

Community Policing and Crime Control in Riverine Areas: A Study of EPE L.G.A. of Lagos State

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Abstract

Community policing is a proactive approach to policing as against traditional policing approach which is reactive in nature. This study examines the role of community policing in crime control in Epe Local Government Area of Lagos State. It employed a mixed method of data collection using questionnaire and in-depth interview (IDI) as its research instrument due to the collaborative nature of the study. The quantitative data elicited through questionnaire were analysed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences version 23 to generate frequency tables, percentages, chi-square goodness-of-fit to test the statistical significance of responses provided by the respondents, while the qualitative data generated with the aid of in-depth interview were transcribed, organised, cleaned and analysed to complement the quantitative data. The study's finding showed that policepublic partnership though has helped the police in controlling crime to some extent but more still needs to be done as some community members are still critical of the police. Additionally, implementation of community policing in Epe is still being bedevilled with some challenges such as inadequate training, negative police perceptions, lack of modern crime gadgets, bribery and corrupt practices, inadequate marine policemen

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among others. The study recommends that members of the public should be more sensitised on the need to partner with the police; and, that there is need to recruit more policemen and train them in accordance with international best practices.

Keywords: Community, community policing, crime, crime control, safety

Introduction

Community policing is a collaborative effort or synergy between the police and community members by identifying problems of crime and disorder and involving all elements of the community in the search for solutions to these problems that have been identified (Community Policing Consortium, 1995). These community elements include the policemen, traditional rulers, religious leaders, fishermen, local government administrators, market men and women, students' bodies, Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC), vigilante groups, civil societies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) among others. Abdulrahman (2007), also alluded to this partnership as he described community policing as a pragmatic and proactive approach to policing that is based on problem identification and problem solving, unlike the traditional policing approach which is more reactive and incident based (Abdulrahman, 2007).

In other words, policemen in communities where community policing approach is being practiced would not wait until the crime is perpetrated before they swing into action, unlike the traditional policing style. This is so because police performance is not being measured by the number of arrests made but rather by the absence of crimes. Effective policing, in contemporary times, requires a systematic synergy between the police and community members aimed at sharing information and promoting mutual trust. Apart from provision of information to the police by members of the public, another fundamental factor precipitating the inclusion of community policing into Nigeria's security architecture is the inadequate number of policemen in the land which is creating a huge gap in terms of policepublic ratio (PPR) thus the need for members of the public to support the police in the task of crime prevention, control and enforcement of law and order.

For instance, according to an erstwhile Inspector General of Police (IGP), Mr. Solomon Arase, with 317,000 personnel to a total area of 923,768 km² and a population of about 170 million, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) lacks the numerical strength to effectively secure the country's geographical space and people (*Thisday Newspaper*, 2016). Going by this statistics and United Nations' Police-Public Ratio, the number of policemen in Nigeria is far below the United Nations' recommendation of 222 police officers per 100,000 people.

From the foregoing, therefore, NPF is left with no other option than to embrace community policing into its internal security architecture as the police is required by the citizens to protect and serve the public's fundamental rights to liberty, equality, equity, fairness and justice under the law in line with democratic tenets and principles (Okeshola and Mudiare, 2013). More importantly, police roles in modern times are all encompassing as the police are saddled with the responsibility of maintenance and enforcement of law and order, crime detection and prevention, protection of lives and property, traffic controlling, and arresting offenders, among other. More importantly is the truism that a nation's socio-economic growth and development is dependent upon a relatively peaceful and crime free society.

Regarding the study materials and methods, a survey research method was adopted for the study due to its exploratory nature. The study adopted triangulation or mixed method of data collection (quantitative and qualitative) using questionnaire and in-depth interview (IDI) as its research instruments respectively because of its advantages over a singular method of data collection (Nachmvis & Nachmivs, 1996). The quantitative data gathered through questionnaire were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. The data were further used to generate frequency tables, percentages, chi-square contingency tables (χ^2 , a nonparametric statistical technique employed to test relationships or relationship in categorical or nominal variables or responses) to test the statistical significance of responses as provided by the respondents. Meanwhile, the qualitative data gathered using in-depth interview (IDI) were transcribed, organised, cleaned and analysed to complement data generated from questionnaire. Hypothetically, the study tried to see if there is a significant relationship or not between the respondents' age category

and the way they perceive policemen performance in Epe L.G.A. of Lagos State.

