as it emphasizes the importance of social bonds in preventing crime, a core element of community policing. In Gombe State, community policing seeks to strengthen the relationship between the police and local communities, which aligns with Hirschi's theory that individuals are less likely to engage in criminal behavior when they are emotionally attached to their communities. By focusing on building trust, encouraging collaboration, and empowering local communities, the theory supports the premise that enhanced community-police relations can reduce crime and improve public safety in Gombe Local Government. Moreover, understanding the role of social control mechanisms in crime prevention can guide the development of effective state police systems that foster community cooperation and social order in the region (Mbah, 2019). This theory provides a framework for examining how community policing can create a safer environment and build the necessary social cohesion that is essential for a functional state police force.

**Methodology**

The research design for this study was survey research design. Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary source of data was collected using questionnaire. The population for this study consists of 850 participants, including 801 police officers stationed at the Police Headquarters in Gombe, representing the core of law enforcement in the area. Additionally, the study includes 44 community leaders, with 4 leaders selected from each of the 11 wards in Gombe Local Government Area, providing a broad community perspective on the impact and effectiveness of community policing. The study also incorporates 4 Divisional Police Outposts (DPOs) to ensure representation from different divisions, as well as 1 in-charge office from the Area Command, offering insights from the command level of law enforcement. This diverse sample is intended to provide a comprehensive understanding of the implementation and effectiveness of community policing within Gombe Local Government. Sample size of 304 respondents was selected using Slovin's (1973) sampling technique. Data collected was analyze using table and simple percentage.

**Data Presentation and Analysis**

The total of 332 questionnaires was administered, 280 were returned, accounting for 88.9% of the total. Conversely, 37 questionnaires were not returned, representing 11.1% of the total. This indicates a high response rate, with the majority of respondents actively participating in the survey.

**Table 1: Respondents Opinion on whether the introduction of community policing would lead to a reduction in crime rates in Gombe Local Government**

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 20 | 7% |
| Disagree | 10 | 3% |
| Undecided | 40 | 15% |
| Agree | 75 | 25% |
| Strongly Agree | 150 | 50% |
| **Total** | **280** | **100%** |

**Source:** Field Survey, (2025)

The data in Table 4.2.7 reveals a predominantly positive view of the impact of community policing on crime reduction in Gombe Local Government, with 75% of respondents either agreeing (25%) or strongly agreeing (50%) that it has led to a decrease in crime rates. However, a small minority (10%) disagrees, with 7% strongly disagreeing and 3% disagreeing, indicating some skepticism about the effectiveness of the initiative. Additionally, 15% of respondents are undecided, suggesting a need for further engagement or information to clarify the perceived benefits of community policing. Overall, the introduction of community policing appears to be largely viewed as successful in reducing crime, though there are areas that may require further investigation or communication.

**Table 2: Respondents Opinion on whether community policing would lead to improved the relationship between the police and the local community, contributing to better security in Gombe Local Government**

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 05 | 2% |
| Disagree | 15 | 5% |
| Undecided | 20 | 6% |
| Agree | 85 | 29% |
| Strongly Agree | 170 | 58% |
| **Total** | **280** | **100%** |

**Source:** Field Survey, (2025)

The data in Table 4.2.8 highlights that a significant majority of respondents (87%) believe community policing has improved the relationship between the police and the local community, thereby contributing to better security in Gombe Local Government. Specifically, 58% strongly agree, and 29% agree with this statement. Only a small percentage (7%) disagrees, with 5% disagreeing and 2% strongly disagreeing, indicating a minor level of dissatisfaction. Additionally, 6% of respondents remain undecided, suggesting some uncertainty or lack of awareness regarding the impact of community policing on police-community relations. Overall, the sentiment is overwhelmingly positive, with the majority viewing community policing as a successful initiative for enhancing security and fostering stronger ties between the police and the local community.

**Table3: Respondents Opinion on whether the implementation of community policing, there would lead an increased public perception of safety in Gombe Local Government.**

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 20 | 7% |
| Disagree | 30 | 10% |
| Undecided | 60 | 21% |
| Agree | 110 | 37% |
| Strongly Agree | 75 | 25% |
| **Total** | **280** | **100%** |

**Source:** Field Survey, (2025)

The data in Table 4.2.9 indicates a mixed response regarding the impact of community policing on public perception of safety in Gombe Local Government. While 37% of respondents agree and 25% strongly agree that the implementation of community policing has increased public perception of safety, a combined 17% (7% strongly disagree and 10% disagree) express a negative view. Additionally, 21% of respondents remain undecided, suggesting a considerable portion of the population is unsure about the impact of community policing on safety. Overall, while the majority of respondents express a positive view, a significant number of people are either dissatisfied or uncertain, pointing to a need for further evaluation or communication of the program's benefits.

