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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNITY POLICING IN COMBATING *SARA-SUKA* (POLITICAL THUGGERY) IN BAUCHI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, BAUCHI STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study aims to assess the effectiveness of community policing in combating Sara-Suka (political thuggery) in Bauchi LGA, Bauchi State, Nigeria. The study involved 384 individuals aged 18 and above across five of the twelve electoral wards in Bauchi LGA, using multistage cluster sampling, purposive sampling, and availability sampling techniques. Questionnaires and in-depth interviews were used to collect the primary data. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and percentage were used to analyse quantitative data, while content analysis was used for the analysis of qualitative data. The study looked at the community policing programme's strategies, its effectiveness in combating Sara-Suka (political thuggery) in the study area, and its challenges. Payback from community policing is frequently portrayed as having significant anti-crime benefits. It was therefore discovered that police and other security agencies in Bauchi are collaborating with members of various communities to combat Sara-Suka (political thuggery). They have mitigated their threat by implementing strategies such as community partnerships, sharing critical information about political thuggery, and neighbourhood watch programmes. However, corruption within and outside law enforcement undermines trust and credibility, making effective community policing challenging. The study recommends improving relationships with the public by law enforcement agencies to gain trust and information, among other things, without which community policing would die.

Keywords: Assessment, Challenges, Community Policing, Effectiveness, Political Thuggery.

Introduction

Crime and disorder have far-reaching consequences for victims and society as a whole. They impact social, economic, health, and psychological aspects, directly affecting the quality of life of individuals and communities. To tackle these issues, many countries, including Nigeria, have established institutions that recruit, train, and deploy police officers and other personnel to prevent, manage, and control them. In Nigeria, for example, the 1999 Constitution, as amended, establishes the Nigerian Police Force under Section 214 (1). Likewise, Chapter 19, Part II, Section 4 of the Police Act and Regulations, Laws of the Federation (2010) states the duties of the police, which are to protect life and property, prevent and detect crime, apprehend offenders, preserve law and order, and enforce all laws with which they are directly charged.

Community policing is a set of approaches that involve the police working closely with the public to prevent and solve crimes (Onyeozili et al, 2021). Studies have found that the programme has numerous benefits, including reducing the demand for criminal activity by increasing public confidence and satisfaction with the police force; enhancing police accountability; detecting and deterring criminal activities by increasing police presence and intelligence gathering within the community, among others. However, the effectiveness of community policing may depend on various factors, such as the quality of the interactions, the level of public support, the type of crime, and the local context. The programme was first introduced in Bauchi State as a pilot project in 2009. Initially, it was launched in five local government areas: Azare, Bauchi, Darazo, Gamawa, and Ningi (Hussain, 2015 p. 38). However, due to its usefulness in addressing crime and general insecurity in those areas, the programme was launched in all twenty (20) local government areas by 2016.

Sara-Suka (political thuggery) in Bauchi State has a history of violence directed at the public by youths since the country's return to democracy. Sara-political Suka's thuggery in Bauchi implies that youths are forced to participate in violent activities, either directly or indirectly. They are involved in ballot box snatching, electoral result manipulation, threatening political opponents, and a variety of other dangerous activities (Ojo, 2019). In May 2023, the Bauchi State Police Department informed the public that they had successfully arrested eleven (11) suspects, including three teenagers, in connection with alleged criminal

conspiracy, Sara-Suka, and possession of dangerous weapons in collaboration with members of the "Peace Committee" (known as the Yan Police Committee). After the completion and declaration of the governorship and state assembly for 2023. It is against this backdrop that this study assesses the effectiveness of community policing in combating *Sara-Suka* (political thuggery) in Bauchi Local Government Area, Bauchi State. The study identifies various community policing strategies used in the study area to combat *Sara-Suka* (political thuggery), and the challenges facing the programme and proposes solutions to overcome them.

Conceptual Clarifications

Concept of Community Policing

In its general sense, community policing has a large literature and has been researched from different perspectives regarding its role in crime prevention and reduction and its effect on citizens' satisfaction with police services. There is no universal definition of the term "community policing," even though the concept cannot be said to be indefinable. Every definition of community policing shares the idea that the police and the community must work together to define and develop a solution to problems and to improve the quality of life in the host community.

In his definition, Dickson, (2016) states:

> Community policing is based on a philosophy and organisational strategy by which the police and members of a community work together as partners to combat social ills such as crime, fear of crime, and other forms of evil that threaten the peace and well-being of community inhabitants (Dickson, 2016).

From the above, using the term "philosophy" in the definition allows the concept to generate different ideas and meanings for different exponents or supporters of the community policing programme. Ikuteyijo and Rotimi (2010) opined that community policing involves a partnership with the community to create a safe and secure environment for everyone. Ogunlowo (2017) added that the community policing philosophy emphasises active citizen participation in the fight against crime. These partnerships and participation are necessary because concerned citizens, working together with effective policing, can help reduce crime. The participation and partnership of police and the community might be in the form of citizens providing information to the police on criminal activities, forming vigilante groups to complement police efforts, and creating security awareness in the neighbourhood (Ogunlowo 2017). It is important to note that citizens play a crucial role in providing the police with valuable information about criminal activities. They can also form

vigilante groups that work alongside the police to enhance security and create awareness in the neighbourhood. This collaboration is not impossible and has been demonstrated by the police in Bauchi, who work with members of the Anti-Social Vices Peace Committee (known as the Yan police committee), which was established to promote peace and reduce criminal activities in communities.

Hussein, (2015) provided a more comprehensive definition of community policing. It stated that:

> Community policing is a philosophy and an organisational strategy that promotes a new partnership between the community and the police. It is based on the premise that both the police and the community must work together as equal partners to identify, prioritise, and solve existing problems to improve the overall quality of life in the community (Hussein, 2015).

The definition above is more comprehensive as it encompasses community policing's philosophy, strategy, organisation, and partnerships with the community to jointly identify and solve community problems together. Thereby absorbing the entire dimensions of community policing.

Given the various perspectives on community policing presented above, it is arguably a multifaceted concept. As a result, community policing entails rethinking the role of the police and restructuring the police organisation to be more flexible and representative of community participation. In other words, it is an interactive process for strengthening the working relationship between the police and law-abiding community members to jointly identify and solve community problems.

Historical Development of Community Policing

The roots of community policing can be traced back to the 19th century, when Sir Robert Peel (1788–1850), a British statesman considered the father of modern police, introduced the Principles of Democratic Policing in 1829. These principles, summarised in the maxim "The police are the public, and the public are the police," presented the possibility of preventing crime by working together with members of the community (Onyeozili, 2021). Sir Robert Peel established the London Police, which came to be known as Bobbies or Peelers (after his name), in 1829. The Metropolitan Police in London was later recognised as the world's first police organisation. In the 20th century, community policing experienced a revival in the United Kingdom, North America, and the Netherlands in the 1970s.

In essence, community policing began in England as a means of transitioning police from reactionary to proactive policing. The community policing era began in the late

1970s and is divided into three generations: innovation (1979–1986), spread (1986–1999), and institutionalisation (1999–present) (Onyeozili, 2021). Currently, community policing is in its third generation, which began in the late 1990s. It is characterised by its institutionalisation and spread to small towns and rural police departments. Despite the widespread success of the programme, the precise nature and depth of its implementation, institutionalisation, and level of commitment remain unclear. However, community policing is regaining attention as an alternative to more repressive policing, especially as part of international assistance to police reforms, thanks to its focus on trust building, broader security concerns, and crime prevention and detection.

In Nigeria, community policing was inaugurated precisely on April 27, 2004, at Enugu to complement the services of the Nigerian Police Force in combating crime (Okiro, 2007). In October 2003, seven officers of the Nigerian Police Force were dispatched to England under the sponsorship of the British Council/Department for International Development (DFID) to study community policing as practised in the United Kingdom and devise strategies for its implementation in Nigeria. Before then, due to public distrust in the police when Tafa O. Balogun assumed office as Inspector-General of Police in 2002, he implemented several measures to improve the police-citizen relationship. He established the Police Complaints Bureau and Human Rights Desk in all state commands with the assistance of the British government (Onovo, 2010). The evolution and implementation of the community policing programme in Nigeria later spread to Benue, Jigawa, Kano, Ondo, and Ogun states. By the end of March 2009, the Community Policing programme in Nigeria had been expanded to include twelve additional states: Lagos, FCT, Cross-River, Kaduna, Anambra, Edo, Bauchi, Kogi, Oyo, Imo, Kwara, and Borno. The programme was first introduced in Bauchi State as a pilot project in 2009. Initially, it was launched in five local government areas: Azare, Bauchi, Darazo, Gamawa, and Ningi.

