The Interface of Formal and Informal Policing Structures in Calabar Metropolis: Implication for Community Policing In Nigeria

Dr. Moses U. Ikoh[1]

Abstract

The failure of the Police to single handedly detect, prevent and control crime has resulted in community members forming informal policing structures (IPS) in the country. This study employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative research techniques to collect and examine data from community members and the Police on the operation of IPS in Calabar Metropolis. It found evidence of effectiveness in crime prevention and control with a significant impact in conflict resolution. Based on these findings, the study called for a deliberate networking between the IPS and the Police that can result in community-oriented policing in the country.

Key words: informal policing structure, community-oriented policing, social capital, crime prevention, crime control.

Introduction

One function that makes the Nigerian Police Force a dependable part of the Nigerian criminal justice system is crime control. This function is executed largely through the detection and prevention of crime. Unfortunately, the ability of the Police to single-handedly detect, prevent and control crime has been seriously questioned. This is because apart from corruption which has found its way into the heart of the policing system, the organization has been blamed for a culture which perpetuates crime. Accusations ranging from excessive use of force, abuse of power, harassment of innocent members of the public, open bribery at both legal and illegal road blocks (Ifeanyi, 2004), to outright aiding and abetting of crime (Olanisakin, 2008) have been leveled against the police. Added to these are controversial cases characterized by trademark of police brutality, arbitrary killings and inability to detect serious crimes and the conviction of people later found to be innocent (Okonkwo, 1966, Otite & Albert, 2004; Ekpenyong, 1999; Erinosho, 1996).

The continuous increase in criminal activities with its attendant burden and the inability of the Police to stem it to a tolerable level has resulted in community members resorting to establishing Informal Policing Structures (IPS) to control crime. Scholars justified the development in the argument that crime is a social problem, not just a criminal justice system problem (Lab, 1992; Astone, Nathan, Schoen & Kim, 1999; Sampson, 2002). They point to a wide range of ideas and abilities found in the society which can be used to control crime (Dangon-Yaro, 1996; Ekpenyong, 1999; Otite & Albert, 2004). These ideas and abilities which initially resulted in physical environmental designs of tall fences and barbs wire gauge around buildings, television surveillance and alarm systems, are today being complemented by IPS. This

[1] Department of Sociology, Federal University, Lafia, Nigeria.

IPS includes Neighbourhood Crime Watch Groups (NCWGs), Vigilante Groups (ViGs) and citizen patrols, among others.

Placing these informal and formal policing structures into a working scheme requires getting both community members and the police into a concerted partnership. It is anchored on the belief that when community members and the police join effort at ensuring safety and security in communities, it would reduce pressure on the police and free them up to face more serious crime and other schedule of mission. It could enhance a symbiotic relationship which can create a reassurance policing that recognizes the needs and concerns of the citizens and make them an integral part of its service delivery. But marrying the formal and informal culture of policing bring two contending problems to the fore: changing the citizens' perception of the police from the negative stereotypes of an implacably corrupt and anti-people police force to that of a police force that can and should be trusted; gaining knowledge of the availability and operation of the NCWGs and ViGs in the Metropolis, their usefulness in crime control, and their preparation to team up with the police as willing partner in crime control. The latter became the primary objective of this study.

As a necessary step, the study proposes three basic related questions: What need informs the emergence of IPS in the Metropolis and how effective and efficient are they in satisfying these needs? What differences exist in the critical functions of crime control between formal and informal police structures in the Metropolis; and how can these differences give way for a sustainable common objective of crime control in the Metropolis?

This study becomes significant in its exposure of the operation of NCWGs and ViGs in the Metropolis; and could provide a learning opportunity for both members of the police force and stake holders in the fight against crime. It could also help to reduce polarization in the argument for and against formal and informal policing structures by providing a process that could encourage interested and affected parties to cooperate with one another. Apart from these, the study seeks to provide a base line data that could provide a foundation for the emergence of effective community policing in the Metropolis.

Building closely on the theory of Social Capital, the study collects both quantitative and qualitative data from household heads, power elites and Police officers in Calabar Metropolis for analysis. It argues that a synergy between existing IPS and FPS can enhance effective and efficient realization of the objectives of community policing much more than the present arrangement of multiplication of police posts without community components. The study is presented in themes, starting with a brief explanation of the study area, reviews of related literature, and methods used for data collection and analysis. This is followed by the results of the study, discussions, conclusion and implications of the study for community oriented policing in Nigeria.

Background and Study Area

Calabar Metropolis is the capital of Cross River State of Nigeria. It is located in the South South geo-political Zone of the country between longitude 04°.57" North and 08°.21" East, South of the equator (Charles & Charles, 2004). It has a heterogeneous landscape with undulating surface spanning 427.05 sq. km, which terminates in Qua River at the eastern flank, Calabar River at the western and southern flanks, and at the evergreen forest belt of Ikot Omin dominated by rubber plantation in the northern flank. The estimated population of 459,695 people grows at the rate of 2.83 per cent yearly (NPC, 2006). For the purpose of political administration, the Metropolis is divided into two Local Government Areas: Calabar Municipality and Calabar South Local Government Area, with 10 and 12 political wards respectively. Each ward has an elected Councillor who represents it in the Local Government Council.

