

SMARTER POLICING PARADIGM FOR COMBATING CRIMES AND INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Crime has predominantly increased in Nigeria, criminals have targeted critical national infrastructure, banking sectors, some of the governmental departments, private and public institutions. The need has risen for the law enforcement to adopt a unique strategy of policing in combating and preventing crime in Nigeria. There is a need for a smarter approach to policing that turns away from the traditional reactive style used in the past, to a proactive framework that focuses on employing analysis and criminal intelligence to reduce and prevent prolific recidivist offenders. The main reason for instituting criminal justice system is to prevent, reduce, combat and eliminate crime but in practice, it will be difficult to achieve this goal, due to the lack of cooperation between the criminal justice system officials and other governmental structures, departments and communities, can hinder safety and security around different communities in Nigeria. The study focuses on the evaluation of smarter policing paradigm that can be effective in combating crime in Nigeria. The paper adopted qualitative methodology; an interview technique was used to collect data. Findings reveal that Nigeria lacks intelligence capacities in addressing crime, few personnel are specifically trained on how to operationalize intelligence in addressing crime in Nigeria. Reactive policing is not effective in combating crime. The recommendation includes need to engage officers in specialised intelligence training, should transcend to more proactive strategy and should adopt a smarter policing model to tackle insecurity in Nigeria.

Keywords: Smarter policing, Paradigm, Effective, Crime Control, Combating insecurity and Nigeria.

Introduction

There has been an increase in different categories of crime in Nigeria recently. Criminals, business competitors, foreign state actors and private individuals troll cyber systems/social network sites looking for information or people to target for exploitation. Terrorism is a global phenomenon that poses a unique challenge globally. There has been increase on illegal activities such as extremism/insurgences, transnational crimes, drug trafficking and related offences, organised crimes, international proliferation of arms and smuggling, human trafficking, technology-enhanced crime such as cyber-related crimes, hackers, spreading of viruses and ransom-ware, espionage, online fraud, theft of intellectual property and information theft. The problem is that, there are few trained intelligence officers and the capacity in preventing and combating these categories of crime in Nigeria (Ezeji, 2017). Al-Qaeda heavily operated in Africa and has done quite a while; it is an umbrella organisation with dozens of small fractions worldwide. Many factions operate in Africa which consists of about two

thousand members trying to overthrow governments; they have made over hundreds of millions of the dollar from kidnapping and raids on local settlements, difficult to defeat due to their tactics of guerrilla fighting and retreating into rural areas. Boko Haram has been committing human rights abuses in 2002 until 2020, the group joined the Islamist States in most bizarre merger ever; involved in kidnapping, abduction, banditry in Northern Nigeria, their activities have displaced more than 5 million people in Nigeria. They use little girls, men and women to orchestrate suicide bombing and have been involved in killing of people more than every other terrorist groups in the world. The question is can the policing model presently implemented in Nigeria be effective in combating crime? Does Nigeria have intelligence capacities to detect or predict any threat that arises against national security. Do we have specialised criminal justice officials' /intelligence officers in Nigeria that can implement incorporate intelligence-led policing strategies in solving crime? Policing can no longer rely on reactive management of crime and criminal justice systems/police management should embrace smarter policing strategies. This study evaluates policing model adopted and implemented by the police, identify the merit and effectiveness of proactive policing and smarter policing strategies that can be adopted to address insecurity in Nigeria. Qualitative methodology was adopted in the study. An interview technique was used for data collection. Sixty participants were purposively selected for the interview due to their vast knowledge on the topic under study. The participants included officers from the police, community leaders and criminologists from higher institute of learning drawn from Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt and Enugu. Qualitative analysis was used for data analysis and interpretations.

These questions will be addressed in the paper;

- (1) What is the policing model presently adopted and implemented in Nigeria?
- (2) Are the models of policing effective in addressing crime?
- (3) Do we have intelligence capacities and capabilities in addressing insecurity in Nigeria?
- (4) Can smarter policing be adopted and implemented in Nigeria?

Conceptual framework/Literature review

Policing concepts

Combating crime includes every activity of the police functions of reactive and proactive policing, visible policing, law enforcement and crime investigations. It excludes crime prevention (Gilbert, 2010). Prevention of crime is the duty of everyone and ensures that crime does not occur. Crime prevention is not exclusive to the police or criminal justice system (Olutola, 2011).

Control of crime has to do with all efforts channeled towards the management of the level of crime in a society. Crime control seems is a part of crime combating an aspect of policing philosophies of crime investigation and law enforcement (Burger, 2005). The crime reduction involves developing sound strategies to reduce the occurrence of crime that immensely affecting the communities. The crime reduction requires gathering information on the crime trend in a particular area or community, then, the data obtained used on improving efficiency

and effective delivery of appropriate preventative responses and measures in that community (Sherman et al., 2007).

