

Effective Community Policing and Vigilante Neighborhood Watch: The Panacea to Insecurity and Sustainable Peace in Plateau State, Nigeria

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Abstract: The principal agency charged with the responsibility of internal peace and security of nations all over the world is the Police. In Nigeria today, the country is becoming more vulnerable to insecurity challenges due to several factors prominent among which are the inefficient and unprofessional policing system. Community policing could therefore be an option that can enhance the effectiveness of the Police Force for fostering internal security in Nigeria. There is a form of contention with the general public's perception of the Nigeria Police as unfriendly, brutal, corrupt, unprofessional, and inefficient. A major problem is the public's lack of trust of the police force, which is of importance to the community policing model and assists the community to sustain peace. This study, therefore, examined the state, challenges and prospects of the sustenance of peace in the communities on the Plateau and fostering internal security in Plateau state. The study covered the period 2010 to 2018, and is centred on the Plateau State Police Command. Data used in the study was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was sourced through questionnaire instrument and semi-structured interviews. The study revealed that armed robbery, stealing/theft, house/store burglary, car theft, murder, ethnic conflicts, religious conflicts, political conflicts and cultism are the prevalent internal security challenges in Plateau State

Keywords: Policing, Community Policing, Vigilante, Neighborhood Watch, Insecurity and Peace

I. INTRODUCTION

Insecurity in the form of ethnic, communal, and religious crisis is one of the biggest, most complex, and perhaps the most complicated problem facing Nigeria and most countries in the world, whether developed or developing countries. The upsurge in these forms of insecurity has left many countries in pains, suffering, and dismay, as it results in incalculable destruction of lives and properties. (Ukwayi & Okpa, 2017).

It is well known and established all over the world that peace and security of life and property is a necessary pre-condition for national development. The principal agency charged with the responsibility of internal peace and security of nations all over the world is the police (Igbuzor, 2010) The transition from traditional policing to community policing is a global phenomenon and the Nigeria police cannot be an exception. The Nigeria police in 2004 embraced community policing as a

pragmatic approach to police reforms. The stage was indeed set for a clear departure from traditional policing, that was reactive and incident based, to a problem – solving oriented policing that is proactive with the community as the cornerstone of policing objectives (Abdulrahman, 2013). This was part of the Force's effort to change policing to a modern and professional policing capable of providing maximum security of lives and property in Nigeria. Community oriented policing is a proactive philosophy that promotes solving problems that are either criminal, affect the quality of life, or increase citizens fear of crime. It involves identifying, analyzing and addressing community problems at their source.

Community policing is anchored on a systematic relationship between the police and the entire citizenry. Police roles and functions are not simply law enforcement but also include tackling a huge range of community problems. It is a paradigm shift that seeks to focus on constructive engagement with people who are the end users of the police service and re – negotiate the contract between the people and the police thereby making the community co – producers of justice and a quality police service.

Accordingly, the utilisation of neighbourhood watch has become integrated into policing in many nations. Experience and practice has shown clearly that neighbourhood watch can effectively contribute to reducing crime and promoting security (Odinkalu, 2011). The concept of neighbourhood watch encourages partnerships with relevant stakeholders because of the belief that the police can rarely solve public safety and problems alone, and such partnerships would involve private businesses, non-profit organisations, the civil society and the media, in addition to other government agencies within the community. The model encourages the application of modern management practices to improve efficiency and effectiveness (Abdulrahman, 2013)

Alemika and Chukwuma (2000) noted that as a result of police inefficiency and ineffectiveness in crime prevention and control, detection and apprehension of criminals, poor rule of law records, the violation of human rights, lack of accountability, incivility and wide-scale corruption, the public

holds the police in low esteem and is fearful of their brutality, extortion and ineffectiveness. The public loss of trust and confidence in the police and in the state, in the face of unrelenting upsurge in violent crimes in the society, necessitated the advent and formation of informal policing strategies, otherwise known as vigilantism or neighbourhood watch (Abrahansen & Williams, 2005). Increasing attention has been given to informal policing, and it is seen as a rational response of 'poor' communities to the weak criminal justice system, with regards to low policing and high levels of criminality (Adewale, 2007)). In spite of this development, the nation still finds it difficult to integrate the activities of the informal police sector into mainstream policing in Nigeria, even when it is obvious that the formal police institutions are not providing the expected result.

The most frequently recorded mechanism by which vigilante and neighborhood watch is supposed to reduce crime is by residents loAustine Agbonlahorng out for suspicious activities and reporting these to the police. The link between reporting and crime reduction is not usually elaborated in the literature. However, it has been argued that visible surveillance might reduce crime as a result of its effect on the perceptions and decision making of potential offenders. Hence, watching and reporting might deter offenders if they are aware of the propensity of the local residents to report suspicious behavior and if they perceive this as increasing the risks of being caught.

Consequently, vigilante/neighborhood watch can be an option that can enhance the effectiveness of the police force in Nigeria. The last few decades have shifted the Police from a Force to a service-oriented organization all over the world. Neighbourhood watch is perhaps the most popular and most demanded policing method among the law enforcement agencies, and has been implemented by many countries including United States, Germany and India. In the United States, where neighbourhood watch practices started with decentralized police systems, neighbourhood watch is accepted as a philosophy and practice that has been recognized as the most important contemporary police innovation designed to reduce crime and ensure effective policing (Zhoe,2003).

One important task necessary for the police to be successful in guaranteeing the security of life and property is to secure the support and understanding of individuals and communities.

Thus, the role of non-state actors like the traditional rulers, religious leaders, and other members of the community (who are actors in neighbourhood watch) in crime detection, prevention and management for the sole goal of achieving security cannot be over emphasised (Adeyefa, 2012). Various scholars and experts have posited that when the NPF work closely with the community, people or locals, they would be able to curb crime and criminality in their respective areas of jurisdiction. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine prospects of community olicing and

neighbourhood watch for security and sustainance of peace in Plateau State of Nigeria.

Statement of the Research Problem

The security challenges facing plateau state are enormous, and it is taking its toll on the social, economic and political lives of every Nigerian and non-Nigerian alike. In various parts of the state, there are myriads of security challenges in the form of, armed insurgency, armed political conflicts, violent destruction of lives and properties, communal hostility and herders and farmers clashes, amongst others. This state of insecurity pervading the entire state has become a source of worry and concern to the government, security agencies, and the citizenry.

Nigeria's security challenges are multi-dimensional, therefore overcoming them requires a multi-dimensional strategy. The situation has now become even more complicated in the current efforts aimed at countering violent extremism. Accordingly, an enhanced and efficient policing system through partnership with the neighbourhood watch becomes essential. The citizen perception of the police is very poor, as there are daily complaints of police brutality and extortion from members of the public. Hence, it becomes imperative to determine whether effective institutionalised neighbourhood watch will enhance security and promote public trust in the Police. Also, another problem that this research work addressed is the public's lack of trust of the police force to protect their security as informants, protect the integrity of information provided, and utilise such information to support police operations in the most professional and law-conforming manner. Consequently, the focus of this study was to examine the prospects of effective community policing and vigilante neighbourhood watchin promoting security of lives and properties and sustanance of peace on the Plateau, Nigeria.

Research Objectives

- To examine the challenges of community policing in Plateau State
- To identify measures to enhancing community policing in Plateau State.
- To ascertain the roles of vigilante service groups in crime prevention and control in Plateau State
- To foster synergy between Vigilante Groups and the Police in Plateau State

Research Questions

- What are the challenges of community policing in Plateau State?
- What are the measures to effective community policing in Plateau State?
- What are the roles of vigilante groups in crime prevention and control in Plateau State?
- How can the Vigilante Groups and Police synergiseto prevent and control crimes?

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Policing

Alemika (2000) view policing as the activity of making societies safe which entails intentional attempts to regulate the distribution of physical security produced by actual or potential use of force. For Odekunle (2004), the central objective of policing is to provide security, or at least a social and psychological feeling of security, for a majority of citizens, in a majority of places and for most of the time. This will involve prevention and control of criminality, maintenance of public order and peace, rendering of assistance and service to all citizens needing or requiring security and symbolizing the law and the government by always upholding the rule of law.

Community Policing

Community policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2019). Tillman (2000) defined community policing "as bringing police and citizens together to prevent crime and solve problems, emphasizing the prevention of crime rather than the traditional policing method of responding to crime after it happen. Community policing involves collaboration between police and community members characterized by problem-solving partnerships to enhance public safety. Community policing was adopted widely among law enforcement agencies in the 1990s, with a view toward improving trust between community members and police, and leveraging police resources through voluntary assistance by community members in public safety measures (COP Office, 2008).

Diamon, & Weiss (2008), view community policing as a philosophy of police management for proactive policing and problem solving to increase efficiency and effectiveness in addressing crime problems, service needs, and improve quality of life. Greene (1993) in the same vein describes community policing as a program of cooperation to solve crime problems. Miller and Hess (1994) stated that community policing is a philosophy that emphasizes working proactively with citizens to solve crime-related problems and prevent crime. Omole (2008) posits that over the years, the environment of policing has changed because of massive change in the social, economic and political environment. Thus, the Police as an organization must also move and be abreast of the changing dynamics of the society.

Vigilante and Neighborhood Watch

Vigilant means being very careful to notice any signs of danger or trouble while "Vigilante" is a member of a group of people who try to prevent crime or punish criminals in their community. On 27th April, 2004, Community Policing or the Vigilante Group of Nigeria was inaugurated by the

former President Olusegun Obasanjo to complement the services of the Nigerian Police force in combating crime on the principle that in a democratic society, the police are entrusted by their fellow citizens to protect and serve the public's fundamental rights, liberty, equality and justice under the law.

Objectives of forming the vigilante group of Nigeria will be seen from the statement of the commandant General of Vigilante Group of Nigeria, Usman Mohammed Jahun, during a formal training of over 400 members of the Enugu state command. Jahun explained the objective as follows: Vigilante group in Nigeria is an informal Community policing entity registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) 1999 to complement or supplement the effort of Nigerian Police and aid other security agencies in the country.

Partnership Approach to Policing

It is widely believed that no one agency alone can succeed in reducing crime. This fact is acknowledged by security experts who argue that, 'any comprehensive strategy to reduce crime must not only include the contribution of the police and the criminal justice system but also the whole range of environmental, social, economic and educational factors which affect the likelihood of crime'. To this end, many countries of the world due to the ravaging security challenges and the apparent inability of the conventional police to handle the situation alone satisfactorily have encouraged the establishment of partnerships between government organisations and private/community organisations in addressing crime. Increasingly, comparative experiences have shown that this approach of incorporating a professional police service and a responsible public seems to be the most effective and fruitful way to achieve positive results and create a safer environment (Oppler, 1997).