Concept of Political Thuggery

Thuggery can be described as a deliberate attempt to intimidate or scare individuals who are perceived as opponents to gain an unfair advantage. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2013) defines "thuggery" as violent behaviour that involves physical attacks on others. Sani, (2019) sees thuggery as any act of intimidation, violence, hooliganism, brutality, or gangsterism against individuals or groups. These actions are intended to scare people or opponents and gain an unfair advantage. The term "thuggery" is therefore associated with criminal behaviour that is linked with violence, brutal acts, assassins, criminality, delinquency, and other similar acts, regardless of whether they result in death or not.

Political thuggery: (thuggery in a political process) is an act of intimidation, using violence, as a threat to political rivals or those who are perceived as political opponents. Such acts are usually carried out before, during, or after elections to achieve an unfair political advantage. Ismail, (2018), defined political thuggery as any negative behaviour that is used to change, alter, or influence the electoral behaviour of voters or voting patterns through force or coercion, or to reverse electoral decisions in favour of a specific individual, group, or political party. Similarly, Anazodo, & Emeh, (2016) defined political thuggery as any negative behaviour associated with violence, kidnapping, murder, assassination, gang activity, or troublemaking that is connected to or related to any political process.

Consequently, political thuggery, especially during elections, may involve various acts such as inciting or encouraging others to act in a disorderly manner. Possessing or using offensive weapons illegally to scare or intimidate voters, snatching or destroying election materials, and exerting undue influence, including forcing anyone to vote or refrain from voting against their will, ballot stuffing, and so on. These acts of illegal interference in the electoral process amount to electoral fraud in Nigeria, which is both criminal and poses severe implications for the peaceful coexistence of society, particularly national security.

Nature and Patterns of Political Thuggery in Nigeria

Political thuggery has become a common occurrence in Nigerian politics since the country's return to democracy in 1999. This trend has created a breeding ground for political violence in the country, leading to resentment among the public (Ojo, 2019). It's worth noting that political thuggery is not limited to one political party, as all political parties are guilty of some form of political thuggery. Political parties that attempt to attain or retain power at any cost commit this heinous crime. Political thuggery is not limited to a specific region of the country; it occurs throughout the nation. Various groups exist throughout the country, formed and maintained by politicians before, during, and after elections to intimidate, harass, distort, and perpetrate acts that would give their party candidates a political advantage over their opponents. Political thugs are a group of young people, typically aged between 18 and 35, some of whom are in secondary school or are school dropouts. They are known for their violent behaviour, unemployment, and drug addiction. These youths (thugs) are hired by politicians during campaigns and elections to intimidate voters and political opponents and force them to accept their sponsors' positions.

In various Nigerian states, political thugs are referred to by different names. For example, in Bauchi State, they are called "*Sara-Suka*" (cuts and pears); in Gombe State, they are known as "Yan-Kalare" (Hausa word for a group of thugs); and in

Adamawa State, they are referred to as “Yan-Daukan Amarya.” In Kano State, they are called “Yan-daba,” and in Kaduna State, they are known as “Kyanwaye” or “Yan-Mage.” In Borno State, they are commonly referred to as “Ecomog,” and in Lagos State, they are called “Area boys” (Kala, & Ibrahim, 2018). All of these groups of thugs are hired by politicians to cause violence and problems before, during and after the electoral process. Politicians in Nigeria are instigating attacks against their opponents for the sole purpose of advancing their political ambitions (SERAP, 2019). Unfortunately, the involvement of youths in thuggery has become a common feature in Nigerian politics. It is rare to have an electoral process that doesn’t result in loss of life, destruction of property, or other criminal activities such as armed robbery and vandalism. Political thuggery is employed to gain power through illegal means or to displace opponents by engaging in criminal behaviour.

Community policing has a long history, dating back to England's Mutual Pledge in the 17th century. It involves cooperation between police and residents to reduce fear of crime and maintain law and order. Community policing flattens the hierarchical framework of the police force, emphasising coordinated service delivery involving public and private firms. It enhances police visibility and promotes public-police partnerships.

Community policing is effective in combating political thuggery due to its collaborative and proactive nature. It involves law enforcement agencies working closely with community members to identify, prevent, and address various forms of criminal activity, including political thuggery. By engaging with the community and building trust, community policing approaches have shown promising results in tackling criminal activity in many countries worldwide.

In the Bauchi Local Government Area, community policing has achieved success in police-community collaboration. The formation of the "Anti-Social Vices Committee" has impacted neighbourhood patrol and community protection. Community collaboration with the police in Bauchi has resulted in about 500 political thugs voluntarily renouncing thuggery and laying down their dangerous weapons. However, community policing may not be effective in eliminating political thuggery, which is often influenced by factors such as corruption, poverty, unemployment, and ethnic divisions. To address political thuggery, community involvement is central to successful crime prevention in all localities.

Strategies for Community Policing

Community policing is a philosophy and practice that seeks to enhance public safety and build trust between the police and communities by fostering partnerships, problem-solving, and organisational transformation (Alemika & Sowunmi, 2014).

Several strategies under the community policing programme are tailored toward combating various forms of crime based on the local context, types of crime committed, and community needs. Some common examples include:

- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design; which involves modifying the physical environment to reduce opportunities for crime.
- Community Engagement: This involves educating, consulting, and collaborating with community members and groups to address their concerns and needs.
- Problem-Oriented Policing (POP); and the ***SARA*** (Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment) model, which involves identifying and analysing specific crime problems and developing tailored solutions.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Community policing strengthens bonds between officers and the community to increase mutual recognition, responsibility, and accountability for a safer neighbourhood (Okaneme, 2010). Historically, while most police departments have assigned patrol officers to specific beats, their accountability has been temporary, limited to their shift rather than to any particular geographic area. Other specialised personnel within law enforcement agencies, such as detectives, have been responsible for fulfilling their duties, but they are not usually accountable for any particular geographic region. Community policing is a policing strategy that concentrates on places rather than times or functions (Okechukwu, 2017). To emphasise geography, community policing employs various methods such as permanent beat assignments, lead officers, beat teams, out-stations, and community police outposts.

Community Engagement and Positive Interactions (CEPI)

Policing involves certain negative interactions between officers and citizens, such as arrests, suspicion, stops, seizures, and detention orders. Unfortunately, these interactions cannot always lead to better outcomes for victims. However, community policing acknowledges this reality and encourages officers to reduce negative interactions by engaging in positive ones whenever possible. Positive interactions have several advantages. First, they increase familiarity, trust, and confidence on both sides. Second, they remind officers that most citizens respect and support them. Third, they increase the officer's knowledge of people and conditions on the beat, providing specific information for criminal investigations and problem-solving. Fourth, they break up the monotony of motorised patrols and engage in joint foot patrols. Fifth, making an extra effort during call handling, attending community meetings, and bringing policing into schools, markets, and other public gathering places can be

highly beneficial. Finally, simply shifting the emphasis of patrol from watching and waiting to interact can have a significant positive impact (Ismail, 2018).

Collaboration and active engagement between the police, other agencies, and citizens are central to community policing. In this approach, all parties work together to identify and solve problems related to public safety. Citizens now have a greater role to play in ensuring public safety, while public and private agencies can combine their resources and authority to address public safety concerns. However, there are some legal and safety limitations on the extent to which citizens can assist in co-producing public safety. It is also not advisable for the police to shoulder the entire responsibility of controlling crime and disorder. Partnerships such as block watch groups, police-school initiatives, landlord associations, and citizen patrols have proven effective in promoting public safety (Palmiotto, 2011) as cited in (Peak, 2013).

