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**ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY POLICING AND INSECURITY IN KEFFI
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ASSESSMENTS OF COMMUNITY POLICING AND INSECURITY IN KEFFI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF NASARAWA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examines community policing and insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria, through three theoretical lenses: partnership policing and community participation, broken windows, and social disorganization theories. Together, these frameworks stress that policing is most effective when community-driven, preventive, and responsive to underlying social conditions. The partnership approach underscores collaboration and mutual trust between citizens and law enforcement; the broken windows perspective emphasizes addressing minor disorder before it escalates; while social disorganization highlights the impact of weak institutions, unemployment, and instability on crime. A cross-sectional design was adopted, with 355 respondents selected through multi-stage sampling methods. Data were collected using structured questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and secondary sources. Quantitative findings were analyzed with descriptive statistics, while qualitative insights were subjected to content analysis. The Findings of the study revealed that community policing in Keffi has reduced insecurity, particularly where collaboration and intelligence sharing are strong. However, challenges such as corruption, inadequate logistics, poor training, and weak institutional support undermine effectiveness. These findings align with the social disorganization and broken windows perspectives, which link persistent crime to structural weaknesses and unattended minor disorders. The study concludes that community policing remains a vital strategy but requires government support, proper resourcing, and strengthened institutions for sustainability. It recommends improved training, provision of modern policing tools, anti-corruption measures, and stronger community-police engagement. Overall, genuine partnership and preventive strategies are key to sustaining community policing as a pathway for reducing insecurity in Keffi and beyond.

Keyword: Community Policing, Security, Insecurity

JEL Classification: H7, K42, Z18

Introduction

Security is one of the most fundamental phenomena across the world. It is a very vital aspect of human existence such that every nation, state, tribe, family and each individual is concerned about their security. In fact, section 14(2)(a) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria declares that the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government. Even though the concept of security attracts diverse opinions in different fields, it generally refers to safety from harm and danger which may constitute threat to human existence (Bodunde, Ola & Afolabi, 2014). In order to ensure security that would reduce the crime rate in Nigeria, the federal government has embarked on enhancement of police surveillance as well as investigation of criminal related offences, heightening of physical security measures around the country and strengthening of security agencies through the provision of security facilities (Robert-Okah, 2014). Despite these efforts, the level of insecurity in Nigeria is still high and the country has been consistently ranked low in the Global Peace Index (GPI, 2018). There has been an increase in crime globally, including Nigeria. Nigeria has witnessed unimagined attacks such as terrorism attack, insurgency, robberies, proliferation of arms and ammunition, transnational organized crimes, drug trafficking, bandit's attacks, kidnapping, abduction, violence attacks against individuals, cybercrimes, trading on illicit drugs and dealing on contraband goods.

In Nigeria like many other nations, the police are the major organization charged with the responsibility of maintenance of law and order as well as internal security of lives and property. Effective police are therefore significant in every society for maintenance of peace, as effective police force will make sure that members of the community are safeguarded in their persons and properties (Olumuyiwa, Kolawole & Kayode, 2014). Paradoxically, even though violent crimes such as armed robbery, homicide, kidnapping and bombing of individuals and public institutions are not unknown in Nigeria, the shocking dimensions they have assumed in recent years, particularly bomb attacks, have not only exposed major deficiencies in the ability of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) to perform its most basic functions, namely “prevention and detection of crimes and apprehension of offenders” but have also brought to the fore the

urgency of revamping the security establishment of the country, particularly the Nigeria Police Force (NPF).

Insecurity and the cases of criminality is fast becoming a serious problem in contemporary world. The high rate of insecurity in Nasarawa State in general, and Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa

State in particular has raised a general feeling of insecurity of lives and property, and have made residents of the community to cry out for urgent assistance to curb the ugly situation in order to safeguard the lives and property of community members. In an anxious bid to tackle this rising wave of insecurity, the federal and state governments have increased support to Nigeria police service in areas of personnel, logistics and firearms. However, it seems that the more weapons and police personnel deployed to fight insecurity, the more criminal activities are committed. Security is revered to the survival of any country and this underscores the importance being given to the issue of security by various governments by putting in place actions and structures that can ensure effective security. Conventionally, security was the autonomous function of the state especially if we consider the intellectual view(s) of some political theorists like Hobbes (1962) who opine that the essence of a state is to guarantee the security of lives and property and ensure law and order through its political sovereignty and monopoly of violence.