Urbanization gained recognition as far back as 1891 in Calabar when the then British Colonial Government selected it as the seat of the Imperial Commissioner and Consul General of the Oil River Protectorate. From thence on, Calabar became not only a political capital but also the economic nerve centre as well as a commercial, religious and educational centre. Its fame brought immigrants that swelled the indigenous population of Efik, Quas and the Efuts (Aye, 1967). Today it has an Export Free Trade Zone with autonomous authority.

Within Calabar Metropolis several NCWGs and ViGs exist. They include the *Obutong* vigilantes, the *Ikot Nkebre* vigilantes, the *Mkparawa Efak* of Essien town, the *Ekori Inim* vigilantes, the *Ikot Ansa* surveillance team, the *Ikot Nta* vigilantes group of Ishie town, the *Diamond Youth* vigilante and the *Asari Eso* neighbourhood police. Others are the *Ikpa Eyop* vigilantes of ward 9, the *Double Smash* of Anantigha, the *Mkparawa Efak* of Jebs and the *Mkparawa Efak* of Afokang. These NCWGs and ViGs can be categorized into three: some consist of paid staff, both paid staff and volunteers, while some consist of purely volunteers. Sources of funding include compulsory and stipulated levy on landlords in the area. While rich landlords are bound by the compulsory levy, they are equally expected to contribute more than the average ones by way of free donations. Well-to-do tenants and residents of the neighbourhood also contribute based on appeal for free donations by the committee responsible for security in the area. The pooled funds are used for the payment of monthly wages as well as the acquisition of torchlights, batteries, whistles, raincoats and rain booths.

Calabar is the headquarters of the Zone 6 Police Command, with jurisdiction over Cross River, Akwa Ibom and Rivers States. Within the Metropolis, there is the State Police Command Headquarters at Diamond Hill, the Mobile Police Force Headquarters (Mopol II), and 8 police divisions, viz: Airport, Akim, Atakpa, Efut (Mbukpa), Federal Housing, State Housing, Uwanse and Ikot Enebong Police Stations. Each of the stations has its area of jurisdiction (patrol limit) from which it receives complaints from residents and attains to emergencies.

Literature and Theory

The gap between officials' responses by the police to crime and public experience of crime is a major concern in many urban centers in Nigeria (Iroh, 2005). Crime and fear of crime have thus continued to rise. As the gap widen daily, it has become a major concern for urban governance (UNICJRI, 1998). This concern has recently resulted in a variety of community reaction to crime prevention. As Durkheim [1938, cited in Conklin (2001: 391)] argued, "crime is a behaviour that shocks the sentiments found in all healthy conscience. It offends shared sense of what is valued and often prompts collective reaction of people in their opposition to acts that violate the law". It is in this sense that crime enhances social solidarity within the community.

Collective-reaction engenders the formation of Social Capital (Lin, 1999). According to Astone, Nathan, Schoen and Kim (1999: 22) the phrase *social-capital* should best be used "when networks and local associations are being described as structures that might support collective action, enforce norms, generate expectations of reciprocity, or foster feelings of mutual trust". Social capital stresses investments that take the form of participation in local voluntary associations and formal institutions (Narayan and Pritchett, 1999). It creates networks of information exchange and links individuals together (Lin, 1999). As individuals establish social network tie within the neighbourhood, there is the creation of social bonding (Sampson, 2002) and community cohesiveness (Howell & Bentley, 1986; Poplin, 1979). One component of community cohesiveness focuses on the residents' ability to organize and cooperate to take action, while another component focuses on the availability of local leadership to get things done (Lackey, Burke & Peterson, 1987).

Various communities have adopted different strategies in attempt to create network to fight crime. Foremost among these strategies is the bringing together of neighbours and residents of an area to form "Neighbourhood Watch" (Lab, 1992).

Neighbourhood watch therefore, is not peculiar to Calabar Metropolis. It is a common feature found in high crime areas (Ekpenyong, 1999). Depending on the strategy adopted, members engage in a systematic patrolling of their neighbourhood. Dagon-Yaro (1996) presents information on one of the known neighbourhood watch associations in Kaduna, Northern Nigeria, called the *Yan Banga*. The organization made up largely of volunteers drawn from the community members, patrol streets and selected areas of the city in the night. Monthly levies are collected from the households located at these streets or areas for the payment of the *Yan Banga*.