Problem-solving Oriented Policing (POP)

Community policing is an approach that emphasises problem-solving instead of just responding to incidents, which has been the traditional approach used in conjunction with the professional model. Of course, emergency calls still need to be handled immediately, and officers will spend a lot of time dealing with individual incidents. However, officers should also investigate the root causes of these incidents, whether they are isolated or repeated occurrences. The ***SARA*** process is a problem-solving approach that involves carefully analysing specific crime and disorder problems. It emphasises the importance of sharing responsibility for problem-solving with the community and other public and private institutions. The ***SARA*** community policing problem-solving process guides officers through four steps: scanning, analysis, response, and assessment. Each of these steps has core components that are essential to achieving community problem-solving.

Scanning: In the problem-solving process, scanning is the first step. Officers start by searching for patterns (modus operandi), repeated incidents, and evidence of a problem. A problem refers to a collection of two or more incidents that pose a risk to the public and share one or more similarities. The primary objective of scanning is to conduct a preliminary inquiry to determine if a problem exists and if further analysis is required. If multiple issues are present, priorities are set during this stage, and a specific officer or unit is designated to handle the problem.

Analysis: This is a crucial step in the problem-solving process, as its success is essential. The ultimate goal of conducting an analysis is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the problem and identify its root cause. This involves collecting information from both internal and external sources about the nature, scope, and causes of the issue (Okaneme, 2010). By examining the offender, the victim, and the location,

officers can visualise the problem and understand the relationships between these three elements

Response: Once officers have defined and analysed a problem in problem-oriented policing, the next step is to determine the most effective way to deal with it (Goldstein, 2013). To do so, problem solvers review their findings from problem analyses and develop creative solutions to address them, ultimately developing tailored responses.

Assessment: During the assessment step, officers assess the effectiveness of their responses based on various criteria. These criteria could include the number of arrests, reported crime levels, response times, clearance rates, citizen complaints, and workload diversity. The evaluation helps determine whether the implemented responses were effective or not. If not, the officers will review the information gathered during the analysis and develop new solutions to implement it. This process helps to ensure the effectiveness of police responses and the safety of citizens.

Given the circumstances above, the police can no longer solely rely on reported crimes and analysis to prioritise the crime problem. Instead, they will focus on the community's concerns, which often include unreported crime and public nuisance. Effective and targeted responses will be planned, evaluated, and put into action by involving the community's resources and experiences throughout the problem-solving process.

Challenges of Community Policing in Nigeria

Community policing has many advantages, as mentioned above. However, some operational shortcomings need to be addressed for the programme to be successful. If implementation issues are left undisclosed or unresolved, the overall sustainability of the community policing programme may be jeopardised. Goldstein, (2013), noted that the main obstacle to achieving the full benefits of community policing has been the failure to involve and obtain a commitment from those who have management and supervisory responsibilities. Dickson (2016) also discoursed that the successful implementation of community policing in Nigeria faces several impediments. These include resistance from police officers who have benefited from traditional policing and prefer to maintain the status quo; a lack of commitment to the project by the implementing officers; a lack of public and government support, and poor welfare packages for officers and men. Furthermore, the relationship and pattern of interaction between the police and informal machinery is one of the biggest challenges to the success of community policing in Nigeria. A variety of implementation challenges may also hinder its success such as; poor implementation can lead to a lack of neighbourhood control; the failure to recognise the historical lack of trust between the

police and specific groups; and insufficient high-quality crime information provided to or by the communities.

Community policing in Nigeria faces some challenges due to citizens' perception that the police resort to using excessive force against them. This belief gained ground when the Nigerian Police Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) was accused of engaging in extrajudicial killings and brutality in 2020. The accusations resulted in the #Endsars Twitter campaign and riots across Nigerian cities and beyond. In 2017, there was a call to disband the police unit known as *SARS* due to their abusive behaviour (SERAP, 2019). The campaign gained momentum in October 2020, when more incidents of police abuse were exposed. As a result of massive demonstrations both in Nigeria and abroad, the government eventually disbanded *SARS*.

The rise in crime rates is alarming, and the situation is further worsened by the widespread corruption that exists both within and outside the police force. Moreover, there is a significant lack of trust between police officers and the general public, as individuals often perceive law enforcement officials with contempt, distrust, and suspicion. Instead of seeing them as allies or friends in the battle against crime, people regard them as adversaries who are on the side of the criminals (HRW., 2015). This lack of trust frequently results in the public deciding not to assist the police in their fight against crime and sometimes leads to angry mobs taking the law into their own hands and carrying out 'Jungle-Justice' on suspects.

Opposition to community policing is often associated with the perception that it deviates from traditional law enforcement methods and instead promotes a more civic approach to policing (Ikuteyijo and Rotimi, 2010). However, it is important to note that if the police are solely viewed as crime experts, it may lead to the disempowerment of the community in finding solutions.

The reluctance of police officers to share essential information with the public is still a significant issue. In the same way, isolating officers may limit their effectiveness, and create flaws in specialised police units. Additionally, providing more resources for community policing teams and establishing specific working conditions can also lead to organisational conflicts. Likewise, rank-and-file opposition to community policing; leadership management and organisational challenges, and doubts about community policing's ability to achieve its stated goals, particularly crime prevention and reduction, also make implementation more difficult. Without a doubt, the police-public relationship is frequently marked by brutality, confrontation, and exploitation. However, despite these flaws, many people believe that effective community policing implementation across the country can be critical to the successful restructuring of the Nigerian Police Force to be more civil and democratic.

Theoretical Framework

Criminal activities in society have become more common, prompting the development of several theories aimed at explaining their nature and existence. As a frame of reference, this study employs a hybrid of the Broken Windows Theory (BWT), the Routine Activity Theory (RAT), and the Gap Theory (GT).

Broken Windows Theory (BWT)

The Broken Windows Theory, proposed by James Q. Wilson and George Kelling in 1982, suggests that a person's physical environment influences their likelihood of committing crimes. The theory, named after an analogy, suggests that visible signs of disorder encourage further misbehaviour, leading to more serious crimes. This theory has influenced community policing strategies and sparked a wave of "broken windows" and "zero tolerance" policing, where law enforcement cracks down on nonviolent behaviour to create a more orderly environment. Proponents credit broken window policing with a significant decrease in crime. Kelling and Coles, as cited in Onyeozili (2021), opined that the success of the Broken Windows approach in community policing is built on four pillars, as follows:

1. bringing law enforcement into close contact with those who are predisposed to commit a crime.
2. Projecting a strong police presence and visibility has a strong deterrent effect on potential criminal elements and crime perpetrators.
3. Improving citizens' ability to take control of their neighbourhoods, thereby reducing crime.
4. Promoting police and community cooperation in the fight against crime through an integrated approach.

Critics argue that the Broken Windows theory suggests that policing methods like stop-and-search and arrest for minor offences are ineffective and harmful and that demographic shifts are more important than the theory's application. They also argue that these tactics violate people's rights and contribute to racial and ethnic prejudice. Some argue that the decrease in crime may be due to better monitoring rather than the Broken Windows theory. In addition, the theory has not been tested and has been used to justify excessively harsh police methods that violate individuals' rights and alienate significant segments of the population (Lanier et al., 2015). The theory's effectiveness is also arguable because some crimes are committed by people who are not necessarily residents of the crime's environment. In cybercrime, for example, the victims are not always close to the criminals because they live far apart.

The Broken Windows hypothesis suggests that police can effectively combat crime by addressing minor annoyances in communities, such as litter, dilapidated buildings, and

social nuisances like loitering and public drinking. These issues accumulate and lead to community decline, potentially leading to crime. If left unattended, these disorderly problems can cause residents to withdraw from the community, they may spend less time outside, and even move away.

Before community policing in Bauchi, youth gangsterism and the *Sara-Suka* (political thuggery) were the order of the day. However, since the implementation of community policing in Bauchi Local Government Area, there appears to have been an increase in social and economic activity, even at night. This suggests that community policing is in effect in the study area. The net result is a weakening of informal social controls, which leads to an increase in disorder and minor crimes as people believe they can get away with such behaviour in these areas where disorderly behaviour is routinely unpunished. Criminals eventually interpret these signs of unattended disorder as a sign that such a neighbourhood is a good place for them to operate with relative impunity.