In South Africa for instance, the law allows "partnership policing" with For-Profit or Non-For-Profit organizations. This has yielded tremendous positive results against the rising spate of crime that has been rocking the country since independence (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2005). In the United States of America, police officers team up with citizens, business, private policing enterprises and other law enforcement agencies to achieve effective policing. This public-police partnership allows citizens to step beyond their daily law-abiding lives and get involved in projects, programs and other specific efforts to enhance their community's safety (Wroblecki and Hess, 2003). In the case of Britain, the policing partnership project in the London borough of Wadsworth has already provided positive results by establishing many projects that include key role players from the community. This has directly impacted on the quality of life of local people and is the envy of other boroughs (Oppler, 1997). In Pakistan, an innovative cross-sector partnership is incrementally improving public safety, security and social justice within the context of a highly complex society. For

instance, in Karachi, a city deeply affected by crime, violence and fear, partnership policing creates ‘safer spaces’ for humanitarian activities. This approach offers insights for the humanitarian sector, which struggles worldwide with emergency response and longer-term recovery in situations with serious security challenges (Pryjomko, 2011).

From the above studies, it appears that partnership policing has proved to be rewarding in crime

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study adopted the survey research design, using both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis. Consequently, both the primary and secondary sources of data collection were employed in the study. Primary data was acquired through the use of closed-ended questionnaires. Also, semi-structured interviews were conducted with three respondents. The questionnaire instrument enabled the researcher to elicit information on the problems which the study seeks to unravel.

Purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of respondents to include: 108 Police Officers (Rank and File, and Senior Police Officers) of the Nigeria Police Force, Plateau State Command and 133 civilians from in Plateau State. The primary source of data was essentially through the administration of 18 – 20 item closed-ended questionnaires to a total of 241 respondents. All information obtained from administered questionnaires was quantitatively analyzed. Primary data further included three structured interviews conducted with the senior police officers and two community chiefs.

In addition to the primary data, the study equally sourced secondary information through library search, official

documents, internet sources, newspapers, journals, articles, government policy papers and reports, as well as unpublished works, and empirical studies on effective in Nigeria.

IV. DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

A total of 270 questionnaires were administered to both the NPF Plateau State Command and some members of the various communities in the State, out of which a total number of 241 questionnaires were returned. The researcher administered 120 questionnaires to the Police Command in the State, out of which 108 were returned; while 150 questionnaires were administered to members of the general public, of which 133 were retrieved. The tools of analysis used include graphs/charts, simple percentages and cumulative percentages. See Appendix II for all the Data Analysis Tables. Table 4.1 below shows the distribution of the questionnaire:

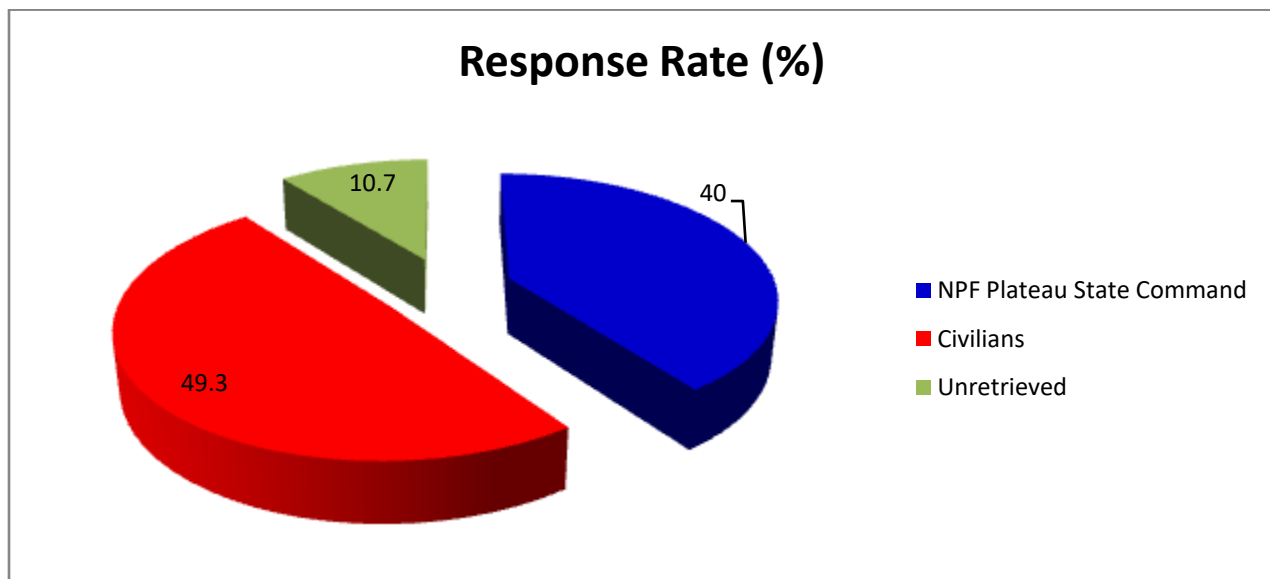
Table 4.1: Distribution of Questionnaires

Organisation	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Returned	Response Rate (%) of 270
Nigeria Police Force (NPF) Plateau State Command	120	108	40
Members of Within the Communities	150	133	49.3
Total	270	241	89.3

Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019.

Figure 4.1 below shows the response rate of the field survey, indicating that a total of 241 questionnaires were returned, which represents ‘89.3%’, while 29 questionnaires could not be retrieved from respondents, accounting for ‘10.7%’. The 89.3% response rate is however sufficient enough for the validity of the findings of the study.

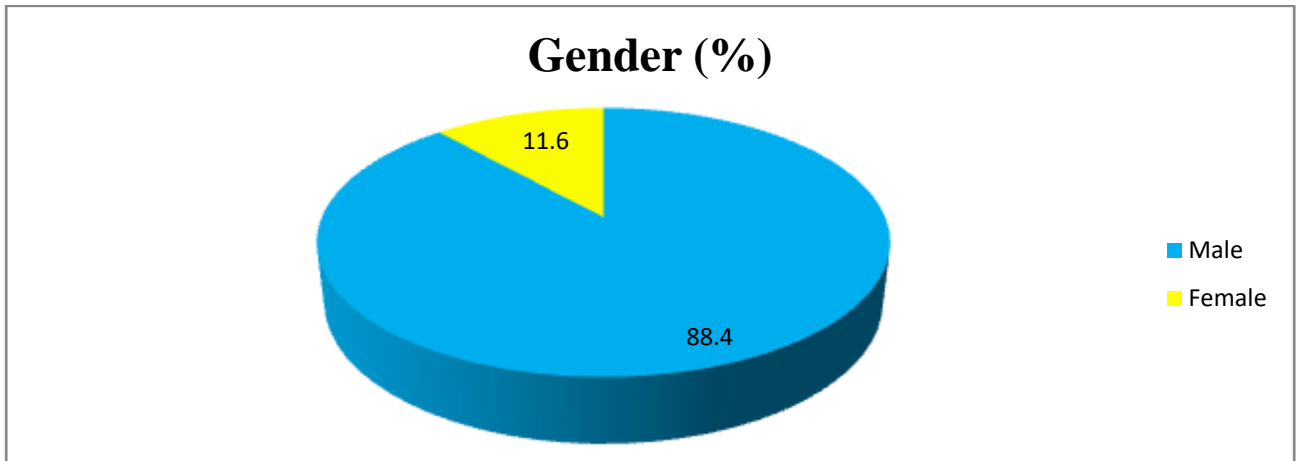
Figure 4.1: Response Rate of Field Survey



Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019.

Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Figure 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Gender



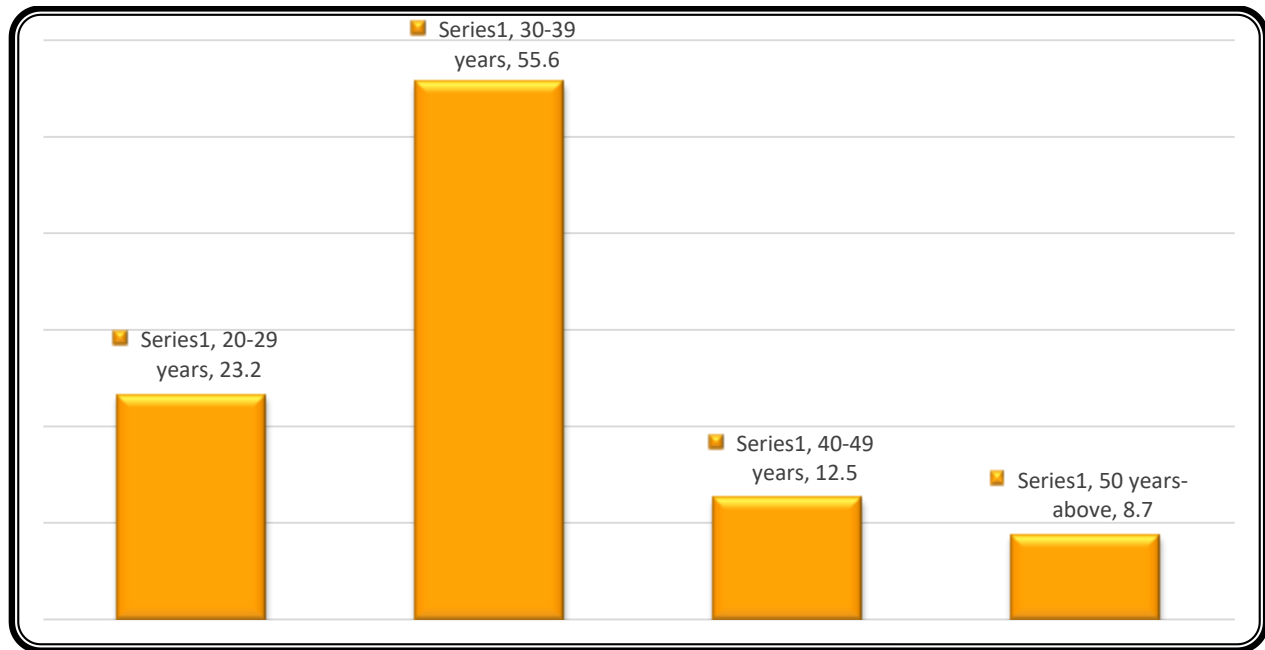
Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019.

Figure 4.2 above depicted that ‘88.4%’ (213) of the respondents were male, while ‘11.6%’ (28) of the respondents are female. This analysis shows that there is a male dominance in the Police Force and that the male genders are

more conscious of the security status of their communities than female. This however has no negative impact on the validity of the analysis of the field survey.

