



RESEARCH PAPER

Trust, Collaboration and Policing: A Qualitative Study of Street Crime in Karachi

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the effectiveness of community policing in addressing street crime in Karachi, Pakistan, a city facing persistent socio-political instability and rising urban crime. While conventional policing methods have struggled to curb offenses such as muggings and drug activity, this study adopts a qualitative approach through semi-structured interviews and focus groups with police personnel, community representatives, and local residents. Thematic analysis highlights critical factors shaping outcomes, including the establishment of trust between law enforcement and citizens, collaboration with neighborhood leaders, officer training, and the availability of resources. Results suggest that community policing can substantially reduce street crime when mutual trust and active community participation are present. Nonetheless, resource shortages, political interference, and widespread public skepticism limit its overall impact. The study concludes that effective crime prevention requires stronger institutional support, investment in training and resources, decentralization of decision-making, and the use of technology to promote accountability and communication.

Keywords: Community Policing, Street Crime, Trust-Building, Crime Prevention, Karachi

Introduction

Street crime in Karachi has reached critical levels, with incidents of mugging, mobile snatching, and vehicle theft occurring on a daily basis. Socio-economic conditions, particularly unemployment, poverty, and inflation, have intensified the problem, creating insecurity across the city. In 2023, over 90,000 cases of street crime were officially reported, resulting in 134 deaths and hundreds of injuries during robbery resistance (Business Recorder 2024). Despite these alarming figures, the actual scale of crime is likely higher due to gaps in data collection. Many victims do not report incidents because of limited trust in the police, lengthy reporting procedures, and the perception that stolen property is rarely recovered. Moreover, discrepancies between official statistics and figures from independent bodies such as the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee (CPLC) highlight significant inaccuracies. Low recovery rates further discourage reporting, perpetuating underreporting. The absence of reliable data undermines effective resource allocation and hinders the development of evidence-based policing strategies.

Community policing has emerged as a collaborative strategy in which law enforcement relies on local communities to assist in preventing and controlling crime (Narejo, Ghaffar, & Ali, 2023). In Karachi, one of Pakistan's largest and most diverse metropolitan cities, the persistence of street crime has become part of daily life, creating insecurity and hampering socio-economic development. The city's rapid expansion, complex socio-political dynamics, and population growth have intensified challenges such as burglary, vehicle theft, and drug-related offenses. Within this context, community

policing offers an opportunity to bridge the gap between citizens and law enforcement. By engaging with residents, police can gather information on the root causes of street crime, adapt their strategies, and foster trust, respect, and communication (Mangi & Shah, 2024). However, mutual distrust between police officers and the public has long hindered effective policing in Karachi, making community-based approaches particularly significant in efforts to restore security and resilience in neighborhoods.

Globally, community policing has gained recognition as a means of strengthening police–community relations, deterring crime, and promoting safer environments (Wassan, Bhatti, Ahmed, Oad, & Detho, 2023). In Sindh, where Karachi is located, the approach is particularly relevant given the province’s socio-political complexities and diverse urban population. Community policing emphasizes proactive engagement, collaboration, and problem-solving, aiming not only to prevent crime but also to address broader concerns such as extremism and terrorism (Imam, 2022). Central to its philosophy is the principle that police are integral members of the community and therefore must maintain strong, cooperative relationships with citizens. Through non-enforcement initiatives and community partnerships, law enforcement agencies can gain deeper insight into the social dimensions of crime while simultaneously building trust and legitimacy (Wassan et al., 2023).

Despite its promise, community policing in Karachi has yet to reach its full strength. Street crime remains an existing problem, undermining public safety and fueling a climate of fear. Traditional policing models have often failed to address the inherent causes of crime, while the absence of a structured framework for community policing and the frequency of public mistrust have further limited progress (Narejo et al., 2023). As a result, questions remain about the efficacy of this approach and the extent to which it can be applied in Karachi’s distinctive urban context. This study seeks to inspect the role of community policing in reducing street crime in the city, with particular attention to the barriers that limit its efficiency and the strategies needed to overcome them.

The research is guided by questions on how community policing enhance crime prevention, how it is understood in the local context, and what mechanisms can increase its impact. In doing so, it analyzes the effectiveness of community police collaboration, identifies challenges in implementation, and reflects on actionable strategies to build safer and more cooperative urban communities. The significance of this inquiry lies in its potential to bolster policy and practice by promoting approaches that reduce crime while fostering trust between the police and the public. In Karachi, where fear and mistrust often hinder cooperation, the findings of this study can offer insights into how police officers might adopt more community-centered, trust-based methods of engagement. By presenting practical recommendations, the research contributes to both academic understanding and real-world policymaking, offering pathways toward a safer and more resilient city (Imam, 2022; Mangi & Shah, 2024).