Routine Activity Theory (RAT)

Routine Activity Theory is a criminological theory that focuses on the convergence of motivated offenders, suitable targets, and the absence of capable guardians as key factors contributing to criminal activities. Formulated by Lawrence E. Cohen and Marcus Felson in 1979, the theory suggests that post-modernity has aided a combination of likely offenders and suitable targets with deficient guardians. The theory offers a comprehensive framework to analyse the interaction between motivated offenders, suitable targets, and capable guardians. Such an approach can inform the development of effective approaches and policies to mitigate the impact of political thuggery on society for example:

1. ***Motivated offenders:*** Political thuggery typically involves individuals or groups with specific motivations, such as furthering a political agenda or exerting control through intimidation and violence. By applying RAT, researchers can assess how community policing affects the presence and activities of motivated offenders engaged in political thuggery.
2. ***Suitable targets:*** Political figures, activists, and their supporters often become targets of political thuggery. RAT allows us to explore how community policing approaches influence the availability and vulnerability of these targets. It helps in identifying whether community policing deters or disrupts opportunities for political thuggery by minimising potential targets or making them less appealing.
3. ***Absence of capable guardians:*** Community policing initiatives aim to enhance the role of law enforcement agencies and develop a collaborative approach with communities. RAT enables us to investigate how such initiatives affect the presence and effectiveness of capable guardians against political thuggery. It also

helps in understanding whether community policing strategies empower communities to actively prevent and respond to incidents of political violence.

Given the above, RAT can highlight the situational factors and environmental conditions that contribute to the occurrence of *Sara-Suka* (political thuggery). Therefore, adopting the Routine Activity Theory provided a robust underpinning for studying the effectiveness of community policing in combating political thuggery in Bauchi Local Government Area. Also, by adopting the Routine Activity Theory, researchers can examine the interplay between these elements within the context of community policing. This allows for a comprehensive analysis of how specific approaches, interventions, and community engagement efforts impact the occurrence and effectiveness of political thuggery prevention and response.

Gap Theory (GT)

The Gap Theory, developed by George J. Thompson in 2006, posits a growing gap between police and the public in crime prevention and control. It suggests that maltreated individuals are less likely to provide vital information on crime, and the better police treat people, the safer they feel and the more the gap closes. The theory also suggests that the quality of contact between the police and the community affects the public's perception of the police. The theory suggests that the nature, scope, and extent of interactions between the police and the community affect the public's perception and interaction with the police. To improve the quality of contact, police should be taught the "90-10 principles of the community," which emphasize that 90% of the people in a community are honest, hardworking, and law-abiding, while 10% are crooks and lawbreakers. This approach can help close the gap of mistrust and lack of confidence between the police and the people, making them more humane in carrying out their services.

Overall, the Broken Window Theory suggests that law enforcement agencies can enhance community trust and cooperation by proactively engaging with the community, responding promptly to minor offences, and fostering shared safety. Routine Activity Theory offers an inclusive framework for analysing community policing's effectiveness in combating political thuggery by enabling the development of effective strategies and policies. Gap Theory also suggests that community policing can effectively combat political thuggery by engaging with communities, identifying gaps, and proactively addressing vulnerabilities

Methodology

This study aims to explore the strategies, effectiveness, and challenges of community policing programmes in Bauchi Local Government Area. The research employs both

quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a clear roadmap for assessing the effectiveness of these programmes. The population includes residents from the local government area, officials from the Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC), Divisional Police Officers (DPOs), and traditional leaders of the Bauchi Local Government Area.

The study used Cochan's (2021) sample size determination formula to select 384 respondents from five electoral wards in the Bauchi Local Government Area. The researchers used multi-stage cluster sampling to divide the area into twelve electoral wards and purposive sampling to select five wards with community policing office structures. Purposive sampling was also used to select and interview four traditional leaders, two members of the Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC), and three Divisional Police Officers for qualitative data. A questionnaire was distributed to 375 respondents across five electoral wards, with 75 respondents per electoral ward. In-depth interviews were conducted with three Divisional Police Officers, two members of the Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC), and four traditional ward leaders of the Bauchi Local Government Area.

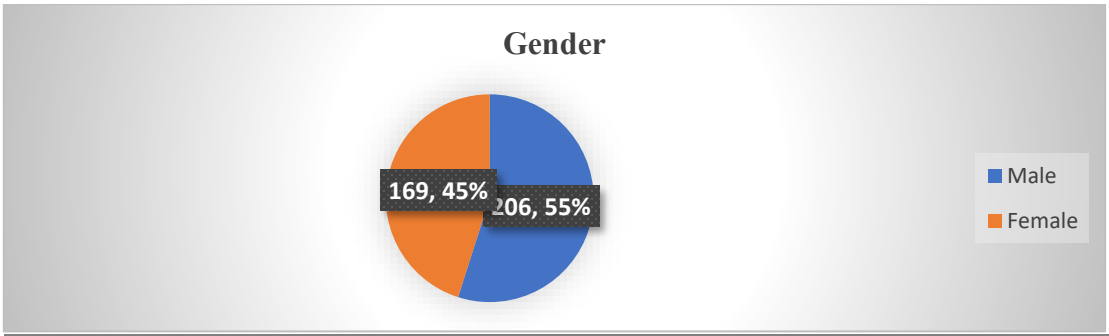
Mixed methods of data collection were employed, including quantitative data collected with the help of five research assistants, who were residents of the study areas. The results were presented in both statistical charts and tabular forms, with simple frequency and percentage values. The qualitative data was analysed using content analysis, and the data was translated, transcribed, interpreted, and presented based on appropriate headings.

Data Presentation

Section A: Socio-Demographic Data of Respondents

The main socio-demographic characteristics considered in the study area are the respondents' gender, age, marital status, level of education, religious affiliation, occupation, tribe, and level of income. The data are presented hereunder using statistical charts.

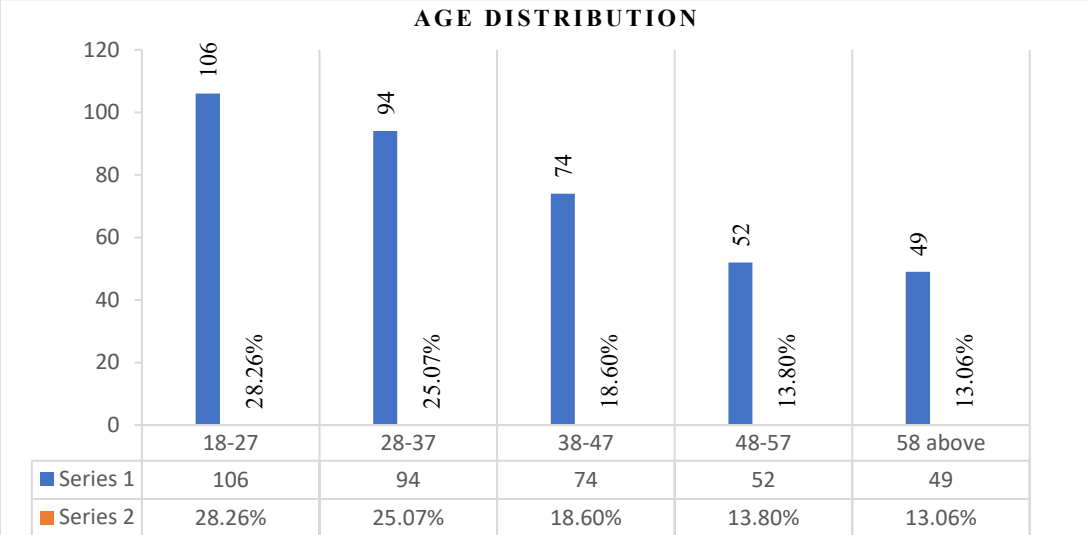
Chart 4.1.1: Gender of the Respondents



Fieldwork, 2023.

Chart 4.1.1 (Pie chart) above represents the gender disposition of the respondents during the survey. Male participation was higher, with 206 respondents representing 55%, compared to female respondents 169 representing 45%.