Community Policing in Nigeria

Nigeria, being a democratic nation, and like other democratic nations of the world, embraces the philosophy of community policing based on the principle that in a democratic society, the police are charged by their fellow citizens to protect and serve the public's fundamental rights to liberty, equality and justice under the law (Okeshola and Mudiare, 2013). Community policing started in Nigeria with a partnership between NPF and United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) with the aim of realising the values, principles and goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Summit Declaration: peace, security, development, poverty eradication, human rights, democracy and good governance, protecting the vulnerable and meeting the special needs of Africa.

Some states in Nigeria were chosen as pilot states for the implementation of community policing programme. The programme recorded a huge success in the selected states in terms of crime reduction and promotion of cordial relationship between the police and community members. In a bid to fully integrate this philosophy into Nigeria's security architecture based on the success recorded in the pilot states, the federal government of Nigeria approved a study tour for some policemen to three cities Houston, Atlanta and Chicago- in the United States of America, courtesy of the British Department for International Development (DFID) to understudy community policing as practised in those cities with the aim of learning the operations, methods, patterns and style of their community policing programmes (CLEEN, 2008). Upon their return from the study tour, NPF integrated community policing programme fully into its core policing structure especially in the major cities of the country.

Conversely, community policing has not recorded absolute success in its operations across Nigeria as it is still bedevilled with some challenges some of which are internal while others are external to the police institution. Some of the major impediments to the successful implementation of community policing in Nigeria are internal resistance to change by those policemen who enjoy the traditional form of policing, lack of commitment to the project of community policing, lack of support from community members,

inadequate support from the government, and poor welfare package/incentives for policemen (Dickson 2007 in Ikuteyijo and Rotimi, unpublished).

Historical Background of Epe Local Government Area

Epe Local Government Area (L.G.A.) is one of the 20 constitutional L.G.A in Lagos State. It is one of the five administrative divisions in which Lagos State is divided into; other being Ikorodu, Badagry, Ikeja and Lagos Island (IBILE). This local government is located on the north side of Lekki lagoon with coordinates 6° 35'N 3° 59'E. Epe L.G.A. has a total population of 181,734 inhabitants with an area of 965km² and a density of 250.7 inch/ km² (National Population Commission, 2006). This L.G.A. is served by the Engineering Faculty of the Lagos State University (LASU), Augustine University, Ilara, Michael Otedola College of Primary Education (MOCOPE), Yaba College of Technology, several secondary schools, Epe General Hospitals, Post Office, several commercial banks and police stations among others.

Community Policing and Structural Functionalism

The structural-functionalism model is one of the classical theories in the field of Sociology. Central to structural-functionalism theory is the concept of a system as it draws its illustration from the human body. Its argument is that societies comprises of a set of related, interrelated subparts that function in unique and inter-dependent ways that result in a state of order, stability or in a state of equilibrium. Meanwhile, the term structure refers to a set of relatively stable and patterned relationships of social units; while functions refers to those consequences or results of any social activity such that the two together relate to allow for adaptation or adjustments so as to achieve a balance (order and stability or equilibrium).

Adapting this theory to this study, it could be realised that community elements, as outlined in the definition of community policing by community policing consortium such as policemen, traditional rulers, religious leaders, fishermen, local government administrators, market men and women, students' bodies, Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC), vigilante groups, civil societies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can be likened to the subparts working interdependently for the survival of the society as explained by structural functionalism.

The policemen, especially the marine policemen, and other elements within this town ranging from the fishermen to community leaders, residents of Epe, religious leaders, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil societies, student bodies, market men and women, vigilante group, Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC) among others should all combine efforts together towards ensuring that the community is free from crime and other disorderly tendencies. If any of these elements for instance, say the community leaders choose not to cooperate in the task of fighting crime, the entire local government might be in a state of chaos or upheaval by virtue of their position and access to vital security and crime information, thus, threatening the peace of the local government area.