The disbanded *Bakassi Boys* put together by the Association of Shoe –makers in Aba (Abia State) in 1998 also served as an example of Neighbourhood Watch. The success of the group in crime prevention in Aba led to the formation of a branch at Onitsha, one of the most lucrative cities for violent criminals in Eastern Nigeria. At Onitsha, the *Bakassi Boys* became the *Anambra Vigilante Group*, which received approval and financial supports from both the State Government and the Onitsha Market Traders Association (OMATA). An empirical work on the operations and patrols of the *Bakassi Boys* has been extensively analyzed by Fasole (2003). In his analysis, Etim (2001: 5) observes the positive impact of the vigilante group to include a drop in "violent crime rates in Aba and Onitsha and a surge in the crime rate of adjourning States of Edo, Delta and Rivers", suggesting the relocation of criminals.

In Western Nigeria, the Odua People Congress (OPC) provides a good example of a massive organization of neighbourhood crime watch (Otite and Albert, 2004). Recruitment into OPC in Lagos is done in every ward (the smallest political unit). After recruitment, the boys are trained through seminars and workshops, during which time the dangers of selling out or collaborating with criminals are stressed. Ifeanyi (2004) reports positive result of OPC operation in many areas of Lagos and agues that these were signs of increased community cohesion and territoriality.

Elsewhere, the success of Neigbourhood Crime Watch in bringing residents of the area and the police officers together in a mutual problem-solving relationship has been lauded. Criminals caught are handed over to the police (Sampson, 2002). Although such evaluations did not show any reduction in crime and the extent of residents' participation in terms of numbers of neighbourhood groups and the number of participants in those groups, it increased public awareness of crime and engendered symbiotic relationship between residents and the police (Ifeanyi, 2004).

In July 2004, the Nigerian Police introduced the idea of community policing (NPF, 2004:3). The approach includes a variety of innovative programmes: Establishment of police posts that can provide walk-in reporting of crime, distribution of crime prevention and operation information, identification information, recruitment and holding meetings with neighbourhood watch groups and other local organizations, and coordination of door-to-door activities of beat patrol officers. A direct police-citizen's contact programme, which would assigned officers to visit residents and elicit information about their fears, provide follow-up assistance, encourage citizens to become involved in neighbourhood watch and distribute crime-prevention information.

The assumption is that "community policing" will increase residents' satisfaction with their neighbourhood, and reduce their fear of personal victimization, as well as crime in the community. Besides, personal knowledge of the officers would enhance the citizen's decision to call the police and become involved in the legal system.

Method of Data Collection

The study employs a survey method which targeted the households head, community leaders, and the police. Two types of data gathering instruments were used, viz: interview and questionnaire. The two local Government areas (LGAs) that make up the Metropolis have 22 political wards (12 wards in Calabar South LGA and 10 in Calabar municipality). These wards provided the units of research and analysis. Here a ward means more than a representative convenience for election into the local government council.

It is a community where people express the majority of their ties to other people, their work and their network of friends and families. The leadership does not come from the elected councilors alone. The village heads, clan heads, paramount rulers, youth leaders and the power elites, variously contribute in providing leadership.

In order to serve the comparative purpose of the study 6 political wards with IPS and 6 without IPS were included in the study. Fifteen questionnaires were systematically administered on households' head in each of the 12 wards. After systematically drawing out the target houses based on the street numbering in each wards, we moved from door to door asking after the household head. Where the household head was absence, an appointment for a repeat visit was made based on suggested convenient time by the wife or children. In compounds where more than one household lived, we administered questionnaire on the oldest resident. A total of 180 questionnaires were administered on household heads in the study area.

Apart from socio-demographic characteristics, respondents were asked to identify the availability of the IPS and type of IPS available in their wards, sources of fund for their operation and the relationship of IPS with the police. The "availability of informal policing structure" (AIPS) and "non-availability of informal policing structure (NIPS) were constructed with dichotomous scale: 0 = NIPS; 1 = AIPS. Respondents were thereafter asked about their experiences with crime of assault, robbery, rape, murder, kidnapping, burglary, theft, fighting by *area boys* and snatching of handbags within the ward. Experience with a particular crime was a dichotomized variable and coded as 0 = have no experience, 1 = have experience. Respondents were also asked about IPS activities and schedules, such as: only patrolled at night, only patrolled during the day, patrolled during the day and night, provide security in the market, arrest and detain suspects, arrest but handover suspects to police, settle disputes and disagreements. Each question carries a respond of yes/no (Y/N) measures as Y = 1, N = 0. In order to evaluate police attitude toward community members and complaints lodged by community members a 5-point Likert scale, which ranged from strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, uncertain = 3, disagree = 2, and strongly disagree = 1, was used.

For qualitative data, each councilor representing the wards with IPS was asked to provide a list of five leaders including two extended-family heads, one youth leader and two power elites. These five leaders in addition to the Councillor constituted a focus group discussion in their wards. In all 6 FGDs were held. Each discussion session covered reasons for setting up IPS, their satisfaction or otherwise with IPS activities and the willingness of the community to collaborate with the police on security and crime control. Each FGD session was tape-recorded and transcribed for content analyses.