Chart 4.1.2: Age Distribution of the Respondents

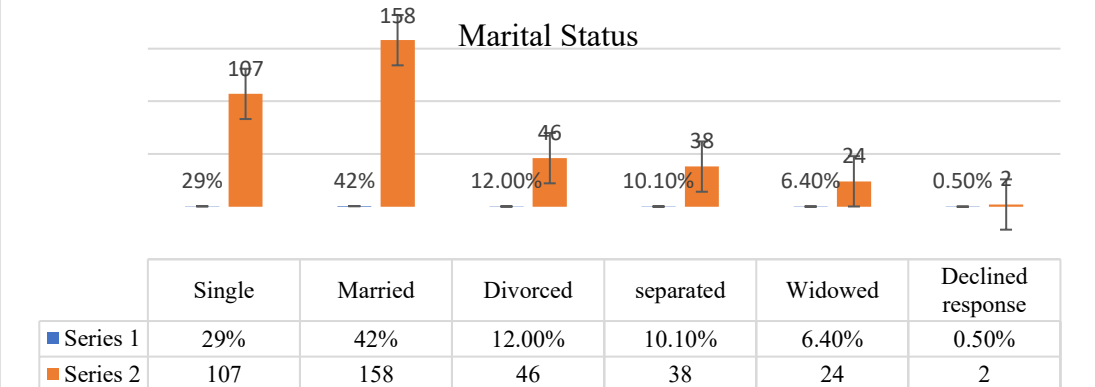


	18-27	28-37	38-47	48-57	58 above
Series 1	106	94	74	52	49
Series 2	28.26%	25.07%	18.60%	13.80%	13.06%

Fieldwork, 2023.

Based on the survey, it was found that respondents' ages were distributed as follows: 106 individuals (28.26%) were aged between 18 and 27 years; 94 individuals (25.066%) were between 28 and 37 years old; 74 individuals (18.6%) were aged between 38 and 47 years; 52 individuals (13.8%) were between 48 and 57 years old; and 49 respondents (13.06%) were 58 years old and older. This information is presented in bar **chart 4.1.2** above.

Chart 4.1.3: Marital Status of the Respondents

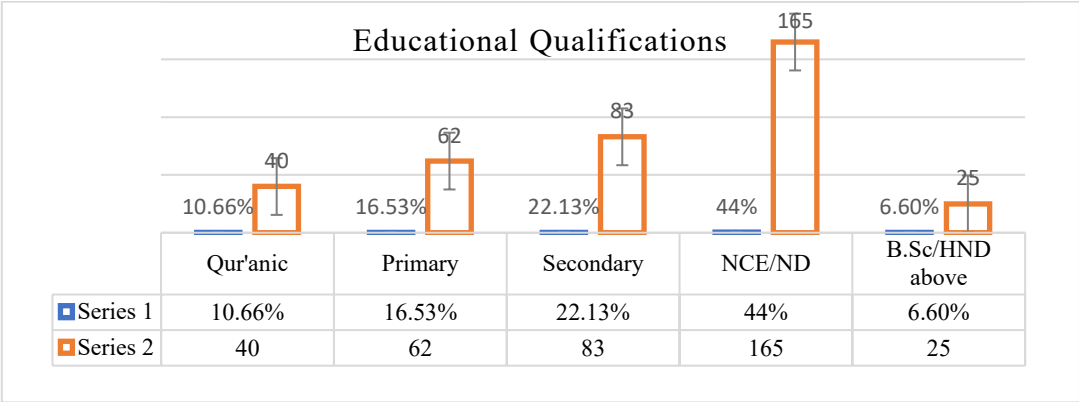


	Single	Married	Divorced	separated	Widowed	Declined response
Series 1	29%	42%	12.00%	10.10%	6.40%	0.50%
Series 2	107	158	46	38	24	2

Fieldwork, 2023.

A study conducted to determine the marital status of the respondents discovered that out of the total sample, 158 respondents (42%) were married, 107 (29%) were single, 46 (12%) were divorced, 38 (10.10%) were separated, and 24 (6.40%) were widows. Only 2 respondents (0.50%) chose not to disclose their marital status. See the clustered column chart (**Chart 4.1.3**) above.

Chart 4.1.4: Educational Qualifications of the Respondents

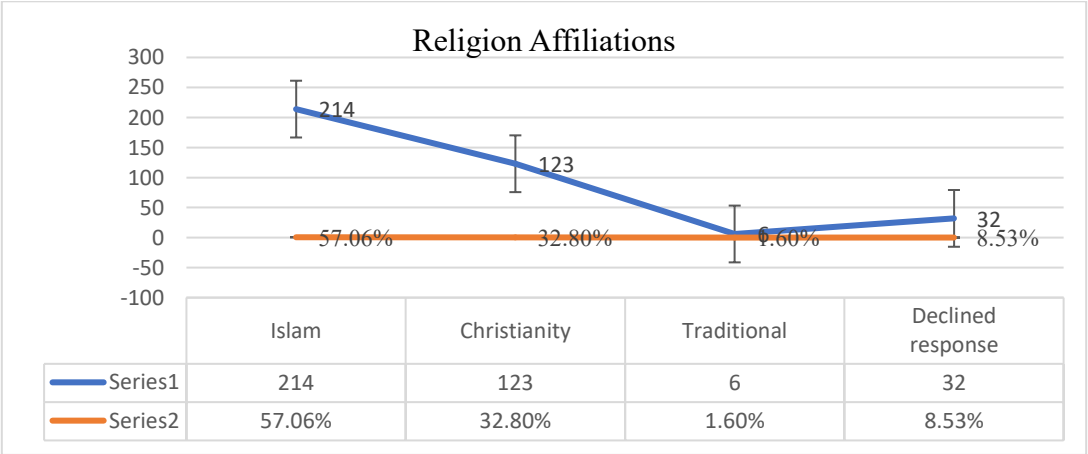


	Qur'anic	Primary	Secondary	NCE/ND	B.Sc/HND above
Series 1	10.66%	16.53%	22.13%	44%	6.60%
Series 2	40	62	83	165	25

Fieldwork, 2023.

The majority of the respondents had either a National Certificate of Education (NCE) or a National Diploma (ND), accounting for 44% or 165 individuals. 22.13%, or 83 individuals, had secondary education, while 16.53% or 62 respondents had primary education. The remaining educational qualifications reported were 10.66% or 40 individuals with a Qur'anic education and 6.60% or 25 individuals with a B.Sc./HND or higher degree. This information is presented in **Chart 4.1.4** above, which shows a clustered column chart.

Chart 4.1.5: Religious Affiliation of the Respondents

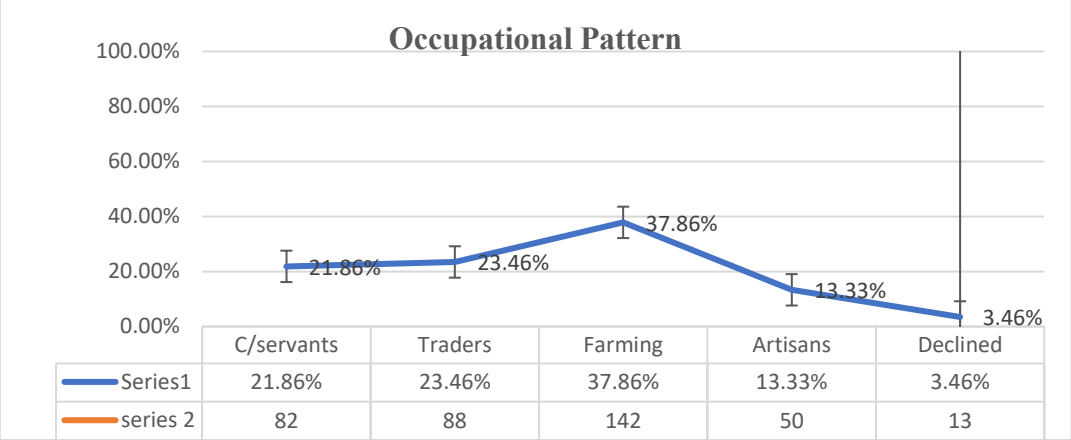


	Islam	Christianity	Traditional	Declined response
Series1	214	123	6	32
Series2	57.06%	32.80%	1.60%	8.53%

Fieldwork, 2023.