Disruption of crime occurs when a crime is hampered for a period, normally as a result of law enforcement action, but not permanently disabled. The disruption is defined as interrupting or inhibiting a threat actor from engaging in criminal or national security-related activity through law enforcement actions and/or regulatory action that impedes the normal and effective operation of the targeted criminal (Gills, 2013).

Different types of policing models

Standard model is easily defined, easily operated within the police administrative units; use top-down approach police management, offence detection, increased arrest and detection and increased efficiency. Standard model of policing includes random patrol, rapid uniformed respond, and deployment of officers to crime investigation once an offence has been detected, and reliance on law enforcement and the legal system as the primary means of reducing crime. Wiesburn and Eck (2004) assert that previous radio directed rapid response; criminal investigations and crime fighting were the dominant models of law enforcement, the job of the police become managing risk, trying to keep the public happy and respond instantly to crime threats, once they emerged. Reactive policing investigating policing became the order of the day; reactive policing strategies assume that detection will reduce the number of offenders and act as a deterrent to criminals, thus having a preventative risk.

Community policing is not easily defined, superficially neighbourhood inclined, bottom-up approach, priorities determined by the community, the target is unclear, satisfying community and increases police legitimacy. Davis et al. (2003) revealed the characteristics of community policing as follows: decentralization of authority and patrol strategies that intend to promote communication between police and the citizens, commitment to problem-oriented policing, permitting public to participate in setting police priorities and developing tactics, empowering communities to help solve their own problem through sponsorship programme.

Problem-oriented policing is easily define, difficult to adopt, focuses on problem, and appropriate for problem-solving, the priorities varies from one problem to another, successful in crime reduction, and other problems. Problem-oriented policing is a conceptual approach that addresses a vast array of policing issues. Problem-oriented policing requires police to delve deeper into the underlying problems that affect the safety and security of the community. It requires police to be able to scan the broad array of information sources they have access to, including calls for services, recorded crime, informants, and the community and to reclassify these requests for assistance or action into aggregations not based on bureaucratic categories but instead on items associated with an underlying problem (Scott, 2000).

CompStat is a short for Compare Statistics, which was the computer file name of the original programme, it is a combination of management philosophy and organisational management tools for the police department, also used in the police department for the accountability process. It is easily defined, and easily adopted, oriented from the police administrative units,

uses a top-down approach police management from analysis priorities, determining to target crime and disorders hot spots, successful in lowering crime rate and crime reduction. CompStat policing model is easy to define, mid-level commanders are more accountable to the executive level of the policing department for managing crime in their area of command units. CompStat is an accountability mechanism that encourages accountability. Precinct captains and managers will use regular detailed crime intelligence and from this intelligence flow determine an appropriate crime strategy. More (2003) affirms that the crime reduction mechanism of compStat involves four principles that include; timely and accurate intelligence; effective tactics; rapid deployment; and relentless follow up and assessment. In compStat model, maps of crime were projected on to a wall. It allows participants to concentrate on crime hot spots, and pressure was placed on precinct commanders to address emerging crime hot spots identified through this intelligence. The context of using of intelligence in compStat precludes more of mapped data or information than the integrated crime intelligence. Crime data and geographical information system (GIS) affect compStat, and are more than data analysis. It is the combination of crime mapping, operational strategy and accountability among mid-level commanders, which also combine technical and marginal system.

Predictive policing is frequently applied to high crime places and also, applicable to offenders. Predictive policing involves the use of historical data to create a spatiotemporal forecast of area of criminality or crime hot spot that will be the basis for police resources allocation decision with the expectation that having officers at the proposed time and place will deter or detect criminal activity (Ratcliffe, 2014).

Evidence-based policing is more of philosophy or marginal style, where scientific evidence is the central foundation for decision-making policing. It resonates on the principle that research should be used to target the places where police are needed the most; police should review the evidence when choosing or testing a tactic to apply, and internal evidence should be used to examine the effectiveness of tactics (Sherman, 2013).

Intelligence-led policing is easy to define, but evolving from managerially challenging situations, evolved to target criminal groups, prolific serious offenders, victims and hot spots, uses top-down approach priorities, determines by police management from crime intelligence analysis, targets prolific offenders, crime problems and hot spots, successful in detection, reduction or disruption of crime problem and reducing crime and harm (Weisburd and Telep, 2014).