The political wards or registration areas that makeup this local government are listed below:

Table 1:

S/N	Political Wards	No of Polling Units	Location of Registration Areas
1	Etita/Ebode	16 (16*384/346=17)	L.G. Primary School, Billy Street, Epe
2	Lagbade	17 (17*384/346=18)	U.P.E. Primary school, Ibi Street, Erepeto, Epe
3	Popo-Oba	8 (8*384/346=8)	ST. Michael Primary School, Lagbade Street, Epe
4	Oke-Balogun	17 (17*384/346=18)	A.U.D. Primary School, Alawaye Street, Epe
5	Ajaganabe	57 (57*384/346=63)	Epe Girls High School, Adeyemi Apena Street, Epe
6	Ise / Igbogun	21 (21*384/346=23)	L.G. Primary School, Ise Village, Ise
7	Oriba/ Ladaba	24 (24*384/346=26)	Community High School, Oriba Village, Oriba
8	Abomiti	40 (40*384/346=44)	L.G Primary School, Emina Village, Emina
9	Agbowa	11 (11*384/346=12)	L.G. Primary School, Ajayi Road, Agbowa
10	Agbowa-Ikosi	10 (10*384/346=11)	Baptist Primary School, Ikosi Road, Agbowa
11	Ago-Owu	12 (12*384/346=13)	Otta Primary School, Beach Road Otta, Ago-Owu
12	Orugbo	5 (5*384/346=5)	Ajebo High Sch, Orugbo B/Stop, Orugbo
13	Ilara	21 (21*384/346=23)	U.P.E. Primary School, Aleke Road, Ilara
14	Ibonwon	15 (15*384/346=16)	A.U.D Primary School, Aleke Road, Ibonwon
15	Odorangushin	16 (16*384/346=17)	Okemagba High School, Epe/ Ijebu-Ode Road, Mojoda
16	Poka	14 (14*384/346=15)	Pobuna Secondary School, Araga Road, Poka
17	Odomola	19 (19*384/346=21)	Community High School Road, Iraye-Oke, Epe
18	Ejinrin	8 (8*384/346=8)	Lofi Ogunmodede College, Ejirin Road, Ejirin
19	Itoikin	15 (15*384/346=16)	R.C.M. Primary School, Ijebu-Ode Road, Itoikin
	Total	346	

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

The study used the political delineation of Epe L.G.A. by Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to systematically reach its target population through multi-stage sampling and proportionate sampling to select its respondents from each of the 19 wards that make up this L.G.A with respect to the number of polling units making up each wards.

According to the 2006 National Population Census (NPC), Epe L.G.A. has a total population of 181,409 inhabitants with an area of 1,185 km² which is approximately 458 square miles (NPC, 2006). Considering the population (181,409), using a sample size table from the research advisors in determining the sample size with 95% confidence level and 0.05 margin of error, the required sample size for the study was 384 respondents (<http://research-advisors.com>).

In all, 375 respondents selected proportionally from the 19 wards were administered questionnaire, while 9 respondents were purposely selected to be granted interview based on their local knowledge. The categories of the study interviewees were the Divisional Police Officer (DPO), the King, Imam, Pastor, Local Government Chairman, Head of Marine Police, Head of Lagos Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC), Chairman PCRC and Head of vigilante group. The Chi-square (X²) test of significance was used to test if relationship exists among the variables under consideration. Chi square (X²) formula is given thus:

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

Where: χ^2 = chi square; O = Observed frequency;
E = Expected frequency and Σ = summation.

Analysis of Data

4.1 Table 2: Socio-Demographic Analysis of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	224	65.1%
Female	120	34.8%
Total	344	100

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
18-27 years	64	18.6
28-37 years	140	40.6
38-47 years	94	27.3
48-57 years	43	12.5
58 years and above	03	0.8
Total	344	100
Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	90	26.1
Married	238	69.1
Divorced	07	2.0
Widowed	04	1.1
Separated	05	1.4
Total	344	100
Ethnicity/Tribe	Frequency	Percentage
Yoruba	277	80.5
Hausa/Fulani	29	8.4
Igbo	24	6.9
Others	14	4.0
Total	344	100
Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Islam	175	50.8
Christianity	160	46.5
Traditional	05	1.4
Others	04	1.1
Total	344	100
Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Civil servant	190	55.2
Business / Traders	72	20.9
Agriculture	53	15.4
Unemployed	18	5.2
Other	11	3.1
Total	344	100

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
Tertiary	251	72.9
Secondary	65	18.8
Primary	16	4.6
Others	12	3.4
Total	344	100
Income Level	Frequency	Percentage
No Income	34	9.8
Below #10,000	21	6.10
#10,001 - #20,000	31	9.0
#20,001 - #30,000	28	8.1
#30,001 - #40,000	30	8.7
#40,001 - #50,000	43	12.5
#50,001 and above	157	45.6
Total	344	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

On respondents' sex, it was observed that majority of the respondents of the study were males constituting (65.1%) while females constituted (34.8%). This is so because many of the females in the study location perceived security or crime matters as the responsibility of men.