In Nigeria, community policing and security management was adopted to address the challenges confronting the nations as a result of the high insecurity rate. The incidence of crime in Nigeria has been on a rapid increase and has reached what Odekunle (2005) described as a pathological stage, in the last two years, the situation of violent crimes in Nigeria has rapidly been on increase especially in northern Nigeria where the police and other law enforcement agencies appear to be incapable of arresting various security breaches that have undermined the safety of lives and property. In Nigeria, despite the introduction of community policing in 2004, the security situation begs for more questions than answers. There is a growing incidence of insecurity and criminality, as the country is plagued with violent crimes like banditry, kidnapping, terrorism, political violence, assassination, incessant bank robbery, to mention a few. Researchers and experts observe that the problematic nature of measuring the effectiveness of community policing and insecurity created a scarcity of empirical studies in that area.

Previous efforts on assessing the effectiveness have been largely anecdotal (Patterson, 2007), while another measurement has tended to focus more on traditional indicators such as insecurity statistics even though the objectives may be more specific than to reduce insecurity.

There is a dearth of empirical researches on the community policing and insecurity in Nasarawa State and Keffi Local Government Area in particular. In achieving the purpose of the study, the following research questions were examining. What is the current community policing and insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria? What is the level of effectiveness of community-

policing in curbing insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria? What are the mechanisms of community policing in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria? What are the challenges facing community policing in fighting insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria? This study, therefore, is designed to assess community policing and insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The study, therefore, intends to bridge these gaps.

2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Concept of Community

A community, from a systems perspective, is akin to a living entity; it is composed of distinct components that represent specialized roles, activities, or interests, each operating within distinct bounds to meet community needs. For example, schools are concerned with education, transportation is concerned with moving people and goods, economic entities are concerned with enterprise and employment, faith organizations are concerned with people's spiritual and physical well-being, and healthcare agencies are concerned with disease prevention and treatment (Henry, 2017). To function properly as a community, each component must efficiently fulfil its duty concerning the entire organism. A healthy community is comprised of interconnected, interdependent sectors that share responsibility for identifying and addressing problems and promoting overall well-being. To successfully handle a community's complex problems, it is necessary to integrate, collaborate, and coordinate the resources of all stakeholders (Thompson et al., 1990). Collaboration, then, is a rational approach to health improvement from a systems perspective.

2.1.2 Concept of Community Policing

The concept of community policing is constantly changing. Community policing has been conceptualized by different scholars, international, regional and sub-regional organizations who have defied uniformity of parlance. Presently, the prevalent definition has been geographical, independent of all that the concept of community policing encloses; it would appear that in recent past, there has been a widening of the concept that extend beyond the traditionally accepted meaning of the community. The concept of "Community Policing" is indigenous to many global communities. In African states and Nigeria in particular the concept of "community policing" does not yield itself to any precise definition. In the first instance, the concept goes by different conventional appellations in

different communities. Community policing as a concept also manifests relative variations in terms of structure, characteristics, and organization as one proceeds from one community to the other. Myriad and various definitions of the concept have therefore emerged as scholars approach the issue of community policing from their perspectives which are greatly coloured by the norms, values, and practices and indeed the ethos of the environment within which they live.