Additionally, the Divisional Police Officers (DPOs) in the eight Police Divisions in the Metropolis were used for key informant interview (KII). The purpose was to examine their operational constraints in the Metropolis, knowledge of the existing IPS, the usefulness or uselessness of the IPS and the police willingness to collaborate with them for the purpose of crime detection, prevention and control in the Metropolis.

Data Processing and Analysis

Initially all data were entered into Microsoft Excel and cross-checked for errors. The sample was stratified into wards with IPS and wards without IPS. Thereafter, they were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for Window. Several statistical methods were used. T-test was used to test the difference between means scores. We also employed the Chi-square cross-tabulation to examined socio-demographic differences, fear of crime and victimization. Next, logistic regression was used to determine the rate of crime victimization and fear. Adjusted odds ratios are reported.

Results

Socio-demographic characteristics

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and the time spent to reach the nearest police station or post. Chi-square analysis indicated no significant differences across the wards at $p < 0.05$ level. For instance, the age differences of the respondents was X^2 (8, N = 180) = 12.85, p = 0.1170, while education was X^2 (4, N = 180) = 2.64, p = 0.6199. Majority of the respondents were civil servants, traders and self employed businessmen and women [X^2 (6, N = 180) = 3.75, p = 0.7144] who using the usual means of transport could reach the nearest police station or post between 10 – 30 minutes [X^2(2, N = 180) = 3.77, p = 0.1521].

Police attitude toward community members

The nearness to Police station or post did not suggest easy accessibility to the police. As shown in Table 2. Respondents evaluation of police attitude to community members revealed a low mean rating of 2.27 (SD = 1.07) on police response to urgent calls. Such low rating found common cord in respondents' evaluation of police relationship with complainants (ξ = 2.93, SD = 1.12). Similarly, respondents believed that police were discriminatory in the discharge of their functions (ξ = 2.23, SD = 1.12).

Respondents' evaluation of the existence of police working relationship with others to improve security and access to justice was rated high (ξ = 3.26, SD = 0.98). Unfortunately, the use of such feed back information when deciding police priorities was rated low (ξ = 2.53, SD = 1.12). Police respect of citizen's right was also lowly rated (ξ = 2.89, SD = 0.86). Such findings can have negative impact on the level of trust between community members and the police.

Experience of personal and household crime victimization and fear

Table 3 presents Chi-square results of a comparison of respondents' experience of personal and household crime victimization and fear of crime in wards with IPS and wards without IPS. Significant differences were observed. Respondents in ward without IPS were more likely than respondents in wards with IPS to experience assault victimization [X^2(1, N = 180) = 14.15, $p < 0.05$], armed robbery victimization [X^2(1, N = 180) = 18.13, $p < 0.05$], theft victimization [X^2(1, N = 180) = 14.10, $p < 0.05$], and fighting by area boys [X^2(1, N = 180) = 7.38, $p < 0.05$]. Subsequent analyses were not significant, but burglary victimization [X^2(1, N = 180) = 0.51, p = 0.4732], and rape victimization [X^2(1, N = 180) = 1.62, p = 0.2025] were more common in communities without IPS than communities with IPS.

A comparison of respondents' fear of crime in wards with IPS and wards without IPS indicated significant differences in the fear of armed robbery [X^2(1, N = 180) = 17.49, $p < 0.05$], burglary [X^2(1, N = 180) = 85.59, $p < 0.05$], and theft [X^2(1, N = 180) = 42.26, $p < 0.05$]. In all, respondents in wards without IPS were more likely to report fear of crime than respondents in wards with IPS.

This finding suggests that respondents who did not directly experienced crime victimization may through conversation with friends and neighbours who were victims developed fear about such crime. Fear thus generated vicarious victimization, especially in wards without IPS.

A logistic regression analysis constructed to predict the rate of crime victimization and fear across the wards revealed that respondents in wards with IPS were less likely to experience armed robbery victimization than assault (OR = 0.11, CI = 0.11-0.52) as compared to respondents in wards without IPS who were 1.20 times likely to be robbed than being assaulted (OR = 1.20, CI = 0.64-2.25). When burglary was considered as the response variable, findings showed that respondents in wards with IPS had odds of burglary victimization that were 25 per cent higher than assault victimization (OR = 1.25, CI = 0.55-2.85).

Surprisingly, respondents in wards without IPS were 56 per cent less likely to experience burglary victimization when compared with assault (OR = 0.44, CI = 0.22-0.58); suggesting either the reinforcement of lock at home or close watch at home during the day when most burglary occur in the metropolis (Ikoh & Charles, 2010). The odds of theft, fighting by area boys and snatching of handbags victimization were elevated in all the wards studied. Respondents from wards without IPS had significant increase in snatching of handbags that was 2.58 times higher than assault victimization (OR = 2.58, CI = 1.50-5.55).