Distribution of Respondents by Age Group

Figure 4.3: Distribution of Respondents by Age Group



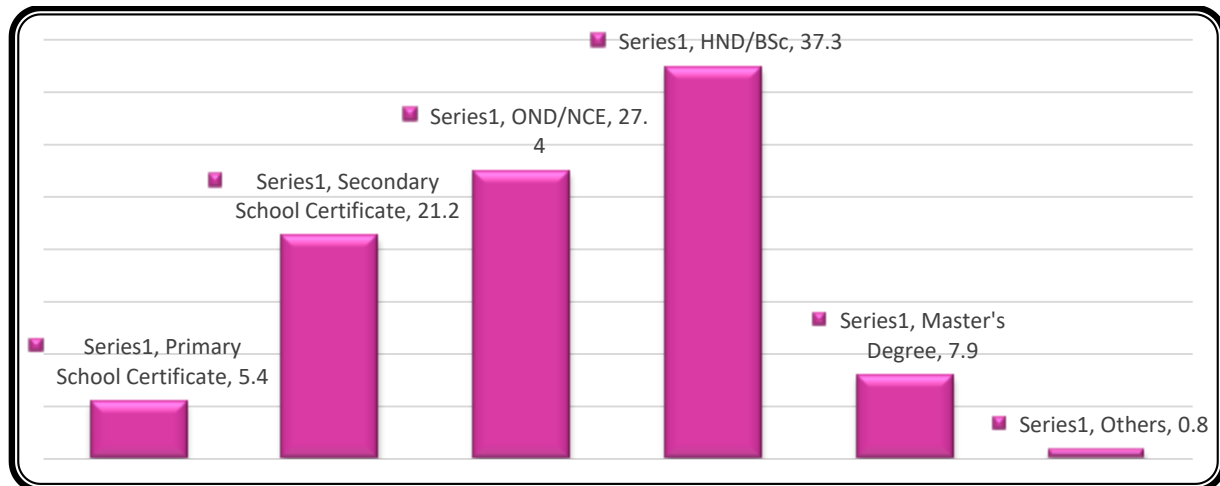
Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019.

Figure 4.3 showed the distribution of respondents by age group. Out of 241 respondents sampled, 23.2% (56) were within the ages of 20-29 years, 30-39 years stood at 55.6% (134), 12.5% (30) were within the age bracket of 40-49 years, while 8.7% (21) were 50 years and above. This

shows that respondents are evenly distributed and are matured enough to discuss and arrive at reasonable and logical conclusion on issues relating to Neighborhood watch and internal security.

Distribution of Respondents by Educational Qualification

Figure 4.4: Distribution of Respondents by Educational Qualification



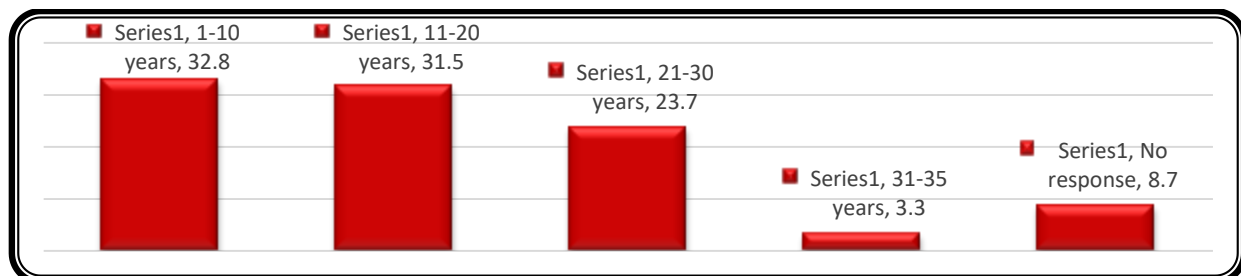
Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019.

Figure 4.4 showed the distribution of respondents by educational qualification. Out of 241 respondents sampled, 5.4% (13) had attained primary education, 21.2% (51) of the respondents had obtained secondary school education, OND/NCE holders were 27.4% (66), HND/B.Sc. holders were 37.3% (90), those who had attained the Master’s degree were

7.9% (19) and a respondent who had other qualifications aside from the above mentioned ones was 0.8% (2). This shows that an overwhelming number of the respondents are well enlightened and educated enough to understand the questions posed to them.

Distribution of Respondents by Years of Service

Figure 4.5: Distribution of Respondents by Years of Service



Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019.

Figure 4.5 above shows the years of working experience of respondents. From the analysis, ‘32.8%’ (79 respondents) of the respondents have spent 1-10 years in service, ‘31.5%’ (76 respondents) have been in service for 11-20 years, ‘23.7%’ (57 respondents) have spent 21-30 years in service, ‘3.3%’ (8 respondents) have spent 31-35 years in service, while ‘8.7%’ (21 respondents) did not respond to the posed question. This points to the fact that ‘32.8%’ of the respondents, who have spent between 1-10 years in service, are the rank and file police officers who are responsible for the day-to-day policing activities. They are therefore well-informed about the nature of police-community relationship in Within the communities of Plateau State. On the other hand, ‘27%’ of respondents have spent 21-35 years in service; it therefore implies that, they are adequately grounded in service and are acquainted with the operations and challenges of Neighborhood watch for substance of peace in Within the communities of Plateau State. Overall, the results of the analysis showed that

respondents sampled were adequately experienced to appreciate and respond to the questions posed to them.

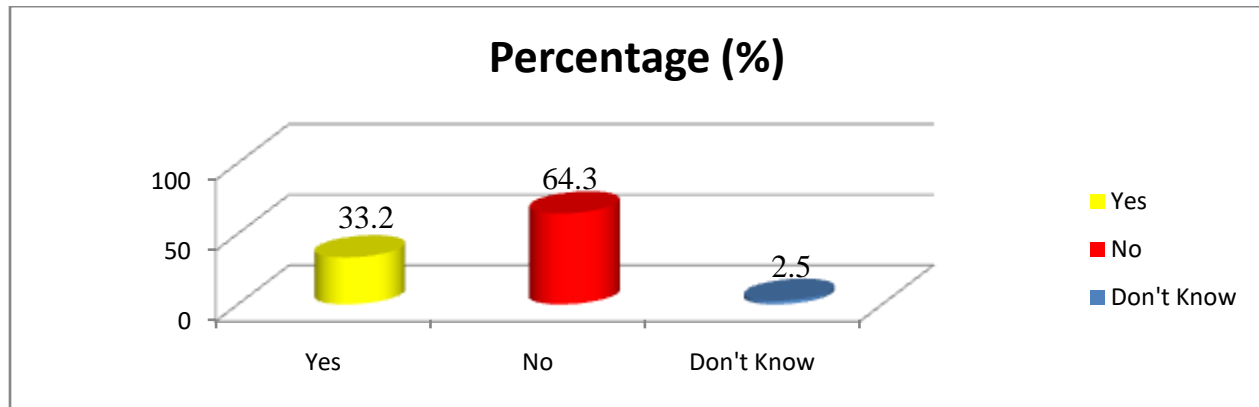
Assessment of the Nature, Challenges and Prospects of Neighborhood watch as a Panacea for Fostering Substances of peace within the communities of Plateau State

This section presents the analysis of the field data which was guided by the research questions and the detailed analysis is presented in the following Figures.

Assessment of the Performance of the Nigeria Police Force in within the communities of Plateau State in Fostering Internal Security

Respondents were asked to rate the performance of the NPF, Plateau State Command in the protection of lives and properties, crime prevention and promotion of substance of peace in the State.

Figure 4.7: Do you think the NPF have performed effectively and efficiently in the protection of lives and property in Plateau State?



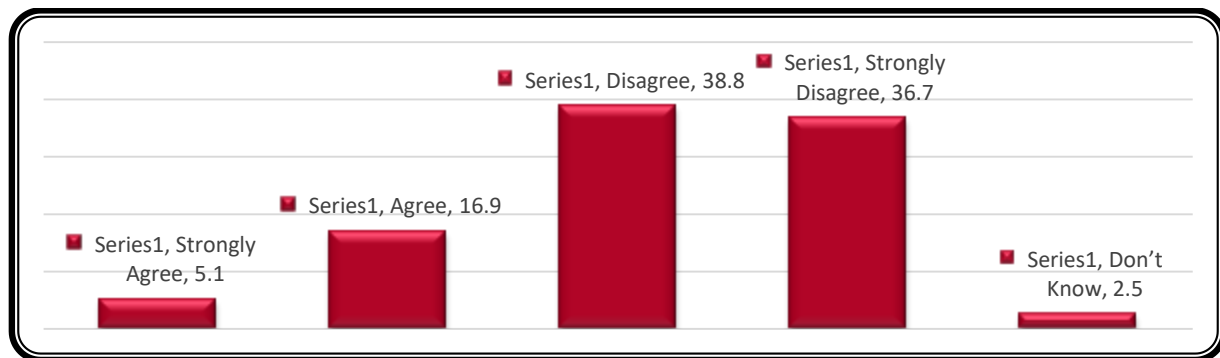
Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019.

Figure 4.7 above shows that majority of respondents (64.3%) opined that the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) Plateau State Command have been performing ineffectively in the protection of lives and property in the state. From the analyses, 33.2% (79 respondents) claimed that the NPF in the state have performed effectively over the years, 64.3% (153 respondents) indicated that the Police Force have not performed effectively, while 2.5% (6 respondents) gave no rating. Few respondents who seemed satisfied with the performance of the NPF noted that the Force despite its numerous challenges is doing its best to maintain substance of peace in the state, arising from the intense ethno-religious clashes and crises confronting most of the communities in the State.

However, majority of respondents rated the performance of the Force as ineffective due to a number of factors associable with the Plateau Command of the NPF which include:

lackadaisical attitude on the job, bias in settling issues, extreme corruption, lack of trust, shortage of manpower, inadequate equipment and logistics, lack of patrol vehicles and lack of professionalism, amongst others. Respondents further noted that the NPF have performed woefully in the response time/speed to crimes scenes/incidences, a significant number of killings are still prevalent in some Plateau communities such as in Barkin-Ladi, and inconsistent patrols in some communities. In addition, a senior Police Officer affirmed that the prevailing situation and environmental constraint have militated against effective performance of the Force. From the foregoing, it could be inferred that the NPF in Within the communities of Plateau State have performed ineffectively due to a number of identified reasons, this necessitates corrective measures to reposition the Force to effectively combat security challenges and inherently promote substance of peace in the State.

Figure 4.8: Do you agree that the NPF have the required personnel to perform effectively?

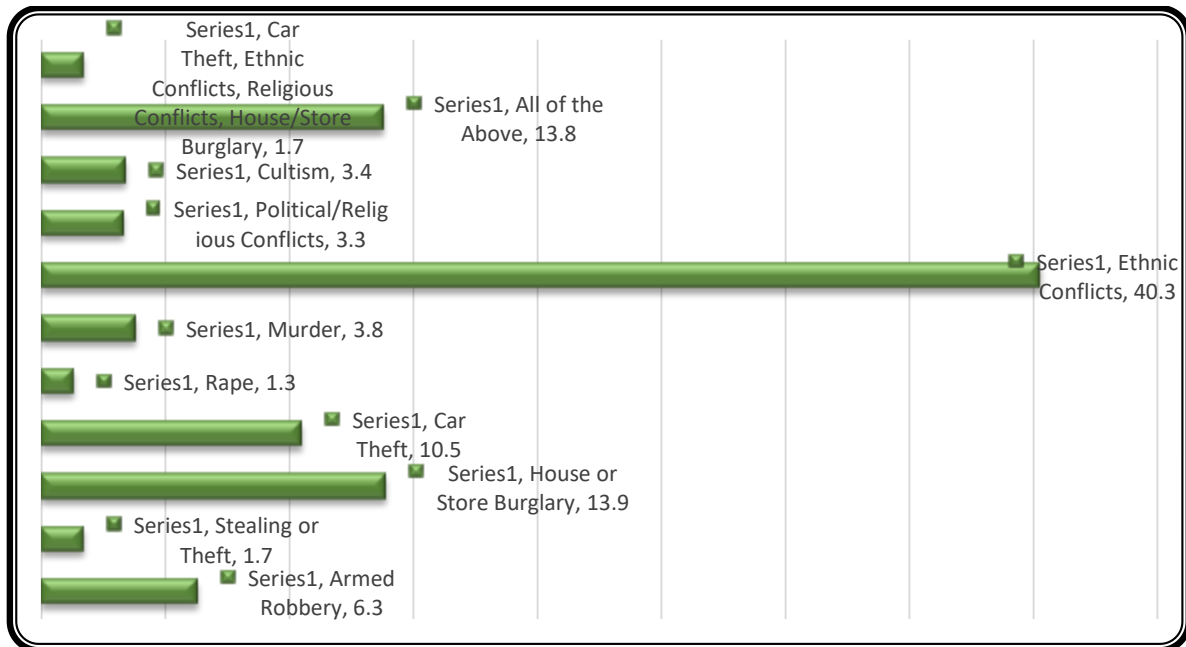


Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019.