Trojanowicz (1986) community policing entails an organization-wide philosophy of full-service, personalized and decentralized policing, where the community is empowered to work in proactive partnerships with the police at solving the problems of crime, fear of crime, disorder, decay, and other societal issues (cited in Stolz & William, 2007). The above definitions capture the soul and spirit of community policing. It entails the collaboration, involvement and participation of stakeholders in the security of the society. Stakeholders include; the traditional rulers, indigenes and residents of the community, police officers, business community, schools, churches and mosques etc. Also, Adeyoh (2014) community policing refers to “all forms of unconventional security groups organized by community members to protect lives and properties in the community. It ranges from neighbourhood watches, communal guards and other forms of vigilante groups that are formed to enhance the safety and security of residents especially in neighbourhoods where formal force are unable to effectively guarantee this”. According to the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), Special Report (2014) “community policing is both an ethos and an organizational strategy or instrument that aims to promote a partnership based collaborative effort between the police and the community to ensure safety and security”. This is precisely so because community policing is both a philosophy and a tool resulting in a disconnect between theory and realities of implementation.

2.1.2 Concept of Insecurity

The term insecurity has not till date been accorded a universal conceptual outlook due to the fact that it has been considered from different perspectives. The concept of insecurity connotes different meanings such as: absence of safety; danger; hazard; uncertainty; lack of protection, and lack of safety. Achumba, Ighomereho and Akpor-Rabaro (2013) define insecurity from two perspectives. Firstly, insecurity is the state of being open or subject to danger or threat of danger, where danger is the condition of being susceptible to harm or injury. Secondly insecurity is the state of being exposed to risk or anxiety, where anxiety is a vague unpleasant emotion that is experienced in anticipation of some misfortune.

Insecurity on the other hand, is the antithesis of security. However, because of the very many ways in which insecurity affects human life and existence, the concept of insecurity has usually been ascribed different interpretations in association with the various ways which it affects individuals. Some of the common descriptors of insecurity include: want of safety; danger; hazard; uncertainty; want of confidence; doubtful; inadequately guarded or protected; lacking stability; troubled; lack of protection; and unsafe, to mention a few. All of these have been used by different people to define the concept of insecurity. These different descriptors, however, run into a common reference to a state of vulnerability to harm and loss of life, property or livelihood. Beland (2005) defined insecurity as “the state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection.” It refers to lack or inadequate freedom from danger. This definition reflects physical insecurity which is the most visible form of insecurity, and it feeds into many other forms of insecurity such as economic security and social security.

Insecurity implies the absence of security and has attracted such common descriptors as danger, want of safety, uncertainty, state of doubt, hazard, trouble, instability, inadequately guarded or protected, lack of protection and being unsafe and want of confidence. In the view of Osawe (2015: p.125), “the concept of insecurity connotes such meaning as a state or condition of being unsafe or the feeling of being unsafe characterized by self-doubt, anxiety, fear and vulnerability; danger; hazard, uncertainty; lack of protection etc. At national level, insecurity could be seen as the threats on the general peace ranging from low-level civil disorder, large scale violence or even on armed insurgency. Threats to national security may be directed at either the state’s citizens, or the organs and infrastructure of the state itself, and may range from petty crime, serious organized crime, political or industrial unrest or even domestic terrorism”.

2.2 Theoretical framework

The study is anchored on the partnership policing and community participation theory, the broken windows theory, and the social disorganization theory, all of which provide rich explanatory foundations for understanding the link between community policing and insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. The partnership policing and community participation theory, developed in the 1980s through the works of Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1990), is premised on the assumption that policing is most effective when the police and the community act as partners in identifying and solving crime-related problems. It assumes that insecurity cannot be adequately curtailed by the police alone without the active involvement, trust, and cooperation of the community

members. Applied to Keffi, this theory explains that effective crime prevention depends on collaboration between the Nigerian Police Force and local residents, particularly through intelligence gathering, neighborhood watch systems, and inclusive community forums that encourage information sharing and mutual trust.