Here are the survey results on the religious affiliations of the respondents, presented in a line chart (**chart 4.1.5**) above. The chart shows that 214 respondents, representing 57.06% identified as Muslims, while 123 respondents representing 32.80%, identified as Christians. Only six respondents, representing 1.60% were followers of the traditional religion. Additionally, 32 respondents, representing 8.53% declined to respond to questions on religious affiliation.

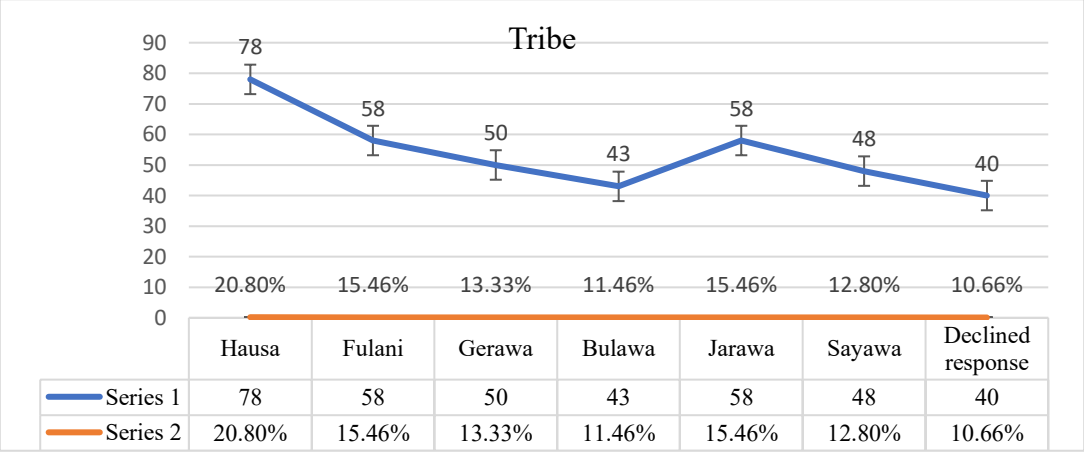
Chart 4.1.6: Occupation Patterns of the Respondents



Fieldwork, 2023.

Based on a survey conducted on the occupational patterns of respondents, it was found that the majority of them were either farmers (142 respondents, or 37.86%) or traders (88 respondents, or 23.46%). Civil servants accounted for 82 (21.86%) of the respondents, while artists made up 50 (13.33%) of the total. However, 13 respondents (3.46% of the total) chose not to disclose their occupation. The data is visually presented in the line chart (**chart 4.1.6**) above.

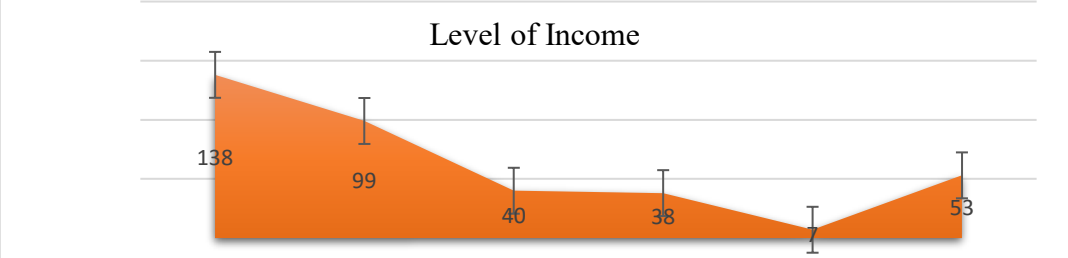
Chart 4.1.7: Tribal Distribution of the Respondents



Fieldwork, 2023.

The line (chart 4.1.7) presented above shows the results of a survey conducted on the tribal affiliations of the respondents. Out of the total number of respondents, 78 individuals (20.80%) identified themselves as Hausa. The Fulani and Jarawa tribes had an equal number of respondents, with 58 individuals each, representing 15.46% of the total, respectively. Gerawa received 50 responses (13.33%), while Sayawa accounted for 48 (12.80%). It is important to note that 40 respondents, making up 10.66% of the total, chose not to disclose their tribal affiliation.

Chart 4.1.8: Level of Income of the Respondents



	Below 40,000	41-60,000	61-80,000	81-100,000	101,000 above	Declined response
Series 1	36.80%	26.40%	10.66%	10.13%	1.86%	14.13%
Series 2	138	99	40	38	7	53

Fieldwork, 2023.

Chart 4.1.8 (Area Chart) above shows the income level of the survey respondents. Out of the total 375 surveys, 138 individuals (36.80%) stated that their income was below 40,000 naira. 99 respondents (26.40%) make between 41,000 and 60,000 naira, while 40 respondents (10.66%) have an income of 61,000 and 80,000 naira. In addition, 38 respondents (10.13%) earn between 81,000 and 100,000 naira. Only 7 individuals (1.86%) earn 101,000 naira and above. However, 53 respondents (14.13%) did not provide any information regarding their income level.

Section B: Effectiveness of Community Policing on the *Sara-Suka* (Political Thuggery) in Bauchi Local Government Area.

This sub-section presents the respondents' view on the effectiveness of community policing programmes on *Sara-Suka* (political thuggery) in the study area. The results are presented in tabular forms with simple frequencies and percentage values.

Table 4.1.1: Awareness of the presence of community policing programmes in Bauchi Local Government Area.

Level of Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
Yes, I am aware	275	73.33%
No, I am not aware	68	18.13%
Declined response	32	8.53%
Total	**375**	**99.99%**

Fieldwork, 2023.

In Bauchi Local Government Area, 275 respondents (73.33%) expressed awareness of the presence of community policing programmes in their communities, while 68 respondents (18.13%) stated that they were not aware of the programme in their community. Additionally, 32 respondents (8.53%) chose not to respond to questions regarding their level of awareness. The data is presented in **Table 4.1.1** above.
Community members of the Bauchi LGA are becoming more aware of community policing programmes than ever before. According to a member of the Police Community Relations Committee:

> We have launched community awareness campaigns to encourage community members to support each other and provide security for themselves, while also assisting the police. The community has shown enthusiasm for the programme and has made financial contributions to assist youths in buying items such as touch lights and batteries for patrols. Additionally, the formation of the Police Community Relations Committee has increased trust between the police and the Bauchi community. With the help of the PCRC, community members have developed trust in each other. They meet with the police regularly to identify priority areas, discuss community problems, and work together to find solutions (Interview with PCRC officer, 2023).

Table 4.1.4: Reasons behind the establishment of Community Policing.

Reasons for establishing CP	Frequency	Percentage
Insufficient police personnel	62	16.53%
Increase in crime rate	212	56.53%
Poor police-comm. relations	34	9.06%
Police Failure to Achieve Goals	41	10.93%
No response to the question	26	6.93%
Total	**375**	**99.99%**

Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 4.1.4 above shows the response to the reasons for the introduction of community policing in Bauchi LGA. Out of the 375 respondents, 212 (56.53%) believed that the increase in crime rates was the primary reason for the establishment of community policing in their communities. 62 (16.53%) respondents stated that insufficient police personnel were the major reason, while 34 (9.06%) and 41 (10.93%) respondents pointed to poor police-community relationships and the failure of the police to achieve their goals, respectively. Finally, 26 respondents did not respond to the question.

> I would like to inform you that there has been a significant decrease in the activities of a group called Sara-Suka in my community. In my palace, we have an office where community members gather to discuss their problems. We handle certain situations at the community level, but when it comes to criminal issues, we always involve the police. Our current main problem is property crime, such as phone snatching and shoplifting. However, we are working together with community members and the police to combat it. This was the statement made by the traditional ward head during an interview in 2023.

Table 4.1.6: Specific contributions by community policing in controlling the *Sara-Suka* political thuggery.