Finally, the study is organized into five main sections. The opening chapter introduces the topic, outlines the research focus, and establishes the relevance of community policing in Karachi. The second chapter reviews global and local literature to highlight theoretical foundations and research gaps. Chapter three details the qualitative methodology, including interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders. Chapter four presents and interprets the findings, while chapter five concludes with a synthesis of key insights and proposes recommendations for strengthening community policing as a crime prevention strategy in Karachi.

Literature Review

Community policing is well known but is defined in different ways. Ultimately, most definitions have much in common, including police-community relationships, a problem-

solving methodology, and organizational decentralization. Community policing is described as being a systematic approach to policing that increases the feeling of community in a particular geographic area to improve the quality of life. This is done by dispersing police forces so that they can be part of three key components: redistribution of traditional police resources, establishment of engagement between police and the community to decrease crime and fear of crime through proactive programs, and re-orientation from curative measures to root because solutions related to crime. This community policing, therefore, operates at the micro-level as a cooperation between the police and the community to improve communal welfare and social control by utilizing social resources available within defined populations (Skogan & Hartnett, 2019).

Community policing is defined as preventing crime, reducing fear, and fostering community trust. Such a police-community relationship is crucial for the success and sustainable development of effective policing. The community's interest should be manifested in the structure of the police organization because it should have actions such as emergency patrols, public order management and criminal inquiries. If the community sees that the police do not care or respect them, then they are not likely to help the police reach their goals, which is important, especially if we are giving the police the tools necessary to solve these issues (Manning, 1983).

Four recurring aspects form the essence of community policing: consultation, adaptation, mobilization and problem-solving. These are the aspects that are key to delivering quality policing. As it is commonly known as "community policing", problem-oriented policing is related to crime prevention duties and gives an overlook to some tasks that law enforcement must realize. Because problem-oriented policing is an approach to community policing, problem-solving should be a part of community policing. Community policing has many advantages, but if the police do not step down from authority and release some control, and if the public is not allowed to participate in justice formation, community policing will be ineffective (Oliver & Bartgis, 1998).

Community policing success depends on the police and public cooperation in constructing common ideals. Collaboration between the public and the police will depend on as many social, political and economic factors that make it possible or not possible. Community policing alone does not, however, enable community members to practice crime prevention or effective policing. Understanding the relationship between different policing methods and their actual work conditions is necessary for effective policing. Community policing has been pursued to prevent economic crime and negotiate efforts; in pursuit of this, it should be seen within a larger context of democratic participation and participation of the community (Fielding, 2005).

It is an ideology that policing should be based on the understanding that law-abiding citizens have the right to be involved in policing matters. It acknowledges that solutions to community problems demand empowering all people, both the police and the public, to identify ungainly ways to deal with neighbourhood issues altogether. The organizational model of community policing necessitates the participation of all civilian and sworn department personnel in putting ideology into action (Moore, 1992).

The Rise of Community Policing

The USA accepted the professional model of policing in the early 1900s, which implies that a professional relationship between police officers and the community has been established, and it is a formal and far-off relationship. It remained in practice until the 1970s, when it came under attack as a way to battle crime and civil unrest. Due to the shortcomings of this model, community policing started to appear in the 1960s. Community policing grew into a transformative strategy for the cooperative relationship between law enforcement and the community. Also, terms like Neighborhood Oriented Policing and Community

Oriented Policing began to appear, where the latter became the most widespread. Community policing was supported further by the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act provisions, which offered funding for hiring more law enforcement officers and focusing on conflict resolution and communication with the community. Therefore, by 2000, more than 87% of the United States law enforcement agencies adopted community policing techniques (Somerville, 2009).

Pakistan has a police force of around 624,390 officers who continue to find it hard to keep peace. The increase in crimes against people and property necessitates a shift in priorities, emphasising cooperation rather than coercion and building public trust. Since 2002, community policing programs started in Pakistan based on the programs of Japan and Bangladesh. However, these have come up against obstacles in lack of resources, inadequate recruiting, and colonial legislation that has hampered their potential. Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives, Muhammad Bilal Saeed, says strong public-police relations and proactive problem-solving are the way to tame robberies and killings. However, to realize its full potential as a community policing that achieves public safety, it should be woven into criminal justice reforms and coordinated efforts of the federal and provincial governments (Stenson, 1993).