The broken windows theory, propounded by Wilson and Kelling in 1982, provides another critical lens for this study. It is based on the assumption that minor signs of disorder, such as broken windows, graffiti, loitering, and petty crimes, if left unattended, create an environment that encourages more serious criminal behavior. This theory suggests that insecurity escalates when communities and law enforcement fail to address small problems early, thereby sending signals of neglect that embolden criminals. In the context of Keffi, the application of this theory reveals the necessity of community policing strategies that target small-scale disturbances like street fights, vandalism, or unregulated motorcycle activities before they grow into larger security challenges such as armed robbery, kidnapping, and violent clashes. Thus, community policing becomes a preventive rather than reactive approach to insecurity.

The social disorganization theory, originally advanced by Shaw and McKay in 1942, emphasizes the link between weak social structures, poor communal organization, and the prevalence of crime. Its central assumption is that crime flourishes in communities characterized by poverty, residential instability, weak institutions, and a lack of collective efficacy. The theory suggests that disorganized neighborhoods fail to exert social control over individuals, thereby allowing deviant behavior to thrive. In the case of Keffi, this theory highlights how factors such as unemployment, corruption, youth restiveness, and weak traditional authority structures contribute to rising insecurity. Community policing, when applied within this framework, acts as a stabilizing force that fosters stronger police–community relations, strengthens neighborhood cohesion, and promotes shared responsibility for crime prevention.

Taken together, these three theories provide a comprehensive lens through which the dynamics of community policing and insecurity in Keffi can be understood. While the partnership policing and community participation theory stresses collaboration and trust, the broken windows theory highlights the importance of addressing minor disorders before they escalate, and the social disorganization theory points to the structural weaknesses that fuel insecurity.

Their combined relevance lies in demonstrating that insecurity in Keffi is not solely a product of police inefficiency, but also of weakened social bonds, unattended community disorders, and the absence of genuine partnership between security agents and the community. By grounding the study in these theories, the research underscores the necessity of a holistic approach to community policing that integrates preventive strategies, strengthens social structures, and builds collaborative security networks capable of addressing both immediate and structural drivers of insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area.

2.3 Empirical Review

Okeke and Ugwu (2019) conducted a study titled Community Policing and Crime Prevention in Nigeria: A Study of Enugu State with the central aim of examining the effectiveness of community policing strategies in reducing crime rates within the state. The research focused on selected local government areas in Enugu between 2010 and 2018 and employed a mixed-method approach that combined surveys and key informant interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics, while qualitative insights were captured using thematic analysis. The findings revealed that community policing significantly strengthened the trust relationship between police officers and residents, thereby contributing to the reduction of petty crimes and violent conflicts. However, the study also highlighted challenges such as inadequate funding and limited training which hindered full effectiveness. It was concluded that community policing remains a viable strategy for tackling insecurity in Nigeria, but its success is dependent on consistent governmental support. Accordingly, the authors recommended improved government funding, regular training in community relations, and the institutionalization of community forums to ensure continuous collaboration between law enforcement agencies and communities.

In a related investigation, Ibrahim and Usman (2020) assessed the role of community policing in managing insecurity in Kaduna State through their work titled An Assessment of Community Policing and Security Management in Kaduna State, Nigeria. This study concentrated on three local government areas—Kaduna North, Kaduna South, and Chikun—covering the years 2012 to 2019.

The authors adopted a descriptive survey design, drawing on multi-stage sampling to select 400 respondents whose views were analyzed using percentages, frequency distributions, and chi-square techniques. Findings from the study demonstrated that community policing enhanced intelligence gathering and strengthened the capacity of security agencies to respond to threats more promptly.

Nonetheless, the persistence of corruption, lack of logistics, and inadequate manpower undermined the overall impact of the initiative. The study concluded that community policing represents a critical mechanism for bridging the gap between security agencies and local populations, particularly in the early detection of criminal activities. To consolidate these gains, the authors recommended providing modern surveillance equipment, ensuring continuous monitoring, and building collaborative frameworks that incorporate traditional leaders and community stakeholders.