Findings and Discussion

Policing models adopted in Nigeria

Most respondents agreed that presently the government has approved the adoption and implementation of community policing. They pointed out that the principle that led to the implementation of community policing in addressing crime in Nigeria includes partnership that allows the police and community to search for a new solution for crime problems, fear of crime and decline in community's close cooperation. The study reveals that this strategy is based on the fact that community members have the right to make a positive contribution in decision-

making process on the issues about their vicinity and involvement and support in effective solving of crime problem their area.

Most of the respondents 55% highlighted consultation as another principle that led to the adoption of community policing entails the needs of the community should be identified, policing priorities need to be determined, also, the police need to reaffirm their mandate by public approval. Consultation occurs within the group, individuals, and local communities as regards how problems are tackled.

The study reveals that community policing broadened the police role by creating a greater impact and change on how police respond to crisis and attend crime scenes, which enhances the safety of the community. Community policing implies a commitment from the police and residents to a new contract; an agreement based on community mutual trust. This strategy enhances the community acceptance in collaborative effort in solving crime within the policing area. Community-policing broadens the police role by eliminating the fear of victimisation and general community issues that lower the quality of life of the community members.

Most respondents, 60% converged that community-policing devolve power to station level, where the community and local station can cooperate and enhance crime prevention. It gives the local officers an autonomy and decision-making power to enable them plan effectively in their jurisdiction. They agreed that community-policing encourages the use of human resources and integrated process including everyone in the police organisation, detectives, civilian personnel, patrol officers and all other employees all work in collaboration to enhance community policing.

The study reveals the uniqueness of community-policing, the model encourages problem-solving strategy which focuses on the origin of a problem; a balance between proactive and reactive tactics can be combined to address the causes of problem in the community. The aim of using problem-solving approach is to remove opportunity as well as motives of offending; community policing does not consist of a single policing tactic or programme, appropriate proactive and reactive methods can be applied specifically to solve crime in a particular area. Community-policing embraces information exchange and police accountability

Most respondents pointed out that the advantages of operating community policing relate to its contribution towards a safer community, community-policing emphasises proactive policing and police visibility; community-policing enhances transparency, encourages openness and increases the internal and external support for the police. It also gives insight into problems in society and promotes joint solution to the problem between police and the community. Community policing encourages effective information exchange between the police and community. Also, the police morale has increased as a result of a partnership between the community and police in joint problem-solving. It increases the professional status of the police, thus motivating police to be analytic, emphatic, flexible and effective in service delivery in the stations where community policing is operated.

Smarter policing strategies to addressing insecurity in Nigeria

The study reveals that sector policing entails policing that focuses on small manageable sectors of a policing area. Sector policing is a tool to implement community-policing. This form of policing is based on a partnership between the police, the community, local and provincial government and business sector. In this respect, De Cock (2004) asserts that the purpose of sector policing is to perform targeted visible police patrol, ensure a rapid response to complaints, address crime generators, reported cases and provide a localised policing service to the community in accordance with their respective needs.

The roles of the sector commanders are to mobilise and organise the community in the sector, to take action against the local crime together with the police, act as a liaison between the community of the sector and local police station, act as a crime prevention officer, which involves being responsible for all plans and projects to address crime in the sector.

The roles of the community in sector policing include to attend community police sub-forum meetings, to discuss action plans with the sector commander to deal with the crime in the sector, participate in neighbourhood initiative to safeguard the area in which they live work and play, to take ownership of community policing and support the police in the enforcement of the law. Other structures that are involvement in community policing include the reservists, community policing forum, community patrol groups, street security, street committees, neighbourhood and business watch (Ezeji, 2017).

Majority of respondents 65% agreed with Ezeji (2017) who illustrated that sector policing adopts more decentralised approach to policing and intends to address the root causes of crime at specific geographical locations in partnership with communities at local level. Sector policing is a tailored-made policing approach, created to suit specific local needs. Sector policing entails the division of areas into smaller managerial sectors and assigning of police officers to these areas on a full-time basis. The police officers regularly patrol their own sectors and can identify and seek appropriate solutions. Sector policing encourages constant contact with members of the local communities.

Most respondents agreed that sector-policing should be proactively and vigorously conducted. They pointed out that the mandate should be based on clear instruction from the police commanders to patrol officers; operation should be planned on the basis of crime analysis, the operation should be focused on a specific problem within an area, projects should be developed in collaboration with the local police and other relevant stakeholders.