Logistic regression coefficient for fear of crime showed that fear of murder and rape was negligible across the wards. Other than these, increased odds of fear for all crimes considered in the study were observed in wards without IPS. For instance, respondents in wards without IPS were 22.15 times likely to experience fear of armed robbery than assault (OR = 22.15, CI = 9.15-52.55). Similarly, fear of burglary was 11.38 times higher than fear of assault (OR = 11.38, CI = 5.32-24.70). As in prior analyses, the crime of theft, fighting by area boys and snatching of handbags significantly increased fear in the wards without IPS.

Activities of informal policing structure

Respondents' rating of the activities of IPS was mixed. As shown in Table 5, many of the Neighbourhood Watch Groups (NWGs) patrolled during the night hours (N = 82 or 91.1%) and very rarely during the day (N = 4 or 4.4%). Although respondents acknowledged the use of IPS to provide security in markets (N = 16 or 17.8%), it was not common in many of the wards (N = 74 or 82.2%). Majority of the respondents (N = 84 or 93.3%) acknowledged IPS role in arresting and handing over of suspects to the police. They also settled disputes and disagreements brought to them by community members (N = 19 or 21.1%).

Opinion differs when accusation often leveled against IPS members were tested. Extortion of money from community members (N = 15 or 16.7%) and taking of bribe to released suspects (N = 17 or 18.9%) were acknowledged by very few respondents. Influential members of the community as well as the power elites "sometimes" used IPS members to make arrest (N = 48 or 53.3%) and intimidate political opponents (N = 30 or 33.3%).

Discussion

Our findings revealed attitudes of police towards community members that left much to be desired. Such attitude included refusal to respond to urgent or distress calls, poor relationship with complainants, inability to take account of public opinion when deciding police priorities, lack of respect for citizens' rights, and differential treatment of community members. The consequences of police inability to respond to urgent calls by community members and poor relationship with complainants are many.

They include anger, disappointment (Alemika, 2003), and in the face of criminal attack, helplessness (Ekpenyong, 1999). Such consequences must have prompted reaction by community members in the formation of IPS. As respondents narrated during focus group discussions:

> We needed to take our destiny into our hands. Robbery attack in our ward was becoming a weekly event and even when we reported to the police, nothing was done about it. It was as if they were subtly supporting their operations….I was woken up one night with a loud bang on my door…I knew it was them (robbers), so I locked up myself in the toilet and called the police. They collected my address and promised to come immediately. They never; not even after the criminals had dealt with me and left. (FGDs in wards 3 and 9)

The common excuses given by the police when they received emergency calls included: no operation vehicle; no fuel in the operation vehicle; the driver is not on duty; our operation vehicle is bad. In such instances, the caller must be prepared to pay for fuel expenses or a hired vehicle. In the absence of such assurance, the service is denied. Complainants who reported cases to the police station were asked to pay for the opening of case-files and provide logistics for the investigation police officer (IPO) to effect the arrest of suspect(s) involved in the case. When the case is finally disposed off, the complainants are also asked to pay for the closure of the case-files. Although these payments are not official, those who are unable to make such payment may have their cases suffer unnecessary delay or the suspects in such cases may surreptitiously pay their way and walk out free (Ikoh & Charles, 2010).

A comparison of respondents' experiences of personal and household crime victimization in wards with IPS and those without IPS confirmed the effectiveness of IPS in checkmating crimes like assault, robbery, petty theft and fighting by area boys. The result also showed a reduction in the fear of crime in communities with IPS as against communities without IPS. This is not surprising, as Conklin (2001) found elsewhere, crime rates are low in communities that are socially integrated, because attainment of individuals to one another reduces crime by strengthening everyone's stake in the Community. The surveillance of behaviour by IPS is more likely to reduce crime by increasing the fear of being observed, reported and arrested (Omaogbehin, 2004). In this study, the reduction in crime victimization and fear generated a multiplier effect. It strengthened community ties among residents as members come to know they can control crime on their own. It also increased night life in the area, which in turn boosted businesses in the entertainment industries. Because of the perceived safety, many tenants were looking for houses in these wards and landlords tended to have hiked the rents.

The following reports by participants during FGDs helped to illustrate the effects of IPS on fear of crime:

> I used to go to bed early, yet with the fear of armed robbers coming in the night. During the day, walking alone was another problem because of fear of being assaulted by the area- boys, who may snatch your bag looking for handset (phone) and money….These fears are no more. (A 42 year old, married woman).
>
> There were certain areas in our ward that you cannot enter in the night. Women who missed their ways into the areas were always raped. Bad boys from other areas used to come there and smoked Indian hemp (marijuana)…the funny thing was that the police knew about these criminal activities and were not doing anything about it….Today you can move there freely in the night. (A 52 year old man, community leader).
>
> We pay for the security that we are enjoying here. It is an additional burden, but far better than living in fear. The *Ikpa Eyop boys* (vigilante group) know how to smoke out the criminals. It is difficult for any criminals to come from outside and operate here successfully, except there is an insider. (FGD, ward 9).

Beside crime prevention and control, the inability of the police to meet the security needs of community members resulted in many of them seeking the intervention of the IPS in the settlement of disputes and disagreements.