Community Policing and Collaboration

To what extent is community policing taken seriously on a global scale? Once we have determined what community policing is when seriously followed, we can begin to answer this question. Obviously, our knowledge of policing constrains our ability to characterize the progress of nations toward community policing. The research for the following simply cannot examine all nations of the world or the free world. The study may also give schematic reports to a limited but diverse number of countries that have really expressed the desire to integrate into the policing for a limited but diverse number of countries that have expressed genuine interest in community policing.

The 15% decrease in the reports of crime received in neighbourhoods in Dubai over the past year came in line with the traffic plan of the 'Policeman in Your Neighborhood' community policing initiative by the chief of the Dubai Police Crime Prevention Department. Since 2013, when it was initiated by the Department of Crime Prevention, the initiative has taken on 1,400 cases during the past two years. An alternative strategy to the existing approach is adopted by the initiative; problems are confronted; services are improved; infrastructure reports are made to the relevant authority, and events, after-school activities, and seminars are conducted to increase young people's awareness. Dubai Police and the general public volunteered more than 800 officers to the project, Captain Hammoud Muhammad Al Muqbali, head of the Community Police Department at the Crime Prevention Department, said. Over the years, the Policeman in Your Neighborhood teams have taken part in fifteen events and addressed many humanitarian problems. For instance, the Policeman in Your Neighborhood programme for volunteering saw volunteers take up the issue of a 14-year-old girl who caught the attention of the Police for domestic woes she was going through (Román & Al Room, 2024).

Her competent authorities took care of her matter in a sensitive and caring manner and invited the Dubai Foundation Women and Children to follow up with her family. The Initiative team had also reunited a five-year-old Asian boy with his family after getting lost in a Dubai neighbourhood. Moreover, the Department gave cold drinks and refreshments to 480 construction workers in Al Barsha and Al Khawaneej to ward off the heat. The Police Officer in Your Neighborhood is a liaison between the Police and the Community on the problems related to security, decreasing the crime rate, following what the community reports, and supporting the residents in the local areas. Setting up a standard way to complain and a way to solve it amicably put the team in a position to promote security

awareness with Dubai's people and foster a great relationship with its community (Almazrooei & Siam, 2021; Arshad et al. 2024).

Law and order in Pakistan is far from tumultuous, even though there are 624,390 police officers in Pakistan. In May 2002, the police system was revamped through the Police Order 2002 with the objective of reforming the police system to be service-oriented and public-friendly. Enacted as part of this reform, the Public Safety and Police Complaints Commission was composed of district, provincial, and national representatives who would represent police officers and demand certain things of the officers but also be answerable to elected officials. The hierarchical structure of the Commission was designed to make the police more accountable to public bodies and organizations. Therefore, citizens became more involved in the policy, such as the Citizen Police Liaison Committee, to increase trust among the public and the police. The main objective of this committee is to serve the public in a people-friendly manner (Hussain & Sanauddin, 2024).

In Pakistan, there were also various attempts at community policing initiatives like Citizen Police Liaison Committees in Sindh and Faisalabad, community policing centres in Karachi and Islamabad, and projects in Sheikhpura, Khanewal and Lahore. Nonetheless, there is much room for improvement with respect to these programs; that is, the police force should be better educated and trained to implement community policing all over the country to alleviate crime. The community policing has not resulted in the crime reduction that was expected. Furthermore, the study revealed major hurdles to the complete implementation of community policing techniques that included deficiencies in resources, understaffing, understaffing and obsolete legal frameworks, which are left over from colonial legislation (Hussain & Sanauddin, 2024).

The Express Tribune (2016) that no community policing initiative in Pakistan fulfils all the criteria. He also said that the police force is trained to stay away from the public because pressure and fear cannot be enforced while the distance is shortened between them. Currently, the public comes into contact with the police as their main role is to be complainants or victims, but with community policing, we try to solve issues in the community proactively. He added that apart from other serious crimes, the criminals have been robbing people and even killing victims on the spot to create fear in the public. The result has been a state of permanent anxiety. Saeed acknowledged that there are problems with community policing but said it could be effective if part of a broader reform of the criminal justice system deals with these entrenched barriers. According to him, the federal and provincial governments should work cohesively to build a community policing system which is more efficient in restoring law and order in the cities (Abbas, Shuey, & Harris, 2022; Ullah et al. 2022).