Respondents were asked if the NPF have the required personnel to perform effectively in the protection of lives and property in Within the communities of Plateau State, with majority of the respondents (75.5%) indicating that the NPF lacks the required personnel. As evident in Figure 4.8 above, 5.1% of respondents strongly agreed to the posed question, 16.9% agreed, 38.8% (92 respondents) disagreed, 36.7%

strongly disagreed, while 2.5% did not know. This data is an indication that the Police Force lacks the required personnel to perform effectively in promoting substance of peace in Plateau state. This position can be supported with the stance of President Buhari and the IGP Solomon Arase in August 2019 during the Police Security Summit in Abuja, to initiate the recruitment of 10,000 new officers into the Force.

Figure 4.9: What Substances of peace Challenges are prevalent in within the communities of PlateauState?

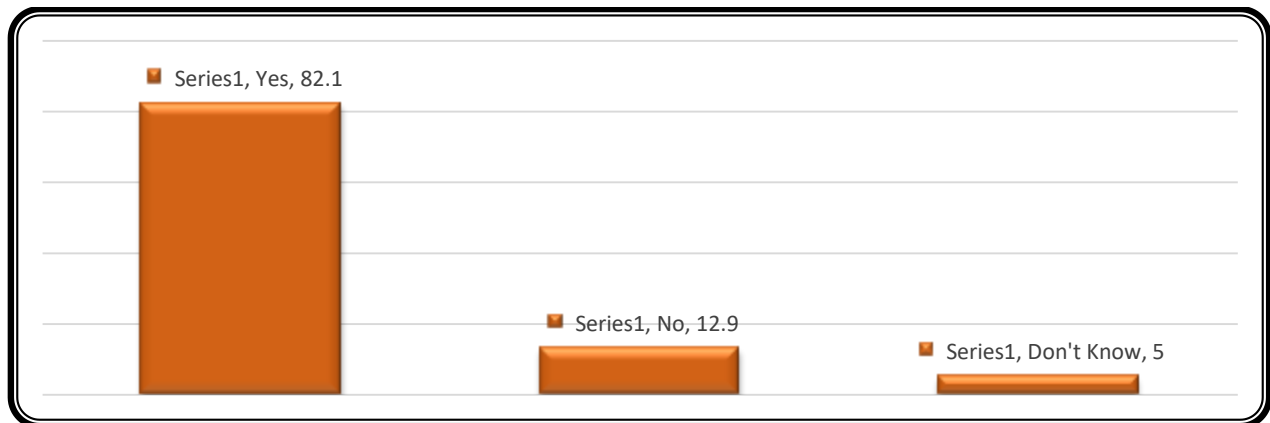


Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019.

The identified substance of peace challenges posed to respondents include armed robbery, stealing/theft, house/store burglary, car theft, rape, murder, ethnic conflicts, religious conflicts, political conflicts and cultism. As evident in Figure 4.9 above, ‘13.8%’ of the respondents (33) opined that all the afore-mentioned substance of peace challenges is currently prevalent in within the communities of Plateau State. However, majority of respondents accounting for 40.3% indicated that ethnic conflicts are the most prevalent substance

of peace challenge within the communities of Plateau State. In addition, respondents rated other prevalent substance of peace challenges as represented in Figure 4.9 above. All these challenges require urgent attention; through appropriate measures and strategies to address them. One of such measures should be the effective implementation of Neighborhood watch which could serve as a panacea for solving the prevalent ethnic conflicts and foster sustenance of peace within the communities of Plateau State.

Figure 4.10: Has conflict/crime rate reduced in your community?



Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019.

Figure 4.10 above indicates that majority of the respondents (82.1%) agree that conflict/crime has reduced in Plateau communities, 12.9% representing 31 respondents were of the opinion that conflict/crime has not reduced in their communities, while 5% accounting for 12 respondents have

no idea as to the posed question. From the foregoing, it could be deduced that crime rate has significantly reduced in the state, but not completely wiped out. Respondents buttressed further that the crimes that have reduced significantly in the state include armed robbery, kidnapping, car snatching and

murder. This brings to fore the need for the Police Force and community members to put in place measures to address the other prevalent substance of peace challenges and conflict/crime in the state.

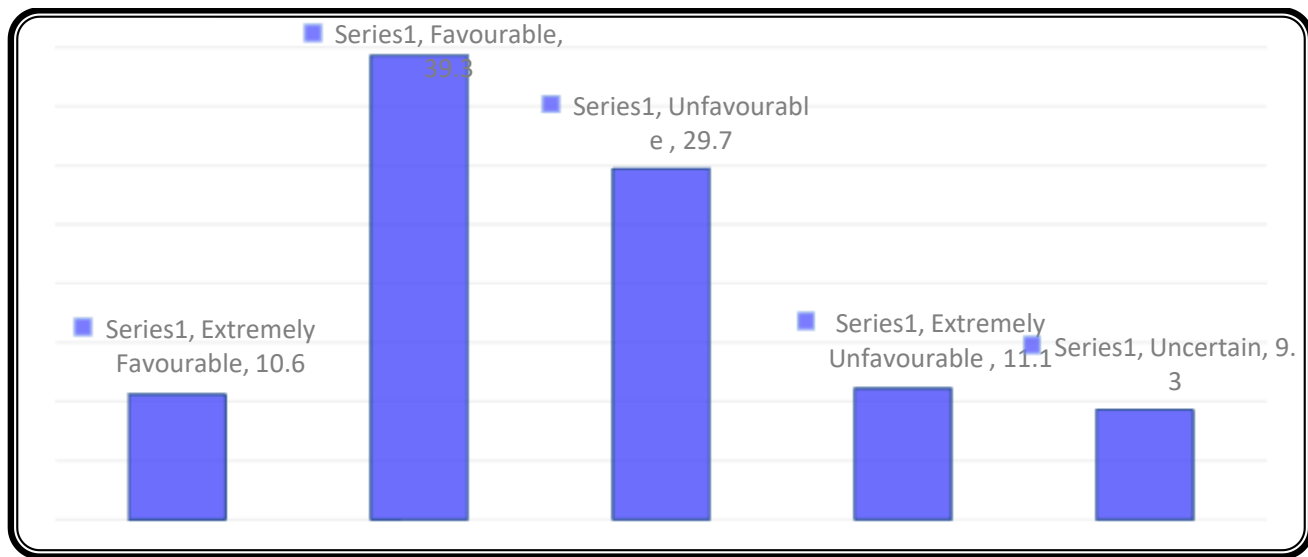
Nature of Community Policing in Plateau State

Respondents were asked to assess the nature of community policing in Plateau State and ascertain the level of relationship between the Police and community members in the State. Although Neighborhood watch has just been instituted in Plateau State, it's still not operational. Consequently, most of the respondents viewed Neighborhood watch as Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC) in Plateau State.

Although PCRC has a linkage with Neighborhood watch, the two concepts are however not the same. The purpose of PCRC

as formulated by the NPF is to bridge the gap between the police and people which is also in tandem with Neighborhood watch (CP Austine Agbonlahor, 2019). If this gap can be bridged, there will be better understanding between the police and people. Also, the PCRC is a platform where information can be given to the police when necessary because the people in the community have a better understanding of the community than the police. As a result, if there is any security issue or information relating to security, it is the members of the PCRC that will be in a better position to communicate them to the police. Accordingly, the people sometimes would know how best to approach a security matter within their community.

Figure 4.11: What is the attitude of the general public towards the Nigeria Police Force in within the communities of Plateau State?



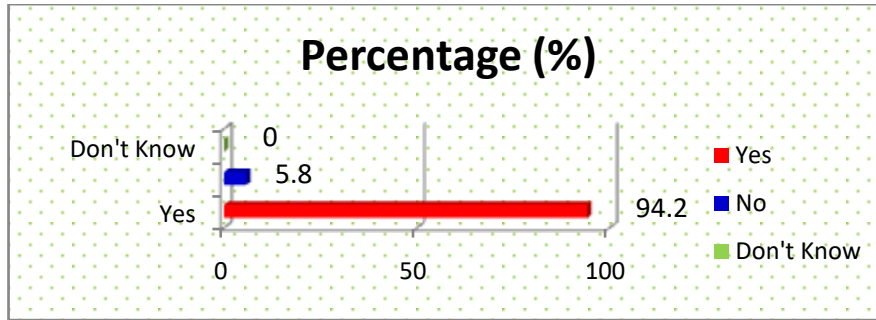
Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019.

Respondents were asked to rate the attitude of the general public towards the NPF within the communities of Plateau State. Figure 4.11 above shows that '10.6%' (24 respondents) rated the attitude of the public towards the NPF Plateau Command as extremely favourable, 39.3% (89 respondents) hold the view that is favourable, 29.7% and 11.1% (67 and 25 respondents) opined that the general attitude of the public toward NPF is unfavourable and extremely unfavourable respectively, while 21 respondents (9.3%) indicated that they 'do not know'. From the analysis, it is observed that despite majority of respondents (49.9%) opining that the attitude is favourable; a significant 40.8% indicated that it was not favourable. Few respondents who were negative in their opinion noted that the police are corrupt, lack integrity and their attitude to the people is hostile, thus, the public may not be accommodating to the activities of the Force. Also, it was stated that there is a stereotype mindset that the Police are

endemically and irredeemably unfriendly to the members of the communities.

On the other hand, other respondents who viewed the attitude of the public towards the NPF as favourable noted that the Police Force do not take side in addressing religious crises or tribal war that is predominant in their jurisdictions. It was also established that the public are generally courteous and hospitable but at times inter-tribal/hostility brings the Police at a crossroad. In addition, the public offers assistance to the Police in terms of giving information. Hence, the public appreciates the efforts made so far in the containment of substance of peace challenges/crises but still uncondensed with the hazy situation as the problem of killings from ethnic/communal clashes are still there intermittently. Accordingly, there is the need for more cooperation from the public in order to succeed in conflict/crime reduction in the State.

Figure 4.12: Has the Plateau State Police Command put in place Neighborhood watch?

