

Implementing Community Policing in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects

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Abstract : This paper examines the evolution of modern policing in Nigeria to the present day, with a focus on the newly introduced community policing, which seeks to cement the operational vacuum created by the repressive and oppressive approach of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), which renders the police incapable of addressing the twin problems of crime and disorder. Thus, the primary purpose for the implementation of community policing was to use it as a mechanism for building the lost trust between the police and the public, perhaps due to the long history of antagonistic and repressive relationships between them. If properly implemented, community policing has the prospect of empowering Nigerian citizens with the skills to protect themselves against invaders of their private security so that crimes can be prevented before anyone is victimized. Other prospects include, but are not limited to, (i) a favorable public view of the police, (ii) building of mutual trust, (iii) increased information flow through effective communication between the police and the public, and above all, (iv) increased police accountability. Unfortunately, problems such as aged suspicious and distrustful relationships, inadequate funding, poor training of officers, poor monitoring and evaluation of the community policing project, lack of public awareness of the benefits of the program, and sabotage by some of the personnel of the police who benefits from the status quo, were some of the reasons that troubled the implementation of community policing.

Keywords : community, policing, problems, prospects, problem solving

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