Similarly, Adeyemi and Ojo (2022) explored the contribution of community policing to reducing insecurity in South-West Nigeria in their study titled *The Role of Community Policing in Tackling Insecurity Challenges in South-West Nigeria*. Their research covered Lagos, Oyo, and Ogun States between 2015 and 2021 and was anchored on a qualitative research design. Data were collected through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with community leaders, police personnel, and civil society actors, and analyzed using thematic content analysis. The findings indicated that community policing fostered mutual trust, improved the flow of information, and enhanced rapid intervention in communities experiencing recurrent security challenges such as armed robbery, kidnapping, and communal clashes. However, the study also underscored that political interference and weak institutional structures significantly threatened the sustainability of the initiative. The conclusion drawn was that community policing is indispensable in the quest to mitigate insecurity in Nigeria, but its long-term viability depends on institutional strength and community ownership. In light of these observations, Adeyemi and Ojo recommended legislative action to provide strong frameworks for community policing, integration of traditional authorities into the security structure, and transparency in resource allocation to reinforce public confidence.

3.0 Methodology

This study employed a cross-sectional survey research design, which enabled the collection of data at a single point in time without manipulating the environment. Such a design is observational in nature, allowing the researcher to describe attitudes, behaviors, values, and characteristics of respondents while also clarifying the relationship between the study variables. The choice of this design was informed by its suitability in providing in-depth responses and facilitating a comprehensive understanding of community policing and insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Keffi, located in the western part of Nasarawa State, served as the study area. The town is not only the headquarters of the Local Government Area but also hosts several strategic institutions including the Federal Medical Centre, Nasarawa State University, military and paramilitary

formations, as well as a mix of public and private educational institutions. These features make Keffi an important hub for examining issues of security and policing. Data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were generated through structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews, while secondary data were sourced from relevant literature and official records. The questionnaire, which combined both closed and open-ended items, was administered to literate and illiterate respondents using both self-administered and interviewer-assisted approaches. Research assistants were trained and supervised by the researcher to ensure accuracy and completeness of responses, with daily checks carried out to guarantee data quality. Complementing this, in-depth interviews provided rich qualitative insights, capturing the underlying motives, perceptions, and experiences of participants regarding community policing and insecurity in Keffi.

3.1 Population, Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

3.1.1 Population of Study

The population of Keffi Local Government Area according to National Population Commission's (NPC) Nigeria 2023 projections is 127,900 (NPC & NBS, 2023). The Local Government Area has ten electoral wards which are: Yara, Iya I, Iya II, Jigwada, Liman Abaji, Sabon Gari, Goriya, Gangaren Tudu, Angwan Rimi and Tudun Kofa. However, the target population includes people both males and females from the ages of eighteen (18) years and above who are residents within the four (4) six selected electoral wards which include Liman Abaji, Gangaren Tudu, Angwan Rimi and Tudun Kofa electoral wards. Also, the study population consists of community leaders, youth leaders, religious leaders, women leaders, traditional rulers, security official, government officials, vigilante group leaders from the study area. The essence of adopting this set of the population for the study is because the community and youth leaders are the gate keepers of the community and the people's representative during conflicts dialogues. As such, they are considered knowledgeable and experienced on the subject of study in the selected electoral wards.

3.1.2 Sample Size

The formula for determining sample size by Cochran (1977) was used to determine the number of respondents for the study. This is explained below as thus:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 P (1-P)}{d^2}$$

Where:

n = the sample size

Z = means the standard normal score corresponding to 95% confidence level (1.96)

P = the estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population under study (0.5)

d = desired level of precision 5% or 0.05

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}{0.05^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3.84 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{3.84 \times 0.25}{0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{0.96}{0.0025}$$

$$n = 384$$

From the above calculation, three hundred and eighty-four (384) questionnaires were distributed disproportionately.

4.0 Data Presentation

The section discusses the results obtained from the data collected from the field through questionnaires and in-depth interviews (IDI). The findings obtained from questionnaires are presented in tabular form while qualitative data are reported under the appropriate table to supplement quantitative data. In the study area, three hundred and eighty-four (384) questionnaires were administered; three hundred and fifty-five (355) were answered and retrieved which were used for the analysis. Also, the IDIs were transcribed verbatim. The data obtained were analyzed, interpreted, and presented.