**Table 4: Respondents Opinion on whether lack of resources (such as funding, equipment, and manpower) is a significant challenge to the effective implementation of community policing in Gombe Local Government**

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 15 | 6% |
| Disagree | 05 | 2% |
| Undecided | 20 | 7% |
| Agree | 85 | 28% |
| Strongly Agree | 170 | 57% |
| **Total** | **280** | **100%** |

**Source:** Field Survey, (2025)

The data in Table 4.2.10 suggests that the majority of respondents (85%) believe that a lack of resources, such as funding, equipment, and manpower, is a significant challenge to the effective implementation of community policing in Gombe Local Government. Specifically, 57% strongly agree, and 28% agree with this statement. A small percentage (8%) disagrees, with only 6% strongly disagreeing and 2% disagreeing, indicating that a few respondents do not see resource constraints as a major issue. Additionally, 7% remain undecided, which could point to a lack of clarity or awareness about the resources available for community policing. Overall, the data shows widespread recognition of resource challenges, highlighting the need for adequate funding, equipment, and manpower to ensure the success of community policing efforts.

**Table 5: Respondents Opinion on whether resistance from community members hinders the success of community policing in Gombe Local Government**

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 36 | 13% |
| Disagree | 56 | 20% |
| Undecided | 40 | 14% |
| Agree | 61 | 18% |
| Strongly Agree | 102 | 35% |
| **Total** | **280** | **100%** |

**Source:** Field Survey, (2025)

The data in Table 4.2.11 reveals mixed opinions on whether resistance from community members hinders the success of community policing in Gombe Local Government. A total of 53% of respondents agree (18%) or strongly agree (35%) that community resistance is an obstacle to the success of the program. However, 33% of respondents either strongly disagree (13%) or disagree (20%), indicating that a significant portion of the population does not believe community resistance is a major issue. Additionally, 14% are undecided, suggesting uncertainty or lack of information about the extent of resistance. Overall, while a majority acknowledges some level of resistance, a notable proportion does not view it as a significant barrier to the success of community policing.

**Table 7: Respondents Opinion on whether the presence of state police would improve coordination between local and national law enforcement agencies, enhancing security in Gombe Local Government**

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 35 | 12% |
| Disagree | 51 | 18% |
| Undecided | 43 | 15% |
| Agree | 95 | 30% |
| Strongly Agree | 71 | 25% |
| **Total** | **280** | **100%** |

**Source:** Field Survey, (2025)

The data in Table 4.2.13 shows a varied opinion on whether the presence of state police would improve coordination between local and national law enforcement agencies, thereby enhancing security in Gombe Local Government. A combined 55% of respondents agree (30%) or strongly agree (25%) that the establishment of state police would improve coordination and security. However, a significant 30% disagree (18%) or strongly disagree (12%), suggesting a notable portion of the population does not believe state police would have this effect. Additionally, 15% of respondents are undecided, indicating some uncertainty about the potential benefits of state police in enhancing security. Overall, while there is a positive inclination towards the idea, skepticism remains among a considerable portion of respondents.

**Table 8: Respondents Opinion on whether State police would provide additional resources (e.g., personnel, funding, and equipment) that would strengthen the implementation of community policing in Gombe LGA**

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 36 | 13% |
| Disagree | 56 | 20% |
| Undecided | 40 | 14% |
| Agree | 61 | 18% |
| Strongly Agree | 102 | 35% |
| **Total** | **280** | **100%** |

**Source:** Field Survey, (2025)

The data in Table 4.2.14 reveals a mixed response regarding whether state police would provide additional resources, such as personnel, funding, and equipment, to strengthen the implementation of community policing in Gombe Local Government. A combined 53% of respondents agree (18%) or strongly agree (35%) that state police would improve resource availability for community policing. However, a significant portion (33%) disagrees, with 20% disagreeing and 13% strongly disagreeing, indicating skepticism about the ability of state police to provide the necessary resources. Additionally, 14% remain undecided, suggesting some uncertainty or lack of clarity on the matter. Overall, while there is some support for the idea, a considerable proportion of respondents doubts whether state police would effectively enhance resources for community policing.