Impact CP of on Sara-Suka	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Reduced significantly	162	43.2%
Maintenance of Law and order	58	15.46%
Security Awareness	24	6.4%
Built Police-Comm. Relationships	120	32%
No Impact at all	nills	0.00%
Declined response	11	2.93%
Total	**375**	**99.99%**

Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 4.1.6 above, presents responses to the effectiveness of the community policing programme in controlling the Sara-Suka (political thuggery) in Bauchi LGA. Out of the total 375 respondents, 162 (43.2%) believe that the programme has significantly reduced the menace, while 120 (32% of respondents) acknowledge that it has improved police-community relationships. Additionally, 58 (15.46%) and 24 (6.4%) respondents believe that the programme contributed to maintaining law and order and

increasing security awareness, respectively. Only 11 respondents (2.93%), declined to answer the question.

Another traditional ward head confirmed the decrease in *Sara-Suka* activities in his community, saying:

> Community policing in my community has contributed to the reduction of Sara-Suka political thuggery. "The programme has fostered trust between the police and members of the community, and the officers respond to phone calls with vigilance. According to him, these have increased general security awareness and aided in the maintenance of law and order in the community" (IDI, with traditional ward head, 2023).

Table 4.1.7: Effectiveness of Community Policing programmes in combating *Sara-Suka* political thuggery.

Effect of CP on Sara-Suka	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	188	50.13%
Very Good	101	26.93%
Good	53	14.13%
Fair	10	2.66%
Poor	6	1.6%
Very poor	2	0.53%
Declined response	15	4.00%
Total	**375**	**99.99%**

Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 4.1.7 above presents a study on the effectiveness of the community policing programme in Bauchi LGA, specifically in addressing the issue of Sara-Suka (political thuggery). The study gathered responses from 375 respondents, wherein 50.13% (or 188 respondents) rated the programme as excellent, 26.93% (101 respondents) rated it as very good, and 14.13% (53 respondents) rated it as good. Only 2.66% (10 respondents) rated it as poor, and 1.6% (6 respondents) rated it as very poor. However, 4.00% (15 respondents) did not provide any answer to the question.

During a phone interview, a divisional police officer confirmed that community policing has had a positive impact on the reduction of *Sara-Suka* in Bauchi, saying:

> Community policing in my division has had a significant impact on Sara-Suka (political thuggery). There is currently little public complaint about politically motivated crimes, in contrast to before, during, and after the 2023 general election.

> We currently have reports of people stealing mobile phones and other items. He concluded that Sara-Suka community policing was extremely effective (IDI, divisional police officer, 2023).

Section C: Strategies of community policing programmes in Bauchi Local Government Area.

Table 4.1.8: Rate of *Sara-Suka* political thuggery before the commencement of Community Policing.

Rate for Sara-Suka before CP	Frequency	Percentage
Remaining as it was	9	2.4%
The rate was high	312	83.2%
Significantly low	20	5.33%
Decreased to near zero	14	3.73%
Declined response	20	5.33%
Total	**375**	**99.99%**

Fieldwork, 2023.

A survey was conducted to determine the rate of Sara-Suka (political thuggery) in Bauchi LGA before the implementation of community policing. The findings, presented in **Table 4.1.8** above, indicate that the frequency of *Sara-Suka* was high, with 312 respondents (83.2%) reporting it. However, 20 respondents (5.33%) reported it as significantly low. 14 respondents (3.73%) reported a decrease in *Sara-Suka*, while 9 (2.4%) respondents reported no change at all. 20 respondents (5.33%) did not provide an answer to the question.

Table 4.1.9: Rate the political thuggery perpetrated by the *Sara-Suka* group after the commencement of the Community Policing programme.

Crime rate after the intro. Of CP	Frequency	Percentage
The rate has Increased	2	0.53%
Very high	5	1.33%
The rate is high	2	0.53%
The rate is low	46	12.26%
Reduced significantly	320	85.33%
Total	**375**	**99.99%**

***Table 4.1.9* Source: Fieldwork, 2023.**

According to the response received in **Table 4.1.9** above, the rate of Sara-Suka political thuggery has significantly reduced after the implementation of community policing in Bauchi LGA. Out of the total respondents, 85.33% (320) believe that the

rate has decreased, 12.26% (46) indicated that it is low, and only 1.33% (5) believed that it is still very high. However, two respondents (0.53%) each suggested that the rate has increased and is very high, respectively.

A ward head, 68 years of age and married, stated during an in-depth interview that the community policing programme had impacted positively on the security of his community. He said:

> Since the implementation of the programme, the presence of police officers in the community has increased and collaboration with community members has significantly improved community safety. The issue of petty theft, such as Sara-Suka, is gradually disappearing. We now have better access to the police and can meet with them at the ward level to discuss issues of crime within our community. Together, we collectively provide solutions to these problems, he concluded. (An interview with the divisional police officer in 2023).

During the interview, another member of the Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC), aged 51 years, married, and a civil servant with an annual salary of more than 100,000 naira, stated that:

> The police in Bauchi LGA have received valuable information from members of different communities. Community leaders have requested to be kept updated on the activities of various vigilante groups, and they collaborate with the police on crime-fighting strategies. The police response to calls from the communities is always commendable. This information was obtained from an interview conducted with the Police Community Relations Committee in 2023.

Table 4.1.11: Willingness to provide the police with information that could assist in the apprehension of criminals and political thugs.

Willingness to give information	Frequency	Percentage
Yes, I'm willing	310	82.66%
No, I'm not willing	60	16%
No response to the question	5	1.33%
Total	**375**	**99.99%**

Fieldwork, 2023.

Responses regarding the willingness to provide information that could lead to the arrests of Sara-Suka (political thugs in Bauchi LGA) were collected. A total of 375

individuals were asked whether they were willing to provide information, and their responses were recorded. Out of the total respondents, 310 individuals (82.66%) responded positively, stating that they were willing to provide information. at the same time, 60 respondents (16%) stated that they were not willing to provide information, whereas 5 respondents (1.33%) did not respond to the question. The data is presented in Table 4.1.11 above.

A divisional police officer, while participating in a phone call interview, stated that:

> I am married and I have been serving for 27 years. As the officer in charge of community policing in the Bauchi State Police Command, I am pleased to report that members of various communities in Bauchi metropolis are now assisting the police by providing vital information that has resulted in the arrest of several individuals involved in Sara-Suka political thuggery in Bauchi LGA. People are now freely walking into police stations to provide information about political thugs in their communities, which usually results in the arrest of these thugs. (This information was shared with me by a police officer in 2023).

Table 4.1.12: The strategy used by community policing in combating Sara-*Suka* political thuggery.

Strategies by CP on Sara-Suka	Frequency	Percentage
Neighbourhood watch	203	54.13%
Stop and search	50	13.33%
Joint Foot patrol	98	26.13%
Provision of police posts	24	6.36%
Total	**375**	**99.99%**

Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 4.1.12: The above shows the results of a survey conducted to determine the strategy of the community policing programme in combating Sara-Suka (political thuggery in Bauchi LGA). Out of the total respondents, 203 (54.13%) indicated neighbourhood watch as an effective strategy. The joint patrol came in second with 98 (26.13%) respondents, followed by a stop and search, which garnered responses from 50 (13.33%) respondents. Lastly, 24 (6.36%) respondents suggested that the provision of police posts in their communities was an effective strategy.

Another divisional police officer during a phone interview stated that:

> The Bauchi state government established the Bauchi Peace Committee, also known as the Yan Police Committee, to

support the community policing programme in Bauchi LGA. The committee is part of the Bauchi Security Network and its members have provided crucial intelligence reports and information on the activities of the Sara-Suka political thugs. As a result of their efforts, the police were able to make multiple arrests during the 2023 election campaign and the announcement of gubernatorial and state assembly election results. The Bauchi Peace Committee has played a commendable role in ensuring peace and security in the state. This information was obtained during an interview with a divisional police officer in 2023.

Table 4.1.14: The most effective community policing strategy in Sara-Suka (political thuggery)

CP's most effective strategy for Sara-Suka	Frequency	Percentage
Community engagement	120	32%
Partnership	132	35.2%
Collaboration with stakeholders	30	8%
Trust Building	85	22.66%
No response to the question	8	2.13%
Total	**375**	**99.99%**

Fieldwork, 2023.