4.1. Data on the Assessment of Community Policing and Insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Table 4.1: Response on the Constituent members of Community Policing in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Community members	94	26.5
Mostly youths, voluntary recruitment	132	37.2
Police and community members	21	5.9
Traditional rulers, community elders	25	7.0
Vigilantes/youths	83	23.4
Total	355	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.1 revealed that 37.2 percent of the respondents asserted that mostly youths and voluntary recruitment constituent members of community policing in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. But 26.1 percent of the respondents were of the view that personnel of community policing in their communities as respected members of their communities. For 23.4 percent of the respondents, members of Community policing in their communities were mostly Vigilantes or youths within the environment. But 5.9 percent of the respondents were of the view that personnel of the Nigerian Police along with members of the communities formed the organization while 7.0 percent thought that the organization consisted Traditional rulers, community elders. This implies that the body is usually made up of youth volunteers who are members of the community and could involve elders of such areas as well. This segment of the members of community policing are active and energetic in performing their duties in curbing insecurity and other criminalities in the Local Government Area and the State at large.

Table 4.2: Responses on the Effectiveness of Community Policing When It Comes to Issues of Curbing Insecurity in the Community

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Not effective	64	18.0
Slightly effective	156	43.9
Effective	83	23.4
Very Effective	52	14.6
Total	355	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.2 is the presentation of the response of the respondents on the effectiveness of the community policing when it comes the issue of curbing insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The data collected provided that 43.9 percent of the respondents asserted that community policing is slightly effective in curbing insecurity in the sampled population of the study. The study further established that those who were of the view that the organization was effective in the criminal arrest were 23.4 percent of the total respondents and 14.6 percent believed that the organization was very effective. More so, respondents were of the view that the community policing was not effective in issues concerning the arrest of criminals within the community were 18.0 percent of the total respondents. This expressed opinion could be aggregated to imply some level of effectiveness in the curbing insecurity by community policing in the communities in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Table 4.3: Response on the Effects of Challenges Faced by Community Policing in their Effort at Fighting Insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Not sure	95	26.8
Increases insecurity instead of declining	130	36.6
Deprived support	47	13.2
Negatively	83	23.4
Total	355	100

Table 4.3 indicates that 26.8 percent of the respondents were not sure of the effects of the challenges on the operations of the community police in their efforts at fighting insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. However, 36.6 percent were of the view that the challenges lead to an increase in insecurity instead of declining within the communities and 13.2 percent of the respondents were of the view that the challenges deprived the organization of the required public support necessary for them to effectively carry out their operations of crime prevention in the communities while 23.4 percent thought that the challenges harm their operations in the communities. This implies that higher percent of the respondents established that there has been an increase in insecurity rate instead of reducing in the sampled population of the study.

Table 4.4: Responses on the Solutions to the Challenges Faced by Community Policing Programme in Fighting Insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Cooperation	69	19.4
Educating and enlighten the members	79	22.3
Employ capable hands	29	8.2
Government intervention	54	15.2
Improved Justice system	46	12.9
Support with equipment	42	11.8
Upgrade and update the community police	31	8.7
Total	355	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.4 shows that 19.4 percent were of the view the cooperation from the public will be a positive factor. Respondents were of the view that the creation of awareness through education and enlightenment of the community members would be a major boost to reducing the challenges were 22.3 percent. For 8.2 percent of the respondents, employing capable hands in the organization will be one of the solutions. Others were Government intervention 15.2 percent, Improved Justice system 12.9 percent, provision of support with equipment 5.6 percent and Upgrade and update the community police 8.7 percent. At the individual level, 71.5 percent of the respondents agreed that they have a role to play in ensuring security within the communities. Only 28.2 percent of the respondents said they did not think that individuals have any role to play in crime reduction within the communities of Keffi

Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Higher percent of the study population accepted that educating and enlighten the members is significant in providing solutions to the challenges faced by community policing programmes in fighting insecurity in the study location.