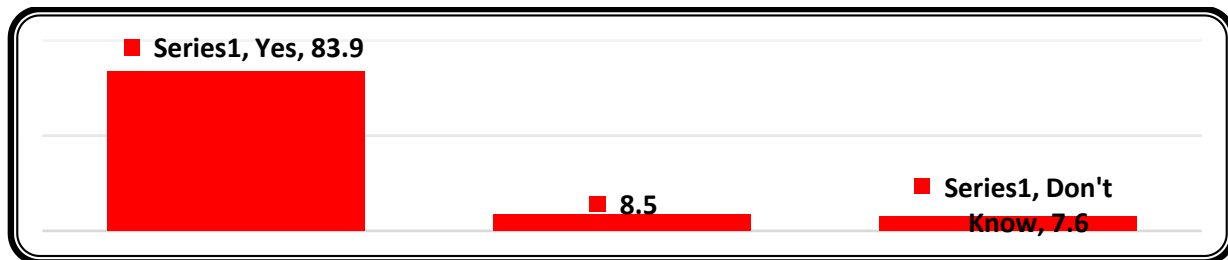


Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019.

This question seeks to find out if the Plateau State Police Command has put in place Neighborhood watch. As evident in Figure 4.12, majority of the respondents (94.2%) indicated that the Command has put in place Neighborhood watch in the State, while the remaining 5.8% of the respondents answered no. In an interview with the within the communities of Plateau State some police officers affirmed that Neighborhood watch has just commenced in the State and is yet to be effective. They tagged it “elementary community policing”.

This is due to the fact that the necessary elements required (such as funding, logistics and personnel) for effective community policing are still lacking in the Command. The Police officers further established that majority of the public and some police officers do not understand intensively the concept and modalities of effective Neighborhood watch. In essence, what is in place in Plateau State is the Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC) and not Neighborhood watch.

Figure 4.13: Does the Police in your Community attend to complaints and conflict/crime incidences promptly?



Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019.

Figure 4.13 show the assessment of the Police in attending to complaints and conflict/crime incidences within the communities of Plateau State communities. From the analysis, 83.9% of the respondents were of the opinion that Police within the communities of Plateau State promptly attend to complaints and conflict/crime incidences in the various

communities, 8.5% of the respondents said no, while 7.6% of the respondents claimed not to have an idea. It could thus be inferred that the Police Force within the communities of Plateau State promptly responded to complaints and conflict/crime incidences in the state thereby reducing the conflict/crime rate and promoting internal security.

Figure 4.14: Do the Police consult the community members when important security decisions affecting the community are taken?

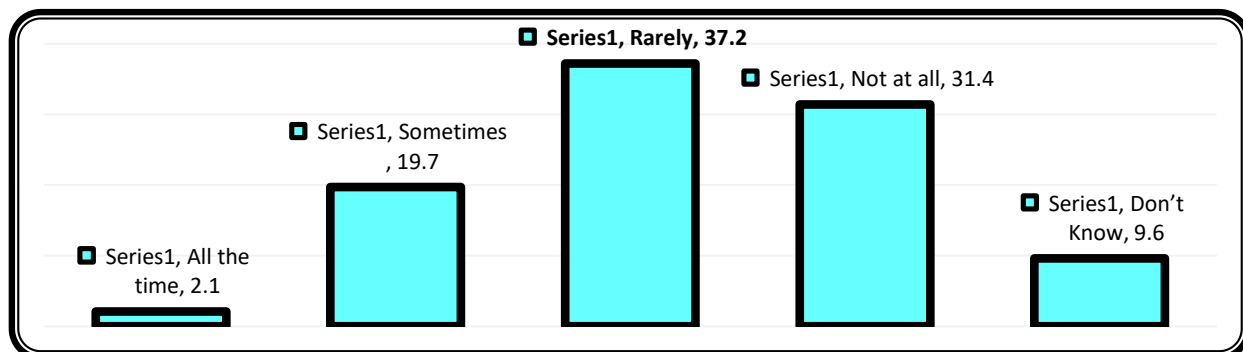
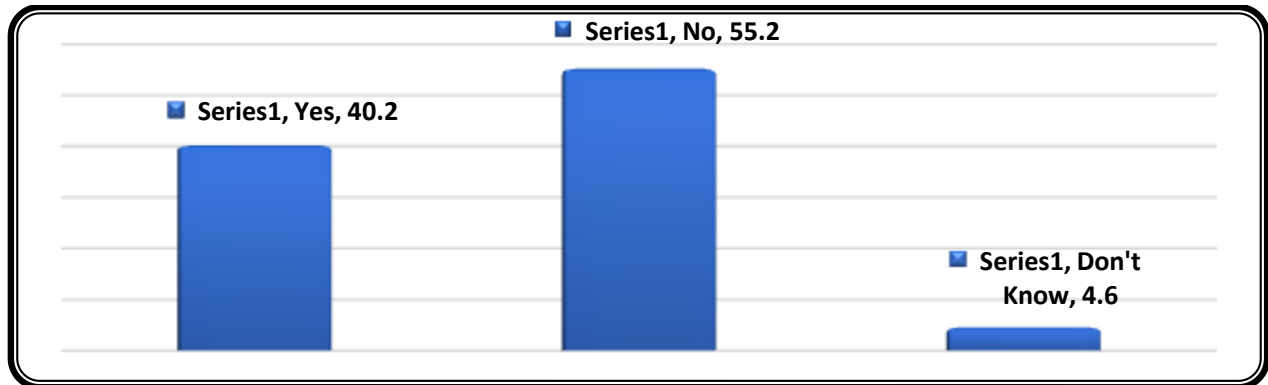


Figure 4.14 above shows that the Police Force barely consults the community members when important security decisions affecting the community are taken. From the analysis, 2.1% (5 respondents) opined that the Police consults the community members all the time, 19.7% (47 respondents) indicated that the community members are consulted sometimes, 37.2% (89 respondents) indicated opined that community members are rarely consulted, 31.4% (75 respondents) affirmed that the community members are not always consulted while 9.6% (23 respondents) had no knowledge of the question posed. It could be deduced from the foregoing that majority of the

community members in within the communities of Plateau State feel neglected in the process of security decision making. Some respondents claimed not to be carried along in the selection of PCRC members in their communities, accusing the Police of influencing the selection of the community members. There is therefore the need to remedy the situation by the Police Force regularly consulting with the traditional rulers, religious groups and community members at large when important security decisions are to be taken.

Figure 4.15: Are the Communities within the communities of Plateau State Supporting Neighborhood watch?

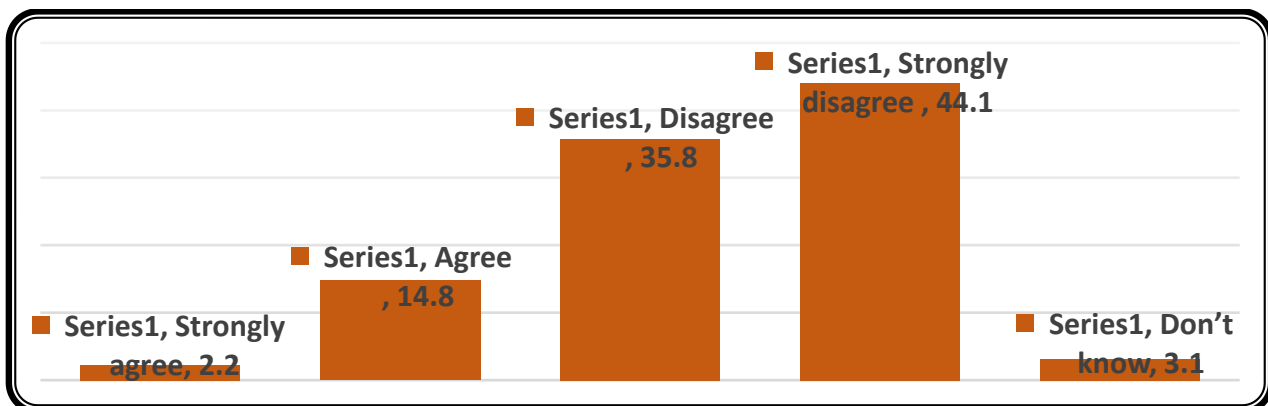


Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019

The opinion of respondents was sampled on whether communities within the communities of Plateau State were supporting Neighborhood watch through the PCRC. Figure 4.11 above indicates that 40.2% (96 respondents) opined that communities supported Neighborhood watch while majority of respondents accounting for 55.2% (132 respondents) opined that communities in within the communities of Plateau State do not support Neighborhood watch. In addition, 4.6%

of the respondents did not have any idea. From the foregoing, it can be inferred that some communities in the State support community policing while some others do not. There is therefore the need for the Police Force to orientate all communities on the essence and prospects of the community policing technique, as a panacea for fostering substance of peace in the State.

Figure 4.16: Do you agree that the present working strength of the Within the communities of Plateau State Police Command is suitable for community policing?



Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019

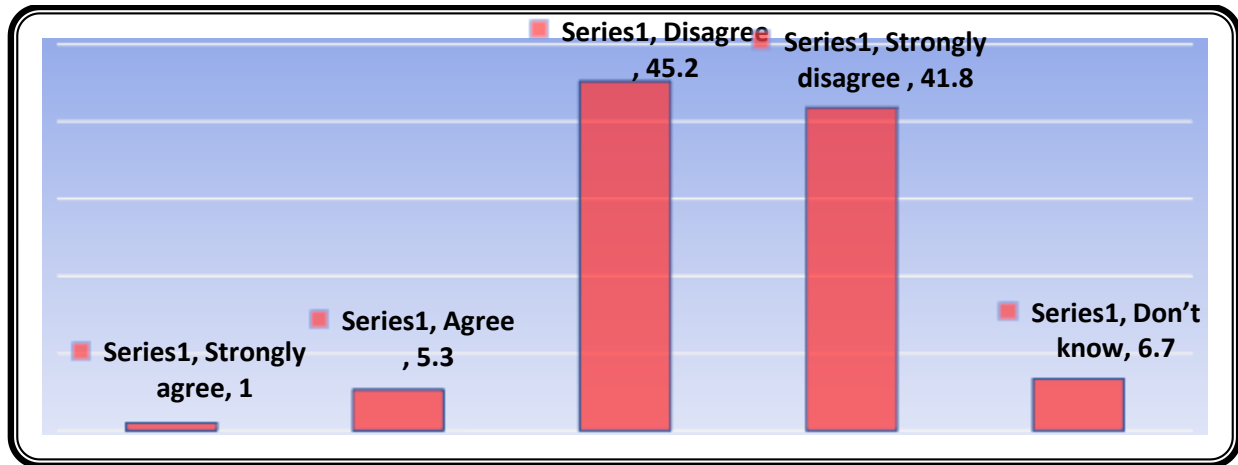
The question of whether the present working strength of the Plateau State Police Command is suitable for community policing was determined on Figure 4.16. Out of 229 respondents sampled, 2.2% (5 respondents) strongly agreed

that the working strength of the NPF is suitable for community policing, 14.8% (34 respondents) agreed, 35.8% (82 respondents) disagreed, 44.1 (101 respondents) strongly disagreed to the posed question, while 3.1% (7 respondents)

did not know. From the analysis, majority of respondents (79.9%) opined that the present working strength of the Plateau State Police Command is not suitable for the effective implementation of Neighborhood watch. This was also affirmed to by the Police, who stated that there is a dearth of manpower in the Police Command, emphasizing further that

the issue of attaching too many police personnel to politicians and government officials is a contributing factor to the insufficient manpower. This however needs to be addressed through the recruitment of new capable officers to be specially trained for the implementation of Neighborhood watch.