Regarding age, majority (40.6%) of the respondents' age, majority of the respondents of the study were between the age brackets of 28-37 years, followed by respondents between age brackets of 38-47 years constituting 27.3%; while respondents between the age brackets of 18-27 years constituted 18.6%. Lastly, respondents between the age brackets 48-57 years and 58 years above constituted 12.5% and 0.8% respectively. It can be inferred from this findings that the youths show more willingness and were more proactive in crime and security matters than the older generations in Epe L.G.A.

With respect to respondents' marital status, it was observed that majority of them were married constituting 69.1%; followed by the respondents who were single constituting 26.1%; while the widowed constituted 1.1%.

Lastly, respondents who were separated constituting 1.4% while the divorcee constituted 2.0%. It could be inferred that married people are

more conscious, active, interested in security matters than non-married people.

Regarding respondents' ethnic/tribal affiliations, majority of the respondents constituting 80.5% were Yoruba, while Hausa/Fulani and Igbo respondents constitute 8.4% and 6.9% respectively. Other tribes apart from these three major ethnic groups constitute 4.0%.

Majority of the study respondents were Muslims constituting 50.8 % while the Christians and the traditionalists constitute 46.5% and 1.4% respectively. Other religious adherents, apart from these three major ones, constitute 1.1%. The reason adduced for having many Muslims adherents more than other religious adherents might be as a result of early introduction of Islam religion in Epe L.G.A. The data on respondents' occupation showed that 55.26% constituted the majority for the study and were civil servants; 20.9% of the respondents were into business and trading, while 15.4% of them were into agriculture; 5.2% of the respondents were unemployed while 3.1% of them fall under other occupations.

More so, 72.9% of the respondents have tertiary education; 18.8% have secondary education while 4.6% and 3.4% of the respondents have primary and other levels of education respectively. It was observed that 45.6% of the respondents earned above ₦50,000 monthly while 12.5% of the respondents earned between ₦40,001 and ₦50,000 monthly; respondents with no monthly income constitute 9.8% while respondents who earn between ₦10,001 and ₦20,000 constitute 9.0%. Furthermore, respondents who earn between ₦30,001 and ₦40,000 and those who earn between ₦20,001 and ₦30,000 were 8.7% and 8.1% respectively; while 6.10% respondents earn below ₦10,000 monthly.

Table 3: Police-Public Relations and Crime Prevention

1	Respondents perceptions of policemen as friends	Frequency	%
	Yes	140	40.7 %
	No	126	36.6 %
	Indifference	63	18.3 %
	No response	14	4.1 %
	Total	344	100
2	Awareness of community policing strategy among the respondents	Frequency	%
	Yes	125	36.3 %
	No	190	55.2 %
	Indifferent	09	2.6 %
	No response	20	5.8 %
	Total	344	100
3	Respondents opinion on police responsiveness to community security concerns	Frequency	%
	Responsiveness	205	59.6 %
	Unresponsiveness	139	40.4 %
	Total	344	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

From Table 3 above, on respondents' perceptions of policemen as friends, about 140 respondents constituting (40.7%) perceive the policemen as being friend while 126 of the respondents constituting (36.6%) answered no to the question. On the other hand, 63 respondents constituting (18.3%) were indifferent to the question while 14 respondents constituting (4.1%) gave no response to this question as to whether policemen are their friend or not.

On awareness of the strategy of community policing by the respondents of the study, 125 respondents constituting (36.3%) are aware of this strategy while 190 respondents constituting 55.2% are not aware, while 9 respondents (2.6%) and 20 respondents (5.8%) were indifferent and do not have response respectively.

On providing useful information bothering on crime to the police, majority of the respondents (211) constituting (56.2%) answered yes to the question, while 111 of the respondents constituting (29.6%) answered no to the question. Meanwhile, only 40 out of the study respondents constituting (10.6%) were indifferent to the question while 30 of them constituting (8%) answered “Don’t know.” Though, this details suggest that a larger chunk of the respondents were willing to provide the police with useful information, more still need to be done especially on others who are not willing.