The adoption of community policing in Karachi can be traced back to the early 2000s when police authorities began experimenting with strategies that involved greater community participation. The Karachi Police have implemented community policing initiatives through various neighborhood policing schemes, police-community dialogues, and local safety initiatives. The goal of these programs has been to foster trust and cooperation between police officers and citizens, which is crucial in a city where public trust in law enforcement has been historically low (Riaz, 2012) In Karachi, the effectiveness of community policing has been evaluated within the context of specific localities. Research by Aslam et al. (2024) reveals that areas where community policing strategies have been implemented show a notable decrease in street crimes where inequalities reduced. In these neighborhoods, police officers often engage in regular interactions with local residents, community leaders, and business owners, helping to build relationships of trust (Aslam, Tahir, & Shaikh, 2024; Ullah et al. 2024).

However, several challenges have hindered the widespread success of community policing in Karachi. One significant barrier is the high level of mistrust between the police

and the general public, particularly in working-class and marginalized neighborhoods. In Karachi, police are often seen as corrupt, biased, and unapproachable, which impedes meaningful cooperation with the community. The presence of political influence in policing practices, ethnic rivalries, and the lack of adequate training and resources for officers also pose significant challenges to the effective implementation of community policing (Imam, 2022).

Material and Methods

We have investigated how community policing is being helpful in preventing the street crime in densely populated metropolitan city Karachi. Using a qualitative research method through focus groups and conducting 20 interviews of police officers, reviews of experts, criminologists, and local authorities, advocates, and legislative authorities, and interviews of officers of community police center Karachi to explore and understand the role of community policing in preventing street crime in Karachi. The qualitative approach is suitable for this topic because it provides an in-depth examination of community policing efforts that are influenced by social, cultural, and local context. The intent for this project is to explore understandings and community experiences, perceptions, and obstacles within policing programs and how community policing is viewed by diverse stakeholders which include local people, police, and community leaders. The voices and narratives of community members and police are used to explore.

Data Collection

This study employed both primary and secondary data to provide depth and a balanced approach to community policing for the prevention of street crime, engaging multiple stakeholders within the community, including policing and crime specialists. 20 in-depth interviews aimed at participants' accounts and perspectives, complemented by group interviews, enabled participants to exchange ideas and provide feedback on community policing. The main tool, Google Scholar, was the starting point of the collection of secondary data, which includes research papers, peer-reviewed articles, and reports of institutions working toward the prevention of street crime. These sources of citation are only a list of the scholarly collection which were used as citation during the research.

Table 1
Data Collection

Rank	Number of Participants	Years of Experience	Role in Community Policing
Inspector	5	12-20	Overseeing community policing strategies and officers
Sub-Inspector	7	8-15	Direct involvement in community engagement, crime prevention
Assistant Sub-Inspector	4	5-10	Community interface, working instantly with neighborhoods
Constables	4	2-6	Conducting patrols and enforcing community safety measures

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model under the study is concerned with the factors which determine the role of community policing in controlling street crime in Karachi. Trust between the police and the community, collaboration with community leaders and local institutions, resources and officer training, community engagement and involvement, decentralization of policing authority, and the utilization of technology are the independent variables that directly influence the effectiveness of community policing strategies. These factors work together to build stronger police-community relationships, improve communication, and foster cooperation in crime prevention efforts. As a result, the

dependent variable, street crime prevention, is achieved through the successful implementation of these factors, leading to a reduction in street crimes such as muggings, robberies, and drug trafficking. This model emphasizes the interconnectedness of these elements and their collective role in enhancing public safety through community policing initiatives.