Table 4.5: Responses on the Roles that Could Be Played by Individual Towards Reduction of the Challenges Faced by Community Policing

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Alerting the community if I see a criminal act	91	25.6
Contribute wisely	26	7.3
Educate people on the importance of community policing	27	7.6
Give information/ Reports criminal activities	100	28.2
Participate in community meetings	52	14.6
Support the security service	59	16.6
Total	355	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.5 demonstrate that 25.6 percent of the respondents were sure of the roles that individual members of the communities could play to reduce the challenges faced by the organization in their effort at reducing crimes. But 9.0 percent of the respondents were of the view that individuals could be alerting the organization on criminal acts that were being perpetuated within the communities. Others were contribution towards purchases of the equipment required for the organization's personnel 7.3 percent, educating people on the activities of the organization 7.6 percent, giving of information and reporting criminal activities to the organization 28.2 percent, participate in community meetings 14.6 percent and Support the security service 16.6 percent. In the table, the respondents express their opinions on the role of government in ensuring more effectiveness of community policing in the communities by given information/ reporting criminal activities as demonstrated by larger percentage of the study.

Table 4.6: Respondents View on the Government Roles for Ensuring the Effectiveness of Community Policing Programme in the Area

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Training of Community Police personnel	91	23.7
Employing more youths into the organization	41	11.5
Provision of equipment to field personnel	59	16.6
Financial rewards to deserving personnel	55	15.5
Government should pay them salaries	31	8.7
Implementing the policy is a good way	25	7.0
Support and finance	53	14.9
Total	355	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 4.7 indicates that 23.7 percent of the respondents, training of community police personnel is one major area government intervention could help in enhancing the effectiveness of Community Policing in the community. Others, where government intervention was perceived to affect improving Community Policing, were: Employing more youths into the organization 11.5 percent, Provision of equipment to field personnel 16.6 percent, Financial rewards to deserving personnel 15.5 percent, Government should pay them salaries 8.7 percent, Implementing the policy is a good way 7.0 percent and giving of Support and finance 14.9 percent. To the respondents, therefore, the government has a major role to play towards ensuring the effectiveness of Community Policing in the communities of Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

4.2 Discussion of the Findings

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that community policing has been relatively effective in combating insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, with residents perceiving its impact as reliable and significant in curbing rising crime. This aligns strongly with the partnership policing and community participation theory, which emphasizes that policing outcomes improve when police and communities collaborate in identifying and solving crime-related problems (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990). In Keffi, respondents indicated that joint responsibility, intelligence sharing, and

trust-building with community members enhanced the ability of security actors to address threats ranging from theft to violent confrontations. This is consistent with the findings of Okeke and Ugwu (2019), who showed that in Enugu State, community policing strengthened trust and reduced both petty crimes and violent conflicts, highlighting the central role of collaboration in sustaining public safety.

The study further found that community policing was not only visible in reducing insecurity but also perceived as highly effective by community members, though the preference for conventional police in making arrests suggests some limitations in trust and institutional capacity. This resonates with the broken windows theory of Wilson and Kelling (1982), which contends that neglecting minor issues encourages more serious criminal activity. In Keffi, respondents affirmed that community policing proved most effective when it tackled small-scale disturbances, such as neighborhood disputes or petty theft, before they escalated into more serious crimes. This finding reflects Ibrahim and Usman's (2020) assessment in Kaduna State, which showed that community policing enhanced intelligence gathering and early detection of threats, though challenges such as corruption and inadequate logistics limited broader effectiveness. Taken together, these results highlight that community policing's preventive orientation is critical for crime control but must be complemented with stronger institutional backing to address major criminal incidents.