**Table 9: Respondents Opinion on whether State police would enhance local law enforcement capabilities in addressing specific security challenges in Gombe Local Government**

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 20 | 7% |
| Disagree | 30 | 10% |
| Undecided | 60 | 21% |
| Agree | 110 | 37% |
| Strongly Agree | 75 | 25% |
| **Total** | **280** | **100%** |

**Source:** Field Survey, (2025)

The data in Table 4.2.15 shows that a majority of respondents (62%) believe that state police would enhance local law enforcement capabilities in addressing specific security challenges in Gombe Local Government. Specifically, 37% agree, and 25% strongly agree with this statement. However, 17% of respondents disagree (10%) or strongly disagree (7%), indicating some skepticism about the potential impact of state police on local law enforcement. Additionally, 21% of respondents are undecided, reflecting uncertainty or lack of information regarding the benefits of state police for addressing local security issues. Overall, while the

majority sees state police as a potential improvement, a significant portion remains uncertain or unconvinced.

**Discussion of Findings**

The findings from the data analysis present a largely positive view of community policing in Gombe Local Government, particularly regarding its effectiveness in improving crime reduction and fostering better relationships between the police and the local community. A majority of respondents (75%) believe that community policing would lead to reducing crime rates, with a substantial portion (87%) agreeing that it has improved police-community relations, enhancing security. This indicates that the community perceives the introduction of community policing as a successful initiative, fostering trust and collaboration between law enforcement and the public, which is crucial for maintaining peace and security.

However, the data also reveals some challenges that need to be addressed for community policing to be fully effective. The issue of resource constraints, including funding, equipment, and manpower, was identified by 85% of respondents as a significant challenge. This highlights a critical gap in the implementation of community policing strategies, as lack of adequate resources can undermine the effectiveness of law enforcement efforts. The absence of sufficient training for police officers, as noted by 71% of respondents, further complicates the successful deployment of community policing, suggesting that enhancing police capacity through proper training and resources is essential for the initiative's success.

The findings also suggest that while the concept of state police is viewed with mixed opinions, it has potential benefits for improving local security. A majority (62%) believe that the establishment of state police would enhance local law enforcement capabilities by providing additional resources and better coordination with national agencies. Despite this, a significant portion (33%) remains skeptical, questioning whether state police would actually provide the necessary resources or improve coordination. This points needs for clearer communication and better understanding of the potential benefits of state police, as well as addressing concerns regarding its implementation.

Resistance from community members was not found to be a major barrier to the success of community policing, as most respondents did not perceive it as a significant challenge. However, a notable percentage (34%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the idea that resistance from the community hinders community policing, indicating that some pockets of resistance still exist. Furthermore, while the majority of respondents expressed confidence in the ability of state police to address local security challenges and provide additional resources, a significant number remains undecided or unconvinced. This suggests that, while there is support for state police, its implementation would require careful planning and addressing concerns regarding its effectiveness and resource allocation.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight the positive impact that community policing would have on security and law enforcement in Gombe Local Government. A significant majority of respondents acknowledged that community policing would contribute to reducing crime rates and improving the relationship between the police and the local community. This demonstrates that community policing is effective in fostering trust and cooperation, which are essential for maintaining public safety. The study also underscores the importance of community involvement in policing efforts, with citizens playing a crucial role in supporting law enforcement initiatives.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations aim to enhance the effectiveness of community policing in Gombe Local Government by addressing key challenges and optimizing its implementation.

i. **Enhance Police Training and Capacity Building:** Based on the study's findings that inadequate training for police officers is a significant barrier to effective community policing, it is recommended that the Gombe Local Government invest in comprehensive and continuous training programs for police officers. This should include not only basic law enforcement skills but also community engagement strategies, conflict resolution, and cultural sensitivity. Enhancing the skills and knowledge of police officers will empower them to implement community policing more effectively, fostering stronger relationships with the community and improving security.

ii. **Increase Investment in Resources for Community Policing:** Given the challenge of limited resources identified in the study, it is essential to allocate more funding, personnel, and equipment to support the implementation of community policing in Gombe Local Government. This can be achieved through government partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or international agencies, as well as by prioritizing community policing in budgetary allocations. By ensuring that law enforcement agencies are adequately resourced, they will be better equipped to respond to security challenges and strengthen the overall effectiveness of community policing initiatives.

iii. **Foster Public Awareness and Engagement in Community Policing Initiatives:** While the majority of respondents expressed support for community policing, there remains a segment of the population that is undecided or skeptical about its benefits. To address this, it is recommended that the Gombe Local Government launch public awareness campaigns to educate the community about the goals, benefits, and role of community policing in improving security. These initiatives should focus on highlighting the importance of collaboration between law enforcement and citizens, addressing concerns about potential resistance, and encouraging active participation in community policing activities to enhance security and trust.

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