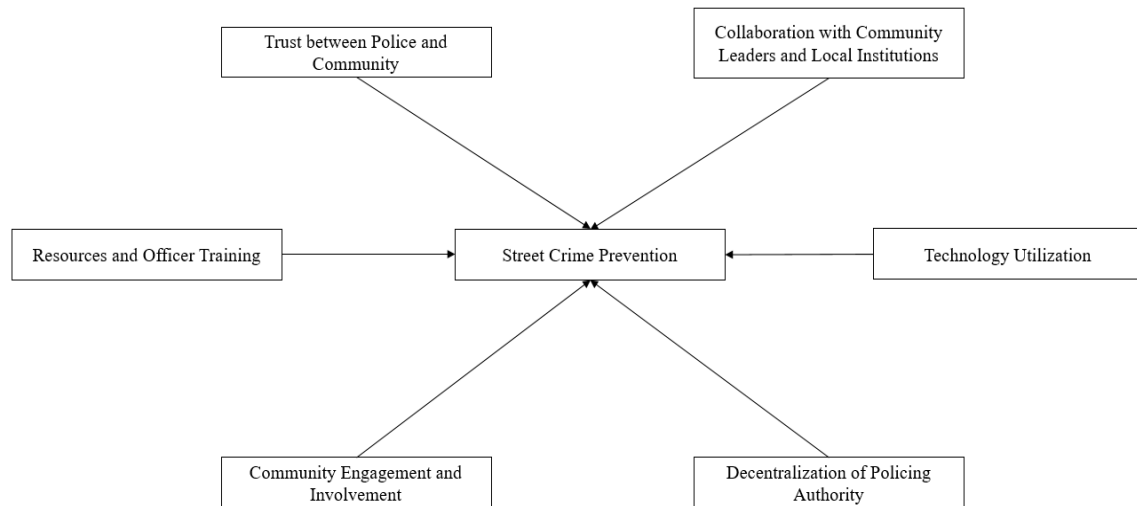


Figure 1 the Conceptual Model

Results and Discussion

Theme 1: Effectiveness of Community Policing in Crime Prevention

Community policing was a recurring theme in the interviews, and it is effective in reducing crime. According to the officers, the community policing doctrine had contributed to minimizing crime in this area rests with the tactics used, the physical location, and the level of interaction between the police and the community. There is, however, a gap that needs closing with policing and enforcement is the community.

Subtheme 1.1: Building Trust between Police and the Community

Most of the interviewers emphasized the same phrases of building bridges with the police and the community. There are community members who share the view that policing is a partnership in which police do not hold the sole responsibility. Many people in the community envision that sustaining local and personal safety rests on the net of charge.

One Police officer said, *"We have to prove ourselves in the area where people like the Karachi Central area and who do not have the police in good books. Also, in some places, we do not hold charge and have to hold town hall and the like. Town hall meetings with people where we have raised and issue. The role is not just about patrolling the streets but letting the community know we are there to keep them safe and secure."* As this insight shows, when there has historically been a distrust of law enforcement, people need to have open dialogue with the community.

Another officer said, *"Building trust in Korangi is difficult. However, we had organized local sports events where officers played with the residents, and we successfully broke the ice. Seeing us more than simply enforcers made the interaction more open and productive."* This example demonstrates how community sports create informal interactions with police officers that humanize police officers and create a more collaborative atmosphere.

Therefore, building trust was considered universally an ongoing process as the officers continued to try to connect with the community beyond their role of law enforcement.

Subtheme 1.2: Impact on Street Crime Reduction

Another prominent theme was street crime reduction and its effect on community policing. According to many officers, active community policing strategies reduced incidents such as muggings, street robbery, and drug trafficking. Although the outcomes of these efforts differed, officers agreed that consistent contributions to a better relationship with the community produced a corresponding decrease in street crimes.

According to an officer who has served in Gulshan for a decade, *"Since we began our community patrols, street crime has been consistently dropping in Gulshan. People initially had doubts about having regular police officers in their neighbourhoods. However, after a while, the crime rate fell. That resulted in fewer incidents of street robbery, which is the direct result of our community engagement."* This response also substantiates that if more police patrol the areas and there is more community involvement in the neighbourhood, then there is less crime.

Another officer said, *"Community policing is not a perfect solution, but it is helping, and street crime is a huge issue here. That's nearly a 15% reduction in some areas in robbery and theft incidents. And a lot of this is about trust building and working with community members to identify issues as they escalate."* This statement highlights that even though community policing does not provide a perfect answer, it does contribute to a decline in street crime when community policing is linked with local collaboration.

One officer further stressed the link between community policing and crime prevention in the police log: *"The crime rate in our area has been decreasing by over 20% within the last year after we stepped up on community policing initiatives. It also shows things like muggings have also gone down."* The statistical evidence is in support of community policing in those described situations.

Subtheme 1.3: Collaborative Efforts with Community Leaders

Working with community leaders turned out to be the other main sub-theme in the conducted interviews. Many officers underscored the role of local clergy and other community figures in earning the trust of the residents and assisting police in crime prevention. Because of the police/civic collaborations, the police were better integrated to the community and the community leaders acted as spokespeople and champions of the police.