The study also revealed widespread awareness of community policing among residents in Keffi, though the low level of participation by police authorities hindered fuller success. This gap aligns with the social disorganization theory of Shaw and McKay (1942), which links crime to weak social structures, lack of trust, and institutional inefficiencies. In Keffi, respondents identified corruption, limited empowerment of police officers, and weak training structures as major obstacles undermining the goals of community policing. These findings echo the concerns of Adeyemi and Ojo (2022) in South-West Nigeria, who stressed that political interference and weak institutional frameworks undermined the sustainability of community policing initiatives despite their demonstrated benefits in building trust and facilitating timely interventions. Thus, the findings show that Keffi's insecurity challenges are not merely the result of criminal behavior but also the outcome of structural weaknesses in community cohesion and police capacity.

Furthermore, corruption within the police force emerged as a key challenge threatening the effectiveness of community policing in Keffi. Respondents emphasized that when officers who are supposed to enforce the law engage in extortion or abuse of power, communities feel vulnerable and

lose faith in security institutions. This concern resonates with Alemika and Chukwuma (2003), who noted that corruption erodes the moral authority of the police and undermines society's broader struggle against insecurity. From the perspective of social disorganization theory, such corruption reinforces disempowerment and weakens the capacity of communities to exercise informal social control, thereby perpetuating insecurity.

In summary, the discussion of findings reveals that community policing in Keffi has achieved notable success in reducing insecurity through collaboration and preventive measures, but its overall impact is constrained by structural weaknesses such as corruption, inadequate training, and insufficient institutional support. These results align with the partnership policing and community participation theory, which underscores the need for police-community collaboration; with the broken windows theory, which demonstrates the importance of addressing minor offenses before they escalate; and with the social disorganization theory, which highlights the role of weak social structures and corruption in fostering insecurity. The convergence of findings, theories, and prior empirical studies demonstrates that community policing in Keffi is both necessary and effective, but its sustainability will depend on deeper institutional reforms, community ownership, and stronger government support.

5.1 Conclusion

The study was carried out to assess community policing and insecurity in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The study established that community policing is beneficial as a policing approach to address a range of different forms of insecurity. The study found that community policing approaches have been used to address property crime, violence, and organized crime. More recently it has been an approach adopted to deal with bandits and kidnapping activities in some communities. Thus, community policing needs clear objectives that focus on crime risk factors. While there is fairly strong evidence that community policing can reduce disorder and anti-social behaviour, overall findings are mixed about the ability to reduce crime.

Reducing crime, although a benefit, is not always the main focus of the community policing programmes, and often the principal outcome is to reduce victimization. Findings of the study further revealed that the mechanism of community policing in the study area of the local government area is effective for the organization's operations and the detection of insecurity is effective.

Also, that the effectiveness of criminal apprehension by community policing is considered adequate. Also, the study disclosed further that community policing is faced with many challenges which included lack of work equipment, lack of public awareness of services provided by the organization, and lack of government support among others.

5.2 Recommendations

The study makes the following recommendations:

- i. The government at various levels should intervene in community policing to reduce insecurity, through introducing and examining the policy concerning community policing to ascertain the requirements in terms of equipment and others required for their effective opinions. There is a need for public enlightenment on the operations of community policing among members of communities in the state, this will go a long way in making things easier for both the government and also for the general public.
- ii. Police supervision should enhance interaction between all levels (officer-supervisor and officer-community) to expand the spans of responsibility of officers. Officers should have greater discretion to empower them in their decision-making and to encourage more flexibility in non-law enforcement situations. This will make police work far more efficient and will enhance performance on the part of officers who are expected to do more in a position of trust.
- iii. Training should expand on interpersonal skills and become more community-oriented. This is particularly relevant as a relatively small proportion of the officer's training is dedicated to such issues. Officers' performance evaluation should emphasize measurable community-oriented activities (contacts, coordination, and assistance) and the reward structure should acknowledge community-oriented efforts, offer tangible salary raises, and intangible recognition for performing accordingly. Finally, it is important to have community policing adopted force-wide and not relegated to special units;
- iv. For police to achieve better rapport with the community, various commands, area offices and, zonal offices and stations need to become and operate more like open systems. This will have huge implications on the organization of Nigeria Police. The structure of police departments needs to be more decentralized to allow better deployment in the community and more effective use of officers and response to citizens and in building the network relations with citizens.

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