A survey was conducted to determine the most effective community policing strategy for combating *Sara-Suka* political thuggery in Bauchi LGA. The results are presented in Table 4.1.14 above. Out of the total 375 respondents, 132 (35.2%) suggested that partnerships were the most effective strategy, 120 (32%) indicated community engagement, 85 (22.66%) said it was trusting building, and 8 respondents (2.13%) did not respond to the question.

A 70-year-old married traditional ward head discussed the level of partnership between the police and community members during an in-depth interview, saying:

> The roles played by the police and community members in combating political thuggery known as *Sara-Suka* in Bauchi LGA are obvious. It has made a significant contribution to lowering the level of violence in the area. Police and community members regularly conduct joint foot patrols, and police respond quickly to distress calls from members of the community. Furthermore, the police have provided community members with hotline telephone numbers to report

any suspicious activity, which has been helpful in the fight against Sara-Suka political thuggery in Bauchi LGA (IDI with a traditional ward head, 2023).

Section D: Challenges of community policing in combating *Sara-Suka* (Political Thuggery).

This sub-section presents the respondents' views on the challenges faced by the community policing programmes in the study area.

Table 4.1.16: Challenges facing community policing programmes.

Challenges facing CP	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of equipment	90	24%
Lack of training	82	21.86%
Lack of police cooperation	88	23.46%
Lack of Community Cooperation	86	22.93%
Declined response	29	7.73%
Total	**375**	**99.99%**

Fieldwork, 2023.

The challenges that hinder the successful implementation of the community policing programme in Bauchi LGA are presented in **Table 4.1.16** above. Out of the total number of respondents, 90 (24%) indicated that they lacked working equipment, 88 (23.93%) cited corruption and a lack of police cooperation, and 86 (22.93%) suggested that it was a lack of community cooperation. Additionally, 29 (7.73%) of the respondents declined to answer the question.

Table 4.1.17: Challenges facing law enforcement agencies in implementing community policing to tackle Sara-Suka political thuggery effectively.

Challenges of Law Enforcement Agencies	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of resources	60	16%
Lack of adequate training	91	24.26%
Corruption within the police force	90	24%
Corruption outside the police force	80	21.33%
Declined response	53	14.13%
Total	**375**	**99.99%**

Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 4.1.17 The above presents the responses to the challenges faced by law enforcement agencies in implementing community policing to effectively combat Sara-Suka's political thuggery. The table shows that 90 and 80 respondents, accounting

for 24% and 21.33%, respectively, cited corruption within and outside the police force as the major challenge. 91 respondents (24.26%) indicated a lack of adequate training as a significant challenge, while 60 respondents (16%) opined that there is a lack of resources. The table also indicates that 53 respondents (14.13%) declined to respond to the question.

Table 4.1.18: Steps to be taken to address issues faced by community policing programmes.

Steps to address CP issues	Frequency	Percentage
Govt. to provide materials	89	23.73%
Improve public awareness	98	26.13%
meetings, workshops, etc.	70	18.66%
Police Community Partnerships	88	23.46%
Declined response	30	8%
Total	**375**	**99.99%**

Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 4.1.18 The above presents the responses obtained on how to address the challenges faced by the community policing programme in various communities of Bauchi Local Government Area. The table shows that out of the 375 respondents, 98 (26.13%) suggested that public awareness should be improved, 89 (23.73%) opined that the government should provide the necessary materials, 88 (23.46%) respondents suggested more police-community partnerships and 70 (18.66%) recommended meetings and workshops, among others. However, it is noteworthy that 30 respondents (8%) declined to respond to the question.

Summary of Findings

The study shows that a majority of the respondents in Bauchi Local Government Area are aware of the community policing programme, which aims to engage communities in crime prevention efforts. This is especially relevant in the fight against Sara-Suka (political thuggery) in Bauchi as it raises awareness and encourages cooperation. The community policing programme was established in Bauchi to combat the rising crime rates and the need for effective crime-fighting measures. The programme involves law enforcement agencies and local communities working together to reduce election-related violence and improve security during political campaigns. By strengthening community policing efforts and encouraging community engagement during political processes, Bauchi State can ensure the integrity of the democratic system.

The study also reveals that since the implementation of community policing, the rate of Sara-Suka (political thuggery) in Bauchi LGA has decreased significantly. This is

attributed to the encouragement of community engagement, which not only prevents and controls the menace but also strengthens relationships between the police and the community. Community outreach programmes and confidential reporting channels, such as police telephone hotlines, have improved cooperation between communities and law enforcement agencies. However, trust, fear of retaliation, and the lack of faith in law enforcement agencies have significantly impacted the community's cooperation with the police. Identifying and apprehending political thugs, community participation, and intelligence gathering are critical in the fight against Sara-Suka.

Neighbourhood watch programmes have significantly promoted safety, reduced crime rates and encouraged collective responsibility in Bauchi. In Bauchi Local Government Area, effective community policing relies heavily on community engagement, partnerships, and neighbourhood watch. Community engagement actively combats Sara-Suka (political thuggery) by participating in crime prevention and providing necessary information to law enforcement agencies. Collaborative efforts between police and communities, such as the formation of local security committees (yan police committee), have also helped in preventing political violence through early intervention and prevention. Therefore, community policing has significantly reduced politically motivated crimes, including thuggery, in Bauchi LGA, demonstrating the effectiveness of community policing.

Conclusion

In Bauchi, the police and other security agencies are collaborating with members of various communities to combat Sara-Suka, which is a form of political thuggery. Through community partnerships, sharing of vital information about political thuggery, and neighbourhood watch programmes, they have been able to reduce the threat posed by these groups. People in the communities are also more willing than ever to provide useful information to the police about Sara-Suka's political thuggery and ensure the safety of lives and property. The Bauchi Peace Committee, also known as the Yan Police Committee, has been established to work with the police in carrying out joint patrols to prevent any form of criminality.

Community policing aims to address public safety issues such as crime and social disorder, but in Bauchi State, the Nigerian Police Force is insufficient to address the various security challenges alone, particularly in farm-dependent rural areas. Therefore, collaborative efforts from members of the public and the political class are necessary to ensure citizen protection.

Corruption in law enforcement undermines trust and credibility, making it difficult to conduct effective community policing and fight political thuggery. Bribery, financial inducements, and political affiliations can lead to tainted investigations and

prosecution of the political thuggery cycle. The lack of political will from the political class, who are sometimes accomplices to political thugs, can significantly impair the effectiveness of community policing. Politicians' support and protection of political thugs, for example, can hinder effective community policing efforts. Above all, insufficient resources, working accoutrements, and a lack of political leadership can also impede community policing efforts to combat political thuggery, thereby reducing the programme's effectiveness.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. The Nigerian Police and other security agencies should work harder to improve their relationships with members of the public to gain their trust and allow for the free flow of information because community policing will die without information from both parties.
2. The Bauchi state government should also assist in the provision of sophisticated weapons, patrol vans, power bikes, raincoats, and all other crime-fighting accessories to both the police and other security agencies for them to effectively contribute to a better crime-free society.
3. Both the government and the general public should recognise the importance of adequately rewarding and motivating working and serving security officers (police and members of the neighbourhood watch) who carry out their duties diligently so that others will recognise the value of hard work and then give it their all.
4. Security agencies should not betray the public's trust by leaking information given to them by the public to hoodlums. To be effective, security agencies must have access to information obtained from people who know the criminals and their likely time of operation.
5. Other security agencies should turn over any suspected criminal to the police for a thorough investigation and subsequent prosecution in a court of law so that the law can be enforced.
6. Qualified personnel (people who are passionate about security work) should be hired for the job.
7. Both the police and the general public should strive to instil respect for human rights and equal justice under the law and to see themselves as one indivisible entity in the fight against all forms of crime.
8. Community members must be re-educated on the importance of collaborating with their local police force to ensure adequate protection of the lives and property of the community.

9. Police officers should be educated on the principles and practises of community policing so that they can embrace it. This can be achieved by engaging them in training and re-training about community policing programmes.
10. Regular meetings between police and community members should take place to keep everyone up to date on security issues and to make critical decisions about the safety of everyone in the community.

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