One officer said, *"Local leaders helped to prevent crime in Korangi. As intermediaries to the respected community, we work closely with community representatives. However, they are one mechanism that helps assurance that messages about safety and law enforcement are disseminated to the public. If we did not have them, our efforts would be less effective."* This insight reinforces that good community policing strategies depend on local leadership and cannot succeed without them.

Another officer cited, *"We've been connected with local mosques and religious leaders to emphasize that safety and peace are important, and their involvement has been vital. They have a special bond with the people, and their support impacted how the community sees the police."* In this place, the importance of religious institutions in bringing together the police and public by acting as a tool in actively bringing the community to cooperate is emphasized.

Another Police Official explained, *"We got around to working with a local NGO to organize youth engagement programs in our community, and this resulted in a dramatic reduction of street drug-related crime. We formed a group working against crime by including community leaders and organizations."* In this insight, the value of working together with non-governmental and community groups to solve specific problems is illustrated, one of which is the question of drug use, which directly contributes to crime in urban areas.

Theme 2: Challenges Faced in Implementing Community Policing

The officers identified several challenges that threaten the innovation of community policing, even though the initiatives were positively correlated with a set of positive outcomes. Such challenges include resource constraints and resistance from within the force and the local community. The major obstacles in the process of establishing and maintaining community policing efforts in Karachi are outlined by the following subthemes.

Subtheme 2.1: Resource Limitations and Training Gaps

An overwhelming tendency of the interviewees emphasized that the police officers involved in community policing lacked enough resources and the necessary training. Adequate funding to implement community policing and specialized training for the officers to be effective were some of the many issues highlighted by many officers. However, these limitations prohibited the police from entering into long, effective interactions with the community because resources were being redirected to other law enforcement issues.

An officer said, *"We lack vehicles and equipment for normal patrols, which directly affects our ability to link with communities. If we do not have the development necessary resources, we can't safely and sustainably build our community policing over an extended length of time. But it's frustrating because there is good potential, but our budget always limits it."* Having been on the receiving end of this aid, the sentiments expressed in this response show the extent to which logistics problems, including insufficient transportation and equipment, restrict the domain and effectiveness of community policing.

Another cop agreed as they said, *"The training we get on community policing is fairly minimal. Our theoretical training does not translate to practical applications on the ground. And we need more workshops and resources to address the community relations when a situation is tense and how to de-escalate."* As depicted in this quote, the officers could not execute this community policing strategy in real-world circumstances because they were not trained.

Subtheme 2.2: Resistance from the Local Community

The police officers also pointed to resistance from residents as another challenge. As many officers pointed out, though, community policing strategies are designed with good intentions. They are often met with scepticism, suspicion, and, all too often, outright resistance from those being protected. No matter how competent or well-intentioned, the community ostracises officers simply for being the police. More often than not, the resistance is due to historical distrust and negative perceptions towards law enforcement.

One officer said, *"Residents in some parts of Karachi, especially in the deprived areas, are often hostile to police officers. They feel that we are not on their side, and it is not easy to convince them otherwise. However, this resistance makes building any relationship with the community hard. This sentiment reflects some problems of surmounting a long-standing mistrust of law enforcement in marginalized neighborhoods."*

Another officer commented, *"When we go and try to interact with some residents, they are always fearful of retaliatory action from the local criminals. Because they believe that in*

retribution and revenge by wrongdoers, they will be singled out or punished by the police, it is very difficult to find information or to make the community cooperate." The fear of retaliation from criminal elements within the community was the barrier to effective communication and cooperation with residents.

As indicated by a third officer, *"Police only care about their agenda, not the community"* is another basis for resistance. People do not see police as the solution to the problem if those areas have high crime rates, and it is a real struggle to change this mindset. A major factor of this resistance is that police are viewed as part of the problem, not the solution.

Subtheme 2.3: Internal Police Resistance and Organizational Barriers

Besides external resistance from the community, several officers also reported internal resistance from the police force. Some internal barriers to adopting these effective policing models and strategies included officers' resistance to using community policing models, lack of motivation by some officers, and organizational issues that hampered the smooth implementation of these strategies.

Another officer contributed, *"Some officers in my agency resist community policing. They think it is a waste of time and would prefer to spend all their time and resources on routine crime control activities like raids and arrests. Establishing relations with the community is also important."* It's very difficult to persuade them. Such resistance to community-policing strategies evokes the inner forces of the police, which is why there are police officers who are still using the old ways.

