Title

COMMUNITY POLICING IN GHANA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC: AN ASSESSMENT IN METROPOLITAN, MUNICIPALAND DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES

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ABSTRACT

Law enforcement authorities are mostly familiar with the concept of partnership, generally organised under the terminology 'community (oriented) policing' (COP) in modern policing. Partnership between the police and communities is considered central to COP and is therefore pursued for by police services for effective crime control and prevention. However, its actual performance has always been problematic. The promotion of collaboration between enforcement agencies and the public rests on the assumption that residents of communities are reservoirs of distinct information and local knowledge about crime within their neighbourhoods such that a significant number of police arrests have occurred due to intelligence provided by residents in communities. This viewpoint aligns with the theoretical underpinning of this study, the social structural theory of community policing, which posits that police officers are essentially outsiders in the communities they serve. The inability of police agencies to meet the basic principles of building close relationships with members of communities has become a major concern for scholars and subject of research. Accordingly, this study assessed the effectiveness of police/citizen partnership (PCP) in the implementation of COP in Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies / Communities (MMDAs/Cs). The study specifically examined how PCP worked in the implementation of COP in the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), Berekum East Municipal Assembly (BEMA) and Central Gonja District Assembly (CGDA). Using the qualitative methodology of semi-structured face-to-face interview and focus group discussions, the study investigated how partnership was perceived, enacted and operationalized in the three contrasting environments. The study concludes COP has not yet been fully embedded as a core operational practice; consequently, partnership building has been difficult and painfully slow, and the Ghana Police Service (GPS) has still not been able to realised the intended outcomes of the implementation of COP across 3 MMDAs/Cs over 2 decades.