Sector policing is an approach to policing where policing area is divided into smaller manageable area known as sectors. For each sector, the management appoints a police officer who is known as the sector commander. The sector commander creates an active partnership with the community to enhance the safety and security of the community. The sector commander is tasked with identifying the policing needs in the sector, factors that contribute to crime and strategies that will be adopted in dealing with root causes of crime in the sector. Sector-policing can be implemented in different phases: phase one involves dividing policing areas into sectors, the number of sectors are determined by the capacity of the station, crime hot-spots, the size and the diversity of the precinct. Phase two involves the identification of root causes of crime within that area, the identification of factors inhibiting effective crime

prevention means of eliminating those factors, identifying the role-players within areas and community-based organisations (De Cock, 2004). Phase three involves appointing sector manager for each sector; sector manager should be a police officer who is tasked with fulfilling responsibilities that include general knowledge of the sector, establishing sector forum, organising meetings and other events in the sector, liaising with all relevant community stakeholders on initiating crime prevention strategies based on the profile and dynamics of the sector and reporting to the station commissioner. In order for the police sector commanders to maintain effectiveness in their sectors, there is need for establishing sector-policing forum, which involves a consultative forum in which relevant stakeholders of a particular sector will be represented by a secretary and a chairperson appointed by members of the community. The role of the sector policing forum includes attending monthly meetings, identification of crime prevention strategies and coordinating and implementing sector-policing activities (De Cock, 2004).

Merit and effectiveness of proactive policing in addressing crime

Most respondents indicated that proactive policing model focuses on trend in reported cases and analysing the information together with the information from neighbouring areas regularly. This approach helps in identifying where resources need to be redirected, what types of crimes prevalence in the communities and the possible solutions, the ability to collect and analyse information is the first step in proffering solution to the crime problems in the area.

Most of the respondents asserted that after collecting and analysing information about crime type in an area, it is crucial to generate crime-prevention plans that help the police solve the problem. They agreed that crime prevention plan identifies a particular problem and analyses how big the problem is, locate resources to address the problem, and define police strategy to work towards the elimination of the problem.

After initiating crime prevention plan, the plan is shared with relevant role players, communicate the strategy and ensure that everyone understands what is expected of them. Another step is to monitor the result of the project; track of whether the strategy is helping alleviate the problem, consult with participating officials and the community to determine whether the plan is successful or whether it needs an adjustment.

Proactive policing entails acting on time before the actual incident of crime occurs. Steps that are associated with proactive policing include defining the problem, that is, understanding of the root causes of the problem, involving members of the community who are affected by the problem in defining what they see as the root causes of the problem. It is necessary to involve the victims or survivors of crime and those that are affected by the problem. These people would be in a better position to give more insight into what they have gone through as a result of the crime and help in defining the root causes of the problem.

It is necessary to identify current strategies and methods used by the police; look at what the police or other role players are doing to address crime in a particular community; identify gaps in the strategies and methods being used; consequently, improve the strategies and methods to enhance effective crime prevention. It is crucial to identify available resources such as using unanalysed crime statistics that have been previously collected; officers dedicate their time

looking for trends in these statistics that will identify one area or part of town where attacks of crime have been clustered and this information can be used to create strategy and plan that will help prevent further occurrence of the crime.

Intelligence capacities and capabilities in addressing insecurity in Nigeria

Most respondents agreed that intelligence is the product of an analytic process that evaluates information collected from diverse sources, integrates the relevant information into a cohesive package and produces a conclusion or estimate about a criminal phenomenon by using the scientific approach to problem solving. They opined that community policing should be intelligence driven.

To operationalize intelligence in consonance with community policing, most respondents 60% agreed with Khalsa (2006), who asserts that contemporary categories of intelligence process include; current: intelligence, which looks at day-to-day event. Estimative; intelligence looks at what will happen. Warning; intelligence gives urgent notice that something will happen. Research; intelligence is an in-depth study of an issue. Scientific and Technical: intelligence is information on foreign technology. They believed that these features of intelligence will enhance crime control in Nigeria.

Most respondent 57% believed that Nigeria lacks intelligence capacities in addressing crime. They pointed out that few personnel are specifically trained on how to operationalise intelligence in addressing crime in Nigeria. Most respondents 70% agreed that reactive policing is not effective in combating crime.

The study reveals that intelligence is the product of the intelligence circle, a process that begins with step one; planning and direction, which leads to step two-the setting of collection requirement based on threats in the form of questions and identified gaps in existing knowledge and which is followed by, step three-the collection of intelligence based on known gaps, step four includes: synthesis and analysis of collected intelligence and results in the creation of an intelligence products which, in step five, is disseminated to policy makers and those responsible for taking actions based on that analysis, and step six is the feedback loop from the customers to evaluate the utility of the product and facilitate another round of the circle by assisting with step one(Lowenthal, 2006).