On police responsiveness to community security concerns, 205 of the respondents constituting (59.6%) admitted that the police is responsive while 139 respondents constituting (40.4%) admitted the police is not responsive to community security concerns in Epe L.G.A.

Testing of Hypothesis

General Decision Rule

The decision rule is a statement that tells under what circumstances to reject the null hypothesis. The decision rule for statistical significance states that wherever the calculated chi-square is greater than the table value, the alternative hypothesis (H1) should be accepted, while the null hypothesis (H0) should be rejected. On the other hand, whenever the table value is greater than the calculated value, the null hypothesis should be accepted, while the alternate hypothesis should be rejected (Spiegel, Schiller & Srinivasan, 2004).

Table 4: Cross tabulation of respondents' age category and their perception on seeing policemen as friend in Epe LGA

Age Category	Do you see policemen as your friend				Total
	Yes	No	Indifferent	No Response	
18-27 years	37 (55.2%)	20 (29.9%)	8 (11.9%)	2 (3.0%)	67 (100%)
28-37 years	43 (33.1%)	59 (45.4%)	20 (15.4%)	8 (6.2%)	130 (100%)
38-47 years	41 (42.3%)	30 (30.9%)	23 (23.7%)	3 (3.1%)	97 (100%)
48-57 years	15 (34.9%)	16 (37.2%)	11 (25.6%)	1 (2.3%)	43 (100%)
56 years & above	4 (66.7%) (16.7%) (16.7%)	1	1	0 (0.0%)	6 (100%)
Total	140 (40.8%)	126 (36.7%)	63 (18.4%)	14 (4.1%)	344 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

From Table 4, it was observed that there is no significant relationship between respondents' age category and their perceptions of police as being friendly. The chi-square test of association was not significant ($X^2= 19.021$, $df= 12$, $p = .088$). Given the result obtained, the second hypothesis is not confirmed and the null hypothesis of no relationship is accepted. There is no relationship between respondents' age category and their perception on policemen as friend in Epe LGA. In other words, people across different ages perceive policemen in the same way unlike the generally held notion that the police are being seen as friends by the older people while the younger ones are usually being critical of them.

Table 5: Cross-Tabulation of Respondents' Level of Education and Awareness of the Concept of Community Policing Strategy in Epe L.G.A.

Level of Education	Are you aware of the concept of community policing strategy in Epe LGA?				Total
	Yes	No	Indifferent	No response	
Tertiary	94 (36.8%)	147 (57.6%)	5 (1.45%)	9 (3.52%)	255
Secondary	26 (41.2%)	28 (44.4%)	2 (3.1%)	7 (11.1%)	63
Primary	4 (26.6%)	5 (33.3%)	2 (13.3%)	4 (26.6%)	15
No education	1 (9.0%)	10 (90.9%)	0	0	11
Total	125 (36.3%)	190 (55.2%)	9 (2.6%)	20 (5.81%)	344 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

From Table 5 above, it was observed that respondents' level of education is associated with their awareness of community policing strategy as addressed using a Chi-Square (χ^2) Test of Independence or Association. Table 5 presents the result obtained. The Chi-Square (χ^2) value calculated is 33.063, $p = .000$. From the table, it can be seen that the association between respondents' level of education and awareness of community policing strategy is more pronounced among those with tertiary education such that majority are not aware of the concept. This pattern of response is also observed among respondents without education.

Table 6: Cross Tabulation of Respondents' Occupation and Perceptions of Police Responsiveness to Security Concerns in Epe LGA

Respondents' Occupation	How responsive are the police to community security concerns in Epe LGA in your opinion?		
	Responsive	Unresponsive	Total
Civil Servants	128 (64%)	72 (36%)	200
Traders	9 (39.1%)	14 (60.8)	23
Business	20 (47.6%)	22 (52.3%)	42
Agriculture	6 (37.5%)	10 (62.5%)	16
Unemployed	23 (65.7%)	12 (34.2%)	35
Others	19 (67.8%)	9 (32.1%)	28
Total	205 (59.5%)	139 (40.4%)	344 (100%)

Source: Field work, 2016.