Unlike the police, disputants were not asked to give money to open case-files or close case-files. Community members were being reconciled with the sole aim of promoting the bond of productive coexistence in the community.

However, a logistic regression analysis predicting the odds of victimization and fear showed that all the nine types of crimes tested in this study were still sources of worry in the Metropolis, although the odds were less elevated in wards with IPS.

Most IPS work in the night, while crime like burglary, assaults, theft and snatching of handbags may be committed during the day. Other than this, emerging crime in the Metropolis like kidnapping and the sophistication that it entails, is beyond the control of vigilante members whose working tools are less sophisticated. Efforts of the IPS have to be complemented if crime is to be effectively controlled and prevented in the Metropolis.

The police acknowledged the role of the IPS in the arrest and handing over of suspects to them, but argued that most arrests were based on suspicions that are not recognized by law:

> Some of them (IPS) would bring suspects to us on accusation of stealing. But when we asked them to bring the exhibits associated with the theft, they will not produce them…yet they want us to take the cases to the court. (KII with Police DPO, age: 57years, male).

> The IPS are playing important role in the fight against crime. Their information is always useful, but some of them would not volunteer information except you give them money….They also take bribe to release important suspects. (KII with DPO, age: 48 years, male).

The willingness of the IPS members to be involved in the legal system is in line with the Police strategy of community policing and should be encouraged.

Conclusion

In this study we found that IPS was not only providing security in their communities but was also handing over suspects apprehended for crime to the police. These findings have two implications. One is the issue of crime displacement. While some of the criminals arrested by IPS have been handed over to the Police, others have relocated; and criminals that used to come to the area for operation have turned their attention to elsewhere. This may explain the elevated odds in crime victimization and fear in communities without IPS.

Another implication is the need for a collaborative policing, a sort of the Formal Policing Structure (FPS)-and Informal Policy Structure (IPS)-based networks. The social capital theory provides a robust foundation for the explanation of the usefulness of such collaborative network. From the analysis of the findings of this study police remains an integral part of the community, and could be reached between 10 – 30minutes duration. But such short duration did not encourage interaction between the police and majority of the people. Social capital is strengthened by "intergenerational closure" of individual social network (Coleman, 1988; Gephart, 1997; Sampson, 2002). Here network closure could occur when the police come to know members of the IPS and their activities, and encourage exchange of information. Closure becomes facilitated by the presence of formal association, and could enhance trust and participation (Harriss, 2002). The existence of such association generates complex feedbacks and path dependencies that can be significant in the fight against crime and criminality.

It suggests a synergy which if institutionalized between the IPS and FPS can effectively checkmate crime to a tolerable level in the Metropolis.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics and time spent to reach the nearest Police station

Variables	Respondents with IPS N = 90		Respondents without IPS N = 90		Chi square test		
					X^2	df	P Value
	N	%	N	%			
Age (Years)							
≤ 25	2	2.2	4	4.4			
26 - 30	6	6.7	9	10.0			
31 - 35	9	10.0	14	15.6			
36 - 40	13	14.4	7	7.8			
41 - 45	17	18.9	12	13.3			
46 - 50	19	21.1	11	12.2			
51 - 55	12	13.3	8	8.9			
56 - 60	8	8.9	14	15.6			
≥ 61	4	4.4	11	12.2	12.85	8	0.1170
Marital Status							
Married	53	53.9	56	62.2			
Single	19	21.1	14	15.6			
Divorced	6	6.7	12	13.3			
separated	7	7.8	4	4.4			
Widow/widower	5	5.6	4	4.4	3.77	4	0.4381
Religion							
Christianity	84	93.3	81	90.0			
Islam	6	6.7	9	10.0	0.65	1	0.4145
Educational status							
Incomplete Primary	2	2.2	4	4.4			
Complete primary	6	6.7	8	8.9			
Incomplete secondary	12	13.3	11	12.2			
Complete secondary	25	27.8	31	34.4			
Tertiary	45	50.0	36	40.0	2.64	4	0.6199
Occupation							
Pensioner	4	4.4	7	7.8			
Banking	5	5.6	8	8.9			
Civil servant	26	28.9	20	22.2			
Farming	8	8.9	5	5.6			
Fishing	5	5.6	7	7.8			
Trading	12	13.3	15	16.7			
Self employed	30	33.3	28	31.1	3.75	6	0.7144
Time taken to reach nearest Police Posts							
≤ 10 minutes	21	23.3	19	21.1			
> 10 mins < 30 mins	61	67.7	54	60.0			
>30mins < 1hr.	8	8.9	17	18.9	3.77	2	0.1521
Gender							
Male	71	78.9	67	74.4			
Female	19	20.1	23	25.6	0.50	1	0.4808

Table 2: Respondents' evaluation of police attitude with community members based on seven stated categories, N = 180 (%)