Figure 4.17: Do you agree that the Nigeria Police Force in Plateau State have enough logistics and equipment to effectively implement community policing?



Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019

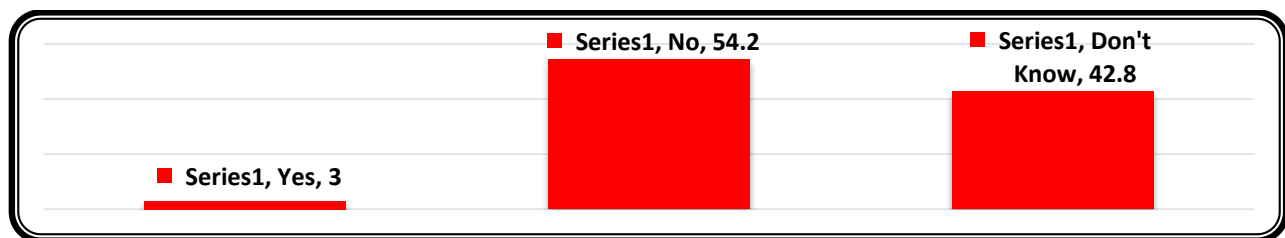
Figure 4.17 shows the assessment of the availability of logistics and equipment required for effective implementation of Neighborhood watch within the communities of Plateau State. It is of significance that majority of respondents (87%) disagreed with the above assertion, opining therefore that the NPF Plateau Command lacks the required logistics and equipment to effectively implement Neighborhood watch. From the analysis, 1% of respondents strongly agreed, 5.3% agreed, 45.2% disagreed, 41.8% strongly disagreed, while 6.7% did not know. Thus, it could be deduced that the level of logistics and equipment in the State Command is not sufficient for the effective implementation of community policing in the State. This

needs to be addressed in order to ensure effective implementation of Neighborhood watch within the communities of Plateau State.

Assessment of Neighborhood watches as a Panacea for Fostering Substances of peace in within the communities of Plateau State

Respondents were asked to assess the impacts and implications of Neighborhood watch for fostering substance of peace in within the communities of Plateau State. This sub-section further seeks the opinion of respondents on the elements and status of Neighborhood watch in their environments.

Figure 4.18: Are there legislative mechanisms for community policing in Nigeria?



Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019

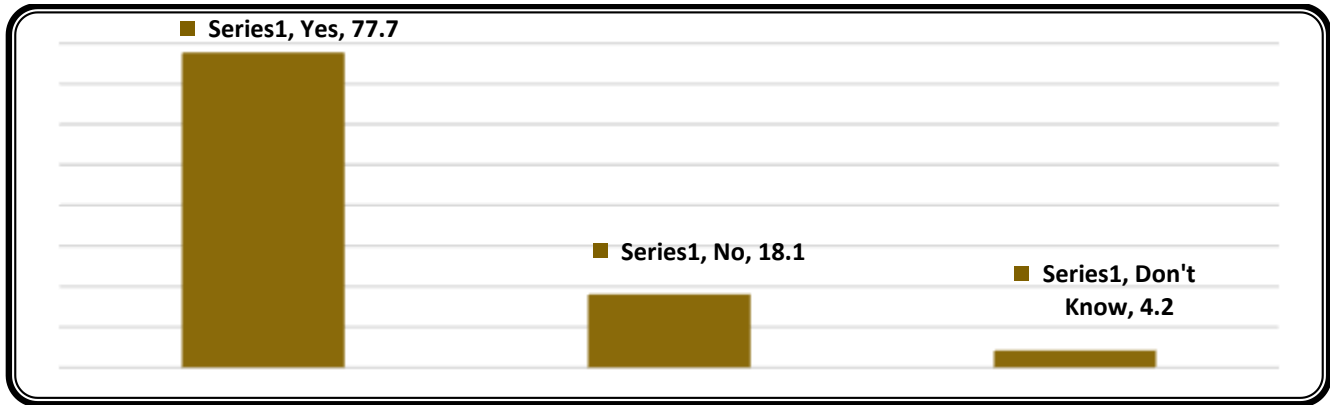
Respondents were asked if there are legislative/policy mechanisms for community policing in Nigeria. Figure 4.18 above shows that there is no legislative/policy mechanism in place for an effective community policing in Nigeria, as indicated by '54.2%' of the respondents (128 respondents), whereas '42.8%' (101 respondents) did not know if there are legislative mechanisms in place, and '3.0%' (7 respondents)

opined that there are legislative/policy mechanisms in place for effective community policing. The analysis is an indication that a high number of Nigerians do not understand the concept of community policing, hence, have no knowledge of its rudiments. As earlier noted, the public assume community policing to refer to the available Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC). Thus, for an

effective community policing to be fully operational in Nigeria, there is the need for appropriate legislative/policy mechanisms to be put in place by the Federal Government and

National Assembly. This is however ongoing as it is specially driven and canvassed for by the current IGP Solomon Arase and is being considered by the President.

Figure 4.19: Has the NPF in Plateau State developed solutions to substance of peace challenges in the State?



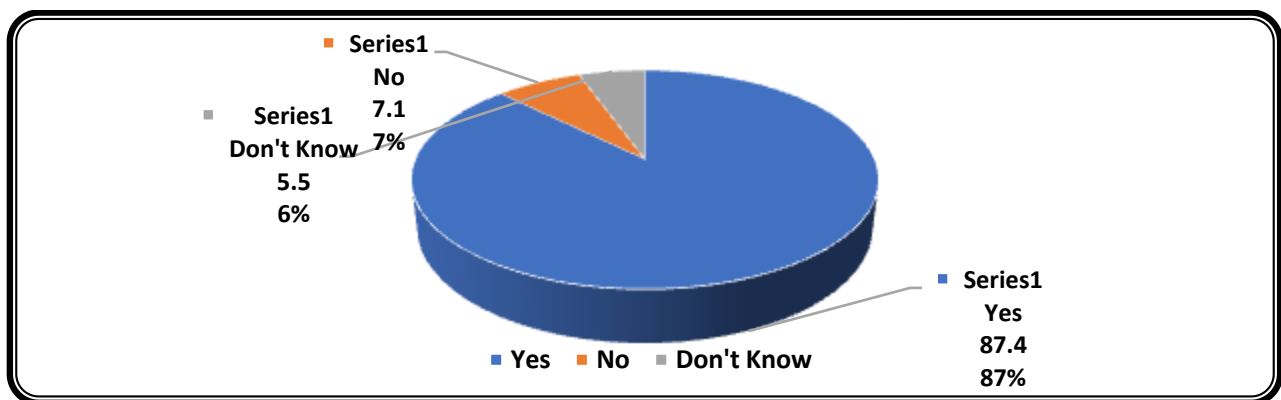
Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019

Figure 4.19 determined whether the Plateau State Police Command has developed solutions and put in place measures to address substance of peace challenges in the State. From the analysis, 77.7% of respondents affirmed that solutions have been developed, 18.1% answered no, while 4.2% of the respondents had no idea about the posed question. Accordingly, it is presumed that the Plateau State Police Command has developed appropriate measures and solutions to address substance of peace challenges prevalent in the State.

Hence, the measures and solutions put in place by NPF as indicated by respondents include: effective intelligence-led policing, enlightenment of the public through the PCRC,

synergy with other security agencies, meeting with stakeholders regularly, enhanced/effective patrol system, deployment of the Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU), partnership with vigilante groups and effective surveillance system. Other measures highlighted by respondents include joint patrol with the Special Task Force (STF) and Operation Rainbow, stop and search method, partnership with the media, partial community policing, inter-ethnic dialogue, good information network and robust public relations. In an interview with the Plateau Police Commissioner, he noted that the State Command relies more on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) method in addressing inter-ethnic and ethno-religious crisis, which are the most prevalent substance of peace challenge in Plateau State (Austine Agbonlahor, 2019).

Figure 4.20: Do you think that the adoption of Neighborhood watch can enhance effective policing for fostering substance of peace in within the communities of Plateau State?



Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019

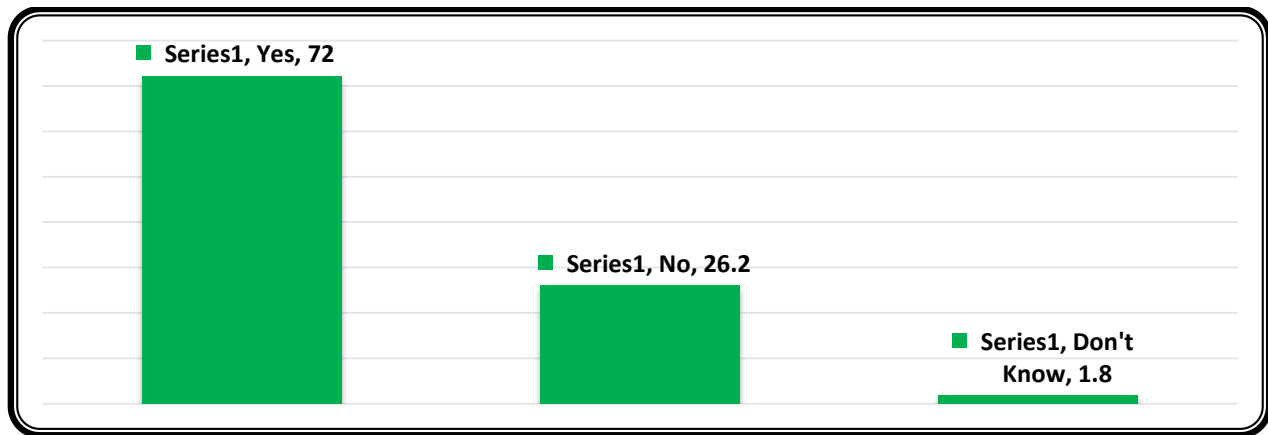
Respondents were asked if they think the adoption of Neighborhood watch can enhance effective policing for fostering substance of peace within the communities of Plateau State. Out of 238 respondents sampled, 208 respondents representing (87.4%) opined that the adoption of

Neighborhood watch can enhance effective policing for fostering substance of peace in Within the communities of Plateau State, 7.1% (17 respondents) indicated that the adoption cannot enhance effective policing for fostering substance of peace in the State, while 5.5% of the respondents

had no idea. With the overwhelming number of respondents affirming that the adoption of Neighborhood watch can enhance effective policing for fostering internal security, there

is therefore the need to adopt the policy in all States of the Federation.

Figure 4.21: Do members of the public provide assistance to officers of the NPF within the communities of Plateau State Communities?



Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019

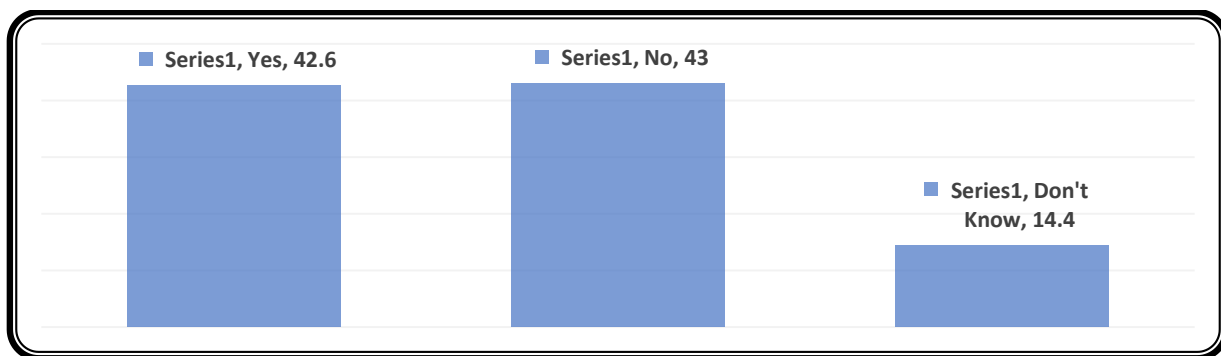
Figure 4.21 determined whether members of the public provides assistance to Officers of the NPF in within the communities of Plateau State Communities, this was necessary for the researcher to enquire if the public were in support of the NPF-driven Neighborhood watch. From the analysis, majority of respondents accounting for 72.0% indicated that community members provided assistance to Police officers in order to reduce conflict/crime rate and promote internal security. In addition, 26.2% (59 respondents) opined that they do not provide assistance to the NPF, while 1.8% (4 respondents) did not know. This is an affirmation that members of Plateau communities are in support of Neighborhood watch by the provision of assistance to the Police for the sole purpose of promoting internal security.

Respondents highlighted the areas in which the public provided assistance to the Police Force, to include: information gathering, night patrol in the community by vigilante and the arrest and handing over of suspects to the Police. Others include the donation of equipment such as touch lights, generators and food; contribution of funds and remittance to the Police during security challenges as well as

the provision of accommodation to newly posted Police officers. On the other hand, few respondents who opined that the public do not provide assistance to the NPF indicated that the situation was so due to a number of reasons, amongst which includes the lack of trust in the Police Force, fear of being considered or substituted as the offenders, and the hostile/oppressive attitude of some Police officers.

Other partnerships engaged by the Police Command as indicated by the Police Commissioner and other Police Officers include the State government, local governments, religious leaders, Ardos/MACBANS, community leaders, private organizations, civil servants, organized labour, trade unions, youth leaders, the natives/the settlers/Fulanis, and social groups. In addition to these are other stakeholders such as banking institutions, students' union leaders and members, all ethnic groups in the State, NGOs and vigilante groups. It should be noted that these synergies are put into use majorly through the platform of the Police-Community Relations Committee (PCRC) and not through the platform of Neighborhood watch which is still at the elementary implementation stage.

Figure 4.22: Do you think community policing has been effective in Plateau State?



Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019

This question seeks to find out the level of effectiveness of the implementation of community policing in Plateau State. The analysis however showed mixed results, as regards the effectiveness of community policing in the State. Out of 230 respondents sampled, 42.6% (98 respondents) answered yes, 43.0% (99 respondents) opined that the implementation of community policing in the State has been ineffective, while 13.6% (33 respondents) did not know whether it has been effective or otherwise. This result is an indication that most respondents (43.0%) hold the view that the implementation of community policing has been ineffective. Also, the fact that a significant 42.6% opined that it has been effective gives the impression that the PCRC which most respondents presume to be community policing has been functioning in their own capacity. It should be noted that the Police Commissioner in the state also indicated that the community policing in Plateau is at the elementary level, and thus, will be difficult to assess its effectiveness. There is therefore the need for the mechanisms required for the effective implementation of

community policing in Plateau State to be put in place. This will enhance the efforts of the NPF towards the promotion of substance of peace in all communities in the state.

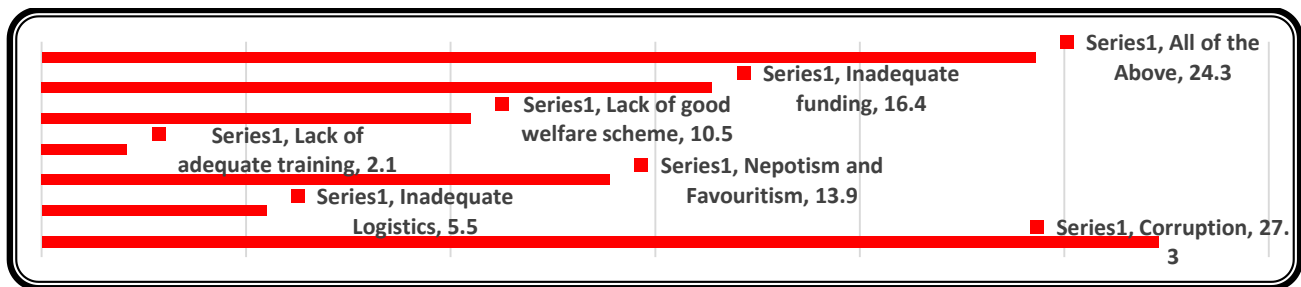
Assessment of Challenges and Prospects of effective Neighborhood watch for Fostering Substances of peace in within the communities of Plateau State

The study identified and assessed the challenges inhibiting the effectiveness of Neighborhood watch for fostering substance of peace in within the communities of Plateau State, as well as the prospects of Neighborhood watch for a robust internal security.

Major Obstacles to Effective Policing in Plateau State

This question seeks to find out from respondents, the problems/challenges that constitute the major obstacles to effective policing in Plateau State and addressing substance of peace issues. Figure 4.23 below gives the breakdown of their responses:

Figure 4.23: From the following, kindly indicate the major factors negatively affecting effective and efficient policing in Plateau State.



Source: Research Field Survey, June, 2019

The identified challenges/problems that constitute major obstacles to effective policing for fostering substance of peace within the communities of Plateau State, posed to respondents include: corruption, inadequate logistics, nepotism and favouritism, lack of adequate training, lack of good welfare scheme and inadequate funding. As evident in Figure 4.23 above, '24.3%' of the respondents (58 respondents) opined that all the aforementioned factors constitute significant threats/obstacles to effective policing for fostering substance of peace within the communities of Plateau State. From the analysis, corruption, nepotism/favouritism, lack of good welfare scheme, inadequate funding and inadequate logistics all featured prominently in the responses of respondents, as '73.6%' (175 respondents) opted for this group of challenges. Other respondents indicated the challenges they think constitute major obstacles the most to effective policing in within the communities of Plateau State, as detailed in Figure 4.23 above.

Other additional factors inhibiting effective policing in Within the communities of Plateau State identified by respondents include lack of patrol vehicles, poor technological system, poor motivation and reward system, inconsistent night patrols, undue interference from the Governor and other politicians, lack of understanding of the people/community, inadequate

police personnel in the State Command, poor welfare scheme, and lack of cordial relationship with the community members. In addition to these, officers of the NPF Plateau State Command highlighted the following as challenges to effective policing in the State: poor boundary/border demarcation of the state, poor Force leadership, lack of adequate support from local governments, lack of policing equipment such as walkie-talkie and torch lights, lack of adequate training in modern counter-terrorism, intolerance and religious bigotry and finally, slow response rate to conflict/crime scenes.

Austine Agbonlahor (2019) in an interview indicated that the major problem of policing in the State is lack of equipment to combat conflict/crime. He stated that the unavailability of sophisticated equipment and logistics makes it difficult for the Command to combat substance of peace challenges. Therefore, enough logistics needs to be provided for the Command. The Police Commissioner also affirmed the view of the other respondents by indicating that the challenge of lack of modern communication gadgets. According to Austine Agbonlahor (2019), the issue of communication is hampering effective policing operations in the state. Hence, if a policeman is outside the State Headquarters, he is incommunicado from the State Headquarters. This situation also affects the response time to conflict/crime scenes. It was

established that the NPF in the state relies on GSM phones which is obviously attached to the unstable network problem. Other notable challenges indicated by the Police Commissioner include dearth of manpower, political interference and insufficient patrol vehicles.

What do you think are the reasons for the ineffectiveness of Neighborhood watch in within the communities of Plateau State?

Respondents were asked to indicate the factors responsible for the ineffectiveness of the implementation of Neighborhood watch in within the communities of Plateau State. It should be noted that the challenges inhibiting effective policing are quite different from that of Neighborhood watch, as the latter has a different modus operandi. Respondents however posited that Neighborhood watch framework in within the communities of Plateau State is confronted with major challenges to include lack of legal backing or framework which is not limited to the State alone but significantly affecting the implementation of Neighborhood watch nationwide. This brings to fore the need for the Federal Government, Police Service Commission and National Assembly to propose and pass a bill to provide legal framework and backing for community policing in Nigeria for the sole goal of fostering internal security. Other challenges identified by respondents include lack of trust in the Police Force by the public, corruption and inadequate funding. It was stipulated by respondents that implementing a standard and effective Neighborhood watch requires sufficient funding, which is lacking in Nigeria. Simply put, "effective community policing is very expensive to run". In essence, the leadership of the NPF, PSC as well as the Federal and State Governments in considering the implementation of community policing should provide an adequate funding framework and strategies to ensure the policing technique to be effective in the conflict/crime reduction, earning of the public's trust/confidence as well as fostering of internal security.

In an interview with Chief Secondas Gyang (2019), he noted that the challenge of effective Neighborhood watch in Plateau State is the unwillingness of the community members to provide information and support to the Police officers. He however attributed this to the hostile attitude of the police in the discharge of their policing duties, as well as the lack of trust in the police on the part of the community members. Chief Gyang also posited that shortage of manpower and inadequate logistics is affecting the implementation of Neighborhood watch in most communities. Another interview conducted with the Police Commissioner, Austine Agbonlahor (2019) revealed that the factors responsible for the ineffectiveness of community policing in the NPF Plateau Command are lack of funds, insufficient training, lack of legal support and the incessant postings of Police officers. He buttressed further that community policing requires special training, which the Command is lacking. Also, the inability to properly fund community policing is another problem in the

Command. Most significantly, CP Austine Agbonlahor noted that despite the Plateau NPF Command having provision of a Community Policing Desk, the lack of interest of police officers in the community policing department is another challenge. He therefore suggested that officers should be trained both within and outside the country specifically for the purpose of community policing as an incentive to attract interest of officers in the department. Lastly, the incessant posting of Police Officers is a serious challenge to effective community policing in Plateau State. This brings to fore the need for the recruitment of more personnel into the Police Force in order to retain the officers serving in various local communities for enhancing the effectiveness of community policing and promote sustenance of peace in Nigeria. From the foregoing, it should be noted that if the challenges identified by the study are addressed/solved, sustenance of peace will be fostered and guaranteed in the country.