The study supports Ratcliffe (2009) who traditionally asserts crime intelligence is useful in tactical operations, which support the front-line areas, investigation and other operation areas in taking case-specific action to achieve enforcement objectives. Tactical intelligence employs applications of analysis to crime control. Operational: supports areas commanders and regional operational commanders in planning a crime reduction activity and deploying resources to achieve operational objectives. Operational intelligence promotes crime reduction activity and resource planning. Strategic: providing insight and understanding and contribute to broad strategic policies and resources. Strategic intelligence relates to national or whole law enforcement perspectives apply to the process of business planning and resource allocation.

The study reveals that human intelligence has been defined as one's capacity for logic, understanding, self-awareness, learning, emotional knowledge, planning, creativity and

problem solving. Artificial intelligence includes both intelligence of machine and the branch of computer science, which creates it, through the study and design of intelligent or rational agents where an intelligent agent is a system that perceives its endorsement and takes action which maximizes its chances of success.

Conclusion

The study reveals the merit associated with sector-policing, which stems from policing smaller and more manageable areas, sector-policing ensures effective crime prevention in a particular sector, pays attention to the root causes of crime, factors and circumstances that enhance crimes in the sector. Sector-policing contributes to community involvement that leads to sound partnership between the police and community; sector-policing enables communities to take greater responsibility of their safety and security; it improves the relationship between the police and community, which increases community trust, respect and the understanding of the police; reduces the fear of crime and improves service delivery by the police to the community. Sector-policing helps identify crime hot-spots and root-causes of crime in a particular sector or at the local level; it encourages the effective use of resources with respect to a particular area and allows manageability. Hence, the precincts are divided into smaller areas, sector-policing encourages quick response to community complaints and emergencies, enhancing better cooperation between police and communities at the local level in addressing crime.

Recommendations

There is need to train and retrain criminal justice officials and the police on specialised intelligence training, should transcend to more proactive policing and effective crime control strategy. Must adopt smarter policing model that will be swift in combating insecurity in Nigeria.

Community policing and problem oriented policing should be operationalized in consonance with intelligence led policing, which focuses on crime hot spot and harmful place is one of the strategies of intelligence led policing and can be used in addressing terrorism and insurgency. Mapping of crime hot spots has become an essential tool to help determine the location police resources and vital techniques that spurs more in-depth analysis.

Effective way to reduce crime is to concentrate police resources where crime is highly concentrated after finding the hot spots. Hot-spot policing is a broad approach that emphasises the need to focus on police action in places of crime concentrated, to be effective way to reduce crime, but it is not to be prescriptive what activities that occur there. Another strategy that proves effective is foot patrol focusing on serious and repeat offenders in hot spots, problem-oriented policing and directed patrol can be used in the gun area. Also, to focus on the most violent offenders, however, community concern focuses on people who fly under the radar of local police, but who presents a persistent nuisance. Offenders who committed numerous crimes of moderate harm had a total summative harm greater than some where at least one offence was violent.

Sector policing approach of community policing should be adopted in Nigeria because, sector policing is an approach to policing where policing area is divided into smaller manageable area

known as sectors. For each sector, the management appointing a police officer who is known as the sector commander. The sector commander creates an active partnership with the community to enhance the safety and security of the community. The sector commander is tasked with identifying the policing needs in the sector, factors that contribute to crime and strategies that will be adopted in dealing with root causes of crime in the sector.

The police should emulate comparative policing operation that impacted crime prevention and reduction, by targeting chronic drug dealers with long criminal history, the police in Brightwood Indiana USA, could make many arrests and gained long term jail sentences, and certified two years' reduction of crime in the area. In Australia, Operation Anchorage lasted for 18 months and targeted recidivist burglars and incarcerated them to the extent that crime reduction benefited for more than 45 weeks, before the burglary rate reached the pre-operational rate.

NPF should focus on arresting key offenders to prevent and reduce gun violence and the activities of insurgents, bandits, kidnappers and terrorists need to activate hot spot operations, officers need to concentrate on particular high crime beats, sufficient officers should be posted in different communities to reduce crime incidences and crime rates. It is crucial that NPF targets the offenders and potential offenders who are about escalation in robberies and terrorism in different communities in Nigeria.

Nigeria should consider operationalising smarter policing models such as intelligence-led policing and community policing because intelligence-led policing is easy to define, evolving from managerially challenging situations, evolved to target criminal groups, prolific serious offenders, victims and hot spots use top-down approach priorities, determined by police management from crime intelligence analysis, targets prolific offenders, crime problems and hot spots, successful in detection, reduction or disruption of crime problems and reducing crime and harm. The model is effective in enhancing crime prevention, control, reduction and investigation.

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