Stated categories	Respond quickly to urgent calls	Respect rights of citizens	Handle disputes between people and group	Treat all people fairly	Maintain good relationship with complainants	Take account of public opinion when deciding police priorities	Work with others to improve security and access to justice
Strongly agree	2.22	1.67	7.78	4.44	6.67	4.44	6.11
Agree	15.00	20.00	49.44	8.89	25.00	13.33	37.22
Uncertain	11.11	39.44	21.67	17.22	26.11	28.33	28.89
Disagree	41.67	29.44	15.00	35.56	25.00	27.22	21.67
Strongly disagree	30.00	9.44	5.56	33.89	17.22	26.67	6.11
Mean	**2.27**	**2.89**	**3.32**	**2.23**	**2.93**	**2.53**	**3.26**
Std.	**1.07**	**0.86**	**1.05**	**1.12**	**1.12**	**1.12**	**0.98**

Table 3: Comparison of respondents' experience of personal/household crime victimization and fear of crime in wards with IPS and wards without IPS

Types of crime and experience	Wards with IPS (%)	Wards without IPS (%)	X^2	p values
Victimization				
Assault	15/90 (16.7)	38/90 (42.2)	14.15	0.0002
Armed robbery	2/90 (2.2)	42/90 (46.7)	48.13	0.0000
Burglary	18/90 (20.0)	22/90 (24.4)	0.51	0.4732
Kidnapping	7/90 (7.8)	5/90 (5.6)	0.36	0.5501
Murder	3/90 (3.3)	1/90 (1.1)	1.02	0.3118
Rape	6/90 (6.7)	11/90 (12.2)	1.62	0.2025
Theft	27/90 (30.0)	52/90 (57.8)	14.10	0.0001
Fighting by area boys	29/90 (32.2)	47/90 (52.2)	7.38	0.0066
Snatching of handbags	29/90 (32.2)	27/90 (30.0)	0.10	0.7474
Fear of crime				
Assault	19.90 (21.1)	26/90 (28.9)	1.45	0.2282
Armed robbery	48/90 (53.6	81/90 (90.0)	17.49	0.0000
Burglary	12/90 (13.3	74/90 (90.0)	85.59	0.0000
Kidnapping	27/90 (30.0)	38/90 (42.2)	2.91	0.0878
Murder	18/90 (20.0)	23/90 (25.6)	0.79	0.3742
Rape	12/90 (13.3)	15/90 (16.7)	0.39	0.5312
Theft	16/90 (17.8)	59/90 (65.6)	42.26	0.0000
Fighting by area boys	23/90 (25.6)	54/90 (60.0)	4.26	0.0389
Snatching of handbags	31/90 (34.4)	38/90 (42.2)	1.15	0.2823

Table 4: Logistic regression predicting the odds of crime victimization and fear of crime in the study area (N = 180)

	Variables	Wards with IPS		Wards without IPS	
		OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI
	Victimization of:				
1	Assault	1.00		1.00	
2	Armed robbery	0.11	(0.01 – 0.52)*	1.20	(0.64 – 2.25)
3	Burglary	1.25	(0.55 – 2.85)	0.44	(0.22 – 0.58)*
4	Kidnapping	0.42	(0.15 – 1.18)	0.08	(0.02 – 0.23)*
5	Murder	0.17	(0.03 – 0.65)*	0.02	(0.00 – 0.10)*
6	Rape	0.36	(0.11 – 1.04)*	0.37	(0.18 – 0.74)*
7	Theft	2.14	(0.99 – 4.72)	1.87	(0.99 – 3.54)
8	Fighting by area boys	2.38	(1.11 – 5.21)	1.50	(0.80 – 2.81)
9	Snatching of handbags	2.38	(1.11 – 5.21	2.58	(1.50 – 5.55)*
	Fear of :				
10	Assault	1.00		1.00	
11	Armed robbery	4.27	(2.12 – 8.68)*	22.15	(9.11 – 52.55)
12	Burglary	0.57	(0.24 – 1.35)	11.38	(5.32 – 24.70)
13	Kidnapping	1.67	(0.77 – 3.34)	1.80	(0.93 – 3.50)
14	Murder	0.93	(0.43 – 2.04)	0.85	(0.42 – 1.72)
15	Rape	0.57	(0.24 – 1.35)	0.49	(0.23 – 1.07)
16	Theft	0.81	(0.36 – 1.80)	4.68	(2.38 – 9.27)
17	Fighting by area boys	1.25	(0.61 – 2.72)	3.69	(1.90 – 7.22)*
18	Snatching of handbags	1.96	(0.96 – 4.07)	9.85	(4.69 – 20.90)*