Prospects of Community Policing as a panacea for fostering Substance of peace within the communities of Plateau State

This question seeks to find out from respondents, the prospects for effective community policing as a panacea for fostering sustenance of peace within the communities of Plateau State. It further enquired from respondents, the appropriate strategies for ensuring effective community policing for fostering sustenance of peace in Nigeria in general, and Plateau State in particular. Respondents indicated that effective community policing helps to discourage criminal activities, it also helps to improve security consciousness of the public in their local communities and encourages/motivates active participation/support of community members in sustenance of peace matters. In an interview with Chief Datong Biuwa, he noted that community policing is a very popular security watch in his neighbourhood. He added that his community has good working relations with the Police Force and members of the communities belonged to neighbourhood watch supervised by the Police. Chief Secondas Gyang (2019) in his own view stated that the payment of security levy is mandatory for some adult members of his community, this will enable them adequately fund the neighbourhood security watch in collaboration with the NPF. Gyang (2019) further noted that the members of the PCRC in his community are selected by the stakeholders in the community and the council of elders in the community also attend monthly police briefing on internal security.

Commissioner of Police, Austine Agbonlahor (2019) indicated that law and order can be easily maintained where there is joint police-community efforts/partnership in fighting conflict/crimes and other sustenance of peace challenges. This can only be effectively achieved through the proper implementation of community policing vis-à-vis fostering sustenance of peace within the communities of Plateau State. For him, effective community policing also encourages active participation of members of the general public in sustenance of peace matters. It is therefore apparent from the foregoing

that the effective implementation of community policing will have direct bearing on crime reduction, boost police-community relations and will foster substance of peace and national development in Nigeria.

Respondents further identified the following strategies for ensuring effective implementation of community policing in order to foster sustenance of peace and national development in Nigeria in general and Plateau State in particular:

- The NPF should ensure adequate training and re-training of officers, provision of requisite logistics and additional manpower required for the effective implementation of community policing;
- The NPF should maintain a cordial relationship with the public for them to have trust in the Police and enable them to work harmoniously;
- All Commissioners of Police, Area Commanders and DPOs should be internalized in the curriculum of Neighborhood watch to enable it become a policing philosophy and culture;
- More patrols vehicles and modern communication gadgets/systems should be provided to the Plateau State Police Command;
- The NPF and Community Leaders should place vigilantes and neighbourhood watch volunteers on allowances and incentives to encourage their participation;
- The leadership of the NPF to improve the welfare conditions and promotion system of Police Officers across the nation.

Summary of Major Findings of the Study

The study posed four research questions, which were all investigated. This section, presents the summary of major findings of the study based on the questions.

The first research question examined the nature of policing and sustenance of peace challenges in Nigeria. The study finds that armed robbery, stealing/theft, house/store burglary, car theft, murder, ethnic conflicts, religious conflicts, political conflicts and cultism are the prevalent sustenance of peace challenges within the communities of Plateau State as evident in Table 4.9. However, majority of respondents accounting for 40.3% indicated that ethnic conflicts are the most prevalent sustenance of peace challenge in within the communities of Plateau State. On the nature of policing in within the communities of Plateau State, the study also finds that the NPF Plateau Command has been ineffective and inefficient in addressing sustenance of peace challenges in the state's communities. This is due to a number of challenges that are immensely affecting the productivity of the State Command. The study further established that this also leads to untimely response to crime scenes and substance of peace complaints of the citizens. In addition, the study established that Neighborhood watch has not yet taken effect in the state, as it is still at its elementary stage. What is in place in Plateau State

is the Police-Community Relations Committee, as found in some other states of the Federation.

The second research question evaluated measures put in place by the Nigeria Police Force towards enhancing effective Neighborhood watch and address substance of peace issues in Nigeria in general and Plateau State in particular. The study finds that the NPF has put in place measures for effective Neighborhood watch within the communities of Plateau State, as affirmed by '77.7%' of respondents in Figure 4.19. The measures and solutions put in place by NPF as indicated by respondents include: effective intelligence-led policing, enlightenment of the public through the PCRC, synergy with other security agencies, meeting with stakeholders regularly, enhanced/effective patrol system, deployment of the CTU, partnership with vigilante groups and effective surveillance system. Other measures highlighted by respondents include Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), joint patrol with the Special Task Force (STF) and Operation Rainbow, stop and search method, partnership with the media, partial Neighborhood watch, inter-ethnic dialogue, good information network and robust public relations.

The third research question investigated the availability of legislative or policy mechanisms for effective Neighborhood watch for promotion of sustenance of peace in Nigeria. The study finds that there is no legislative/policy mechanism in place for effective Neighborhood watch in Nigeria. This study thus holds the view that there is an urgent need for appropriate legislative/policy mechanisms for effective community policing to be put in place by the Federal Government and the NPF.

The fourth research question analyzed the challenges and prospects of effective community policing as a panacea for fostering sustenance of peace in Nigeria. The study finds that there exist a number of significant challenges which hinders effective community policing in Nigeria in general and Plateau State in particular, which include: lack of trust in the Police Force by the public, corruption, inadequate funding, inadequate intelligence/information sharing mechanisms, poor logistics support, and lack of clear policy/legislative mechanism for community policing. Others include shortage of manpower, lack of community policing expertise in police stations, incessant posting of Police Officers in and out of communities, lack of patrol vehicles, lack of modern communication gadgets and inadequate training/re-training of Officers.

Having identified the challenges confronting effective Neighborhood watch, it becomes imperative to assess the prospects for effective community policing for fostering sustenance of peace in Nigeria. The study identified the following prospects: reduction in criminal activities, improving security consciousness of the public in their local communities and encouraging/motivating active participation/support of community members in sustenance of peace matters. It also encourages active participation of

members of the general public in sustenance of peace matters. It is therefore apparent from the foregoing that the effective implementation of Neighborhood watch will have direct bearing on crime reduction, boost police-community relations and will foster substance of peace and national development in Nigeria.

In addition, the study finds that members of Plateau communities are in support of Neighborhood watch by the provision of assistance to the Police for the sole purpose of promoting internal security. Respondents highlighted the areas in which the public provided assistance to the Police Force, to include: information gathering, night patrol in the community by vigilante, the arrest/handing over of suspects to the Police and the donation of equipment such as touch lights, generators and food.

The evaluation and analysis of this chapter provides the nexus for making recommendations and proffering implementation strategies for ensuring effective implementation of Neighborhood watch as a panacea for fostering substance of peace in Nigeria.

Neighborhood Watch, on the other hand, is an organized group of citizens devoted to crime and vandalism prevention within a neighborhood. Therefore, members of Neighbourhood Watch and others who use legal means of bringing people to justice are not considered vigilantes. In other words, Neighborhood Crime Watch is not vigilante security apparatus, because when suspecting criminal activities, members of Neighborhood Watch or crime watch are encouraged to contact authorities or police and not to intervene (Ikutejio & Rotimi, 2012). Neighborhood Watches, therefore, are police informants in that they give police relevant information that helps the police in their investigations and crime preventions. In Nigeria, ethnic militias or militant groups have been erroneously taken to be vigilante groups. Although, some ethnic militias are involved in vigilante service, they are not strictly speaking vigilante security apparatus in that they are engaged in other activities which are not necessarily or primarily vigilante service.

V. CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The 1999 Nigerian Constitution provides for the establishment of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) under Section 214, and the Force is the foremost security agency of government saddled with the responsibility of substance of peace and its duties are clearly spelt out in Section 4 of the Police Act. The study established that the NPF has been trying to operate a means to ensure that the substance of peace of the country is maintained, but in spite of this effort, there appears to be growing uncertainty in public order, as reports of high crime rate such as armed robbery, assassination, kidnapping and child trafficking seem to be on the increase. Accordingly, the experience and practice of countries such as the United States of America, United Kingdom, India, South Africa and Pakistan has shown clearly that community policing can

effectively contribute to reducing crime and promoting internal security, as there are fewer reports of crime incidences and improved public trust in their policing system.

At the 2019 National Security Summit of the Nigeria Police Force which was attended by President Muhammadu Buhari, the IGP, Solomon Arase insisted that community policing remained key to ridding the country off terrorism/insurgency, kidnapping, murder, cultism, violence and other substance of peace crimes which impacts negatively on the country's development. The IGP decried the existing gap between the police and citizens which he said prevents them from seeing conflict/crime and substance of peace management as a joint obligation of all. The IGP hence asserted that there is an urgent need to bridge the gap between the police and the community in order to restore public trust.

This research work has revealed that the effect of Neighborhood watch is yet to be felt in the country, as it is still at its elementary stage. What is in place in most states in the country is the Police-Community Relations Committee. Some of the identified challenges hindering effective community policing in Nigeria in general and Plateau State in particular include: lack of trust in the Police Force by the public, corruption, inadequate funding, and inadequate intelligence/information sharing mechanisms, poor logistics support, and inadequate manpower, amongst others.

The prospects of effective Neighborhood watch in Plateau State and Nigeria in general cannot be overemphasized. Its effective implementation no doubt encourages active participation of members of the general public in substance of peace matters. Therefore, the widely held view that substance of peace is the sole business of the government and security agencies is no longer tenable. In this regard, the Nigerian public need to be sufficiently sensitized on the viability and necessity of community-policing as a joint effort in fostering internal security. This is because the public is a strategic stakeholder in internal security. In order to ensure the effective adoption and implementation of Neighborhood watch for fostering Nigeria's internal security, the following recommendations and implementation strategies are hereby proffered.

Recommendations and Implementation Strategies

The Federal Government should effectively implement community policing all over the country.

Implementation Strategies

- i. The NPF and PSC to initiate and forward a bill to the National Assembly for passage to legalise Neighborhood watch across all states in the country.
- ii. The NPF to promote connections between police and the people they serve by retaining officers in a particular community for several years.
- iii. The NPF to organize more in-house workshops and training of police officers to ensure that the police are

properly educated on the value of partnering with the community.

The Federal and Plateau State Governments should improve the logistic needs of the NPF for effective implementation of Neighborhood watch.

Implementation Strategy

The Federal and Plateau State Governments to increase funds for the logistic support of the police as this will translate to effective policing and ensure efficient implementation of Neighborhood watch for fostering internal security.

Although, some vigilante security outfits may have started as Neighborhood Watch, but they are not exactly the same. Vigilante and Neighborhood Watch are both private security but that is as far as the similarity goes. Vigilante is a private individual who legally or illegally punishes an alleged law breaker, or participates in a group, which metes out extralegal punishment to an alleged lawbreaker. Following from this definition, vigilante groups therefore metes out extra-legal or extra-judicial punishment to an alleged lawbreaker. However, not all vigilant activities are illegal, because sometimes vigilante began by apprehending or catching criminals and hand them over to the police. Vigilante justice is spurred on by the idea that criminal punishment is either nonexistent or insufficient for the crime, usually based on the perception that the government is ineffective in enforcing the law and this need community members to volunteer to protect the community. In other instances, a person may choose a role of vigilante as a result of personal experience as opposed to social demand. Persons seen as “escaping from the law” or “above the law” are sometimes the targets of vigilantism. It may target persons or organizations involved in illegal activities in general or it may be aimed against a specific group or type of activity, for example, police corruption. Vigilante behaviour may differ in degree of violence, and in some cases vigilantes may assault targets verbally, physically attack them or vandalize their property. Any person who defies the law to further justice is a vigilante, and thus, violence is not a necessary criterion.

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