Second officer was stunned by the absence of senior management leadership for community policing and stated, *"Officers don't think of it as a priority — and that is not what is cascaded to the people below. They doesn't have institution push for it, so hard to maintain momentum."* In fact, this sentence is the structural, organizational barriers that resist successful community policing programs to continue and flourish.

Bureaucratic red tape and inflexible hierarchies were also blamed by some officers. *"We have to struggle through so many bureaucratic obstacles when we are attempting to establish community outreach programs,"* a police officer complained. There are so many steps to go through, and before we get approval, the time to act is over. The inefficiency of the bureaucracy adds difficulties agencies encounter in rolling out community policing initiatives rapidly.

Theme 3: Community Policing Models and Strategies

This theme focuses on several community policing models and strategies police officers employ in Karachi. Officers have given insights into the best practices that proved to be effective, innovative approaches used to control crime, and their recommendations for improving community-policing efforts in the city. The following sub themes outline these practices and strategies.

Subtheme 3.1: Best Practices in Community Policing

Officers said that some community policing models have yielded positive results in Karachi, especially when the police have created links with different sections of the community. One officer said, *"For some of the localities that we have established what we use to call our neighborhood patrol system, we have seen drop of multiple street crimes. We assign neighbourhood to officers, and their work is not just wandering but making relationships with the shopkeepers, residents and community leaders."* This model of neighbourhood patrolling benefits police officers allowing them to become familiar with the community at the

neighbourhood level and building more trust between the police and the community. Furthermore, citizens may be inclined to collaborate with the police and give information about crime.

But another officer also mentioned the necessity of 'community liaison officers', going on to say, *"Their fundamental work is engaging with residents and mediating conflicts and being the bridge between the police and the public. Liaison officers are based in some neighbourhoods and become individuals to go into those communities."* Dissent serves to mediate conflict, advises and hopes that issues of the community come to the hearing of the police. according to this view, certain offices are earmarked to link police with surrounding networks.

Subtheme 3.2: Innovative Approaches to Crime Prevention

Police also proposed other crime prevention strategies that are different from conventional community policing approaches. Emerging technology—social media and online sites mostly—was seen as a significant mechanism in engaging the community.

One officer said, *"We are now using social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp to interact with the people. We have dedicated pages to give crime updates and safety tips and receive feedback from the community. Other than that, this has effectively connected with younger populations who are more active online."*

The second officer discussed surveillance technologies like CCTV cameras in high-crime areas and said, *"As we've put CCTV cameras in certain neighbourhoods now, it has made a difference. It has made the residents feel safer and helped us identify suspects in our criminal activities. It has been very effective in reducing crime, which combines technology with community engagement."* Technology promotes police presence and builds community confidence.

Discussion

This discussion thoroughly analyses the research findings in light of existing literature on community policing in Karachi. The research intended to find the role of community policing in the suppression of street crime in Karachi, considering its effectiveness, difficulties, and potential in community policing strategies. The key findings of this discussion are obtained through interviews with law enforcement officers and community stakeholders and are related to local and international context theoretical frameworks and recent empirical studies.

This study's most important central finding included stress on building trust between the police and the community. It was universally agreed upon that trust was the prerequisite of effective community policing because, historically, certain areas of Karachi were infamous for a large distrust and skepticism towards law enforcement. This finding is consistent with Mkhize (2020) assertion that community policing is effective only if the police establish trust and legitimacy with the public. In the case of Korangi and Karachi Central District officers, informal community engagements like town hall meetings and local sports events were important strategies to build positive relationships with residents (Mkhize, 2020). This corresponds to other studies regarding the importance of legitimacy in law enforcement. According to Mangi & Shah (2024), citizens are less likely to cooperate with law enforcement, share information, and reduce crime if they perceive police officers as outsiders, agents of control, and part of an external institution (Mangi & Shah, 2024). The research also indicates that there is a relationship between the execution of community policing programs and the decrease in street crime in areas with a high rate of crime. 'Widespread decrease has been witnessed in street level crimes like muggings, thefts, drug trafficking in areas like Gulshan-e-Iqbal and Malir,' officers observed. These findings agree

with similar studies. For example, Ekici et al. (2022) stated that community policing in Karachi also reduced street crime because of greater community involvement and early crime prevention behavior (Ekici, Akdogan, Kelly, & Gultekin, 2022).