Table 5: Respondents' rating of IPS activities, N = 90

Activities	Category of rating (%):		
	Yes	No	Sometimes
Patrol at night	82 (91.1)	-	8 (8.9)
Patrol during the day	4 (4.4)	80 (88.9)	6 (0.7)
Provide security in the market	16 (17.8)	74 (82.2)	-
Arrest and detain suspects	14 (15.6)	5 (5.6)	71(78.9)
Arrest and handover suspects to the Police	84 (93.3)	-	6 (6.7)
Settle disputes and disagreement	19 (21.1)	67 (74.4)	4 (4.4)
Extort money from community members	15 (16.7)	54 (60.0)	21 (23.3)
Take bribe to release suspects	17 (18.9)	38 (42.2)	35 (38.9)
Are used by powerful people to make arrest	13 (14.4)	29 (32.2)	48 (53.3)
Are used by Politicians as thugs	32 (35.6)	28 (31.1)	30 (33.3)

References

Alemika, E. E. O. (2003). Police corruption and insecurity in Nigeria. In S. Einstein and M. Amir (Eds.). *Police Corruption: Paradigms, Models and concepts: Challenges for Developing Countries*, (Pp. 445 – 494). Huntsville, Texas: Office of International Criminal Justice, Sam Houston State University.

Anderson, M. & Collins, P. (1998). Introduction. In M. Anderson & P. Collins (Eds.). *Race, class and gender: An anthology*, (Pp.: 1 – 10). Belmont, CA.: Wadsworth.

Astone, N. M., Nathan, C. A., Schoen, R. & Kim, Y. J. (1999). Family demography, social theory and investment in social capital. *Population and Development Review, 25*, 12 – 29.

Aye, E. U. (1967). *Old Calabar through the Centuries.* Calabar: Hope Waddell Press.

Charles, J. O. & Charles, A. O. (2004). Family and Child Labour: A study of Child Hawkers in Calabar. *Journal of social Development in Africa*, 19 (2): 113 – 133.

Charles, J. O. & Ikoh, M. U. (2005). Beyond Social Class and Crime: Linking Political Patronage of Agaba Boys with Crime in Calabar Metropolis. *Nigerian Journal of Social and Development Issues*. 4 (1): 21 – 41.

Coleman, S. B. 91998). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94 (Supplement): 95 – 120.

Conklin, J. E. (2001). *Criminology* (7th ed.). London: Allyn and Bacon.

Dagon-Yaro, M. B. G. (1996). Local Communities and Crime Prevention. In A. B. Dambazau, M. M. Jumare & A. M. Yakubu (Eds.), *Issues in Crime Prevention and Control in Nigeria* (223 - 242). Kaduna: Baraka Press and Publishers.

Ekpenyoung, S. (1999). *Deceased Mega Cities: The Centre of Fear*. Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt Press.

Erinosho, L. (1996). Socio Economic problem and Crime. In A. B. Dambazau, M. M. Jumare & A. M. Yakubu (Eds.), *Issues In Crime Prevention and Control in Nigeria* (13 – 24). Kaduna: Barake Press.

Fasole, S. (2003, Febrruary, 10). Burning issues in crime control in Nigeria: Violence against women. Paper presented at the 2oth anniversary celebration and conference on violence against women in Nigeria, Zaria

Gephart, M. A. (1997). Neighbourhoods and communities as contexts for development. In J. Brooks-Gunn, G. J. Duncan & J. L. Aber (Eds.). *Neighbourhood poverty* (Pp.: 1 – 43). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Harriss, J. (2002). *Depoliticising development: The World Bank and social capital*. London: Anthem Press.

Ifeanyi, A. H. (2005,March 1). Lagos as a Theatre of Aberrations. *Daily Sun*, 2, 5.

Ikoh, M. U. (2002).*Social Class and Crime: the Study of "Agaba Group" in Calabar Metropolis.* Unpublished master's thesis, Department of Sociology, University of Calabar, Nigeria.

Iroh, E. (2004, April 1*). Peace, Security and Government in Nigeria*. Convocation Lecture. Imo state University, Nigeria.

Lab, S. P. (1992).*Crime prevention: Approaches, practices and evaluation*. Cincinnati, Ohio: Anderson Publishing Co.

Lin. N. (1999). Building a network theory of social capital. *Connections, 22* (1), 28 – 51.

National Population Commission (2006). *Survey report*. Calabar: National Population Commission.

Narayan, D. & Pritchett, L. (1999). Cents and sociability: Household income and social capital in rural Tanzania. *Economic Development and Cultural Change, 47* (4), 871 – 879.

Okonkwo, C. O. (1966). *The police and the public in Nigeria*. London: Sweet and Maxwell.

Olanisakin, F, (2008, April - June).In the line of fire. *Focus on Africa*, Vol 9, No. 2: 18- 21.

Omaogbehin, F. N. (2004). *Handbook on community policing*. Abuja: Nigeria Police Force.

Otite, O & Albert, I. O. (2004). *Community conflicts in Nigeria: Management, resolution and transformation*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books.

Sampson, R. J. (2002). Crime and public safety: Insights from community-level perspectives on social capital. In S. Saegert, J. P. Thompson & M. R. Warren (Eds.). *Social capital and poor communities* (Pp.: 89 – 114). New York: Russel Sage foundation.

United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (1998). *Victims of crime in the Developing* World, no. 57. Rome: UNICJRI.