From Table 6 above, it was discovered that the research question which sought to associate respondents' occupation with their perceptions of police responsiveness to community security concerns in Epe L.G.A. was addressed using the Chi-Square (χ^2) Test of Independence or Association. The calculated Chi-Square (χ^2) obtained is 12.695, $p = .026$. This indicates that the occupation of respondents is associated with their perception of police responsiveness to community security concerns. It therefore suffices to say that occupation of respondents is associated with how they perceive the responsiveness of the police to community security concerns. Majority of civil servants believe that the police are responsive to community security concerns; majority of traders believe that the police are unresponsive to community security concerns; majority of the unemployed also believe that the police are responsive to community security concerns in Epe L.G.A.

Discussion of Findings

No doubt, the introduction of community policing into the security or policing architecture in Epe L.G.A. of Lagos State has witness some successes in term of crime prevention and control, yet, despite this positive feat achieved, the strategy has also witnessed some challenges such as lack of proper understanding of the strategy by some of the police, especially among the rank and files officers attached to the police division. The finding was in tandem with the findings of Ikuteyijo (2009) and Okeshola & Mudiare, (2013) on the problem confronting community policing, as they both opined that corruption is one of the major impediments bedevilling proper integration or acceptance of community policing as it negatively affect people's perception on the policemen.

It was also observed that the number of policemen in this L.G.A. compared to the inhabitants of Epe were grossly inadequate, according to the Divisional Police Officer (DPO), which makes it difficult to actually measure or gauge whether the strategy is effective or not. There is also undue influence in police operation by some political elites; some of them still engage the police to suppress their opposition. This was also observed by Centre for Law Enforcement Education (CLEEN) that partisan community leaders weaken the cohesion of community-policing forum thus adversely affecting the objectives of the strategy.

On a final note, the study finds out that criminals in Epe L.G.A. have been taking advantage of the coastal nature of this town to perpetrate their crime. Some of them have been hiding their metallic criminal weapons underneath the sea which makes it difficult for the marine policemen patrolling the waterways to quickly detect and seize these weapons from these criminals. Apart from the inadequacies of the conventional police, the marine policemen too are grossly inadequate and lack sophisticated and modern equipment such as speedboat to compete with the criminals, thus, hampering rescue mission according to Mr. Emmanuel Ojukwu, a commissioner of police and one time Force Public Relations Officer (PPRO).

Conclusion

Policing of societies is not the sole responsibility of law enforcement agents alone, rather it is the responsibility of every member of societies. In this regard, there is an urgent need to ensure that those that have been officially saddled with this responsibility i.e. the police are in good terms with the people they are serving. Little can the police achieved in the fight against crime without the cooperation of the people. Beside this, the number of policemen is grossly inadequate to serve the entire citizenry hence the need for partnership between the police, other law enforcement agents and the people.

More importantly, the world itself is changing and the nature of criminalities is also changing. In this light, a policing strategy that will be more proactive is needed in that it will nip the problem in the bud as effective policing is not usually measured by the number of arrest made rather it is measured by the absence of crime in the society. Therefore, all hands must be on deck in order to ensure that the society is free of crime and fear of crime. In as much as the function of the police cannot be compromised, there is need for urgent action to be taken by the government aimed at ensuring that their role or function is professionally carried out without fear or favour. All the elements within the society should join force with the police in identifying problems of crimes and jointly solving these problems as crime is a social pathology that threatens the social fabrics of society thus hampering effective socio-economic growth and development. of society. Based on the importance of this collaboration between the police

and the public at containing crime, it thus behoves Nigeria government to train its police force in line with international best standards and practices.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the study has come up with some recommendations that if implemented will go a long way in enhancing proper and smooth relationship between the police and community members which will further promote information sharing and reduce mutual distrust from members of the public. This will in turn reduce crime in Epe local government area of Lagos State.

- i. More police stations should be built around this L.G.A. and more policemen should be recruited; with government providing for them modern equipment that will ease their work.
- ii. Marine policemen should be provided with sophisticated equipment to secure the waterways in Epe L.G.A. However, proper training should also be given to them to allow them discover some of the hidden criminal weapons beneath the lagoon. If possible, they can join forces with the naval officers in this regard.
- iii. There is need for police chiefs to implement the “bail is free” policy to the letter by ensuring that people detained do not pay for bail as police institution is not a money generating institution but rather that of service delivery. The police should steer clear of issues outside their constitutional provisions.
- iv. Waterproof metal detectors devices should be provided for marine police officers as some criminals now hide their weapons beneath the creeks.
- v. The negative image of the force being perceived should be worked upon as many people are seeing the policemen as problem oriented people instead of problem solving people.

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