Another major discovery was that community leaders had an influential role in enabling community policing to prosper. Police targeted cooperation with high-ranking local leaders such as religious leaders, social activists, and important community members. It was cooperation that was instrumental in filling the gap left between the police and citizens, especially in crime-prone localities. The results support the literature for local leadership in the role of community policing. (Sherman & Eck, 2003) believe that the intermediaries between the public attitude and the police are community leaders, and communication channels from the public to the police and back are present (Sherman & Eck, 2003). Coalition with local mosques and NGOs of Malir and Korangi neighborhoods effective to this degree are evidence of the community-based approach to combating street crime. The police can then collaborate closely with such institutions in the community (i.e., community-based organizations, employment agencies, church groups, leadership groups, and school groups) and establish effective crime prevention programs like educational workshops and youth participation programs.

This research encountered evidence in favor of success, but also hindrances that distance us from successful community policing in Karachi. There is proper training and limited resources for the police officers. Several officers also said they lacked the money, logistics and specialized preparation to interact seriously with the community. Among other challenges identified were the opposition of the locals and the resistance from within the police force. Community members sometimes hesitate to cooperate with law enforcement because of fear of reprisals from criminal groups, mainly in areas such as Korangi and Malir. In addition, there was resistance to becoming a community police force because some officers rejected community police models in favour of old methods such as raids and arrests (Wassan, Bhatti, Ahmed, Oad, & Detho, 2023). The results correspond to a great deal of the existing literature on community policing, especially in areas with high amounts of crime and social unrest. The experiences of police officers in Karachi uphold the contention by Hussain & Sanauddin (2024) that building trust between the police and the community is essential. Surprisingly, the evidence provided in this study supports that reductions in street crimes closely linked to community policing initiatives. However, this study points out challenges, such as a lack of resources, opposition from the local population and police officers, and political instability, which highlight the complexity of translating capacity into action in pursuing community policing in Karachi (Hussain & Sanauddin, 2024).

Conclusion

This study sought to examine the role of community policing towards managing street crime in Karachi with regards to the efficiency, issues, and possibilities of community policing strategies. Being Pakistan's one of the largest and most intricate cities, street crimes are a harsh challenge Karachi is facing, one of which is based on a fast-spreading population, socio-political undercurrents and overtaxed apparatus. Finally, the research has mentioned that community policing can be a promising strategy of dealing street crimes in Karachi, but limited to certain factors, such as the degree of trust between the police and the community, resources, and community involvement, are all present. The study also identifies trust building as one of the primary factors of community policing efforts. The research provides that in every locality across Karachi, from Korangi, which is a high crime zone, to Saddar, where the environment was politically stable, the main idea of effective community policing was the trust that needs to be built between law enforcement officers and the community. Successful policing involved police officers who directly interact with residents, where they attend community functions and were seen patrolling in neighbourhoods. These officers gained more cooperation from the people and successfully reduced crime. This goes along with the reports that emphasized legitimacy and trust as the base of effective policing.

A second important finding is the quantifiable effect that community policing had in reducing street crime. However, over time we implemented these programs and were able to monitor crime statistics, officers reported that, in areas where the policies were being implemented aggressively, incidents of muggings, car thefts, and assaults has decreased. The effectiveness, however, depends on the area's socio-economic conditions, crime rate, and community involvement. Despite improvements, political unrest, gang violence, and a strong distrust of residents towards the police continued to grow in higher crime areas like Korangi and Malir. This suggests focused, context-orientated community policing strategies that suits different neighborhoods. The study further demonstrates that community policing programs only succeeded through collaboration with community leaders and local institutions. The police built better relationships with residents, assisting in sharing information, and encouraged the community to take steps for crime prevention in neighbourhoods with strong community leadership, such as neighbourhoods with active religious or social leaders. These findings align with the international best practices which suggest that community policing works better when local institutions and leaders are partners in initiatives. Despite the positive outcomes of community policing, research also identified some barriers in realizing its full potential. Insufficient funding for outreach programs and inadequate officer training were vital resource limitations. Second, a lack of support from the police themselves, and from communities themselves—who have a long history of difficult relations with the police—made it hard to execute community policing practices.

Recommendations

Based on this research, some suggestions can be made in order to strengthen the community policing in Karachi: Policy makers should first give a priority to community policing at the head of the budget. The funds should be sufficient enough to fund patrol community outreach initiatives and train officers in communications, conflict resolution and cultural sensitivity. Officer training schemes should be designed to enable officers to acquire skills in order to build good relationships with different communities within crime hot-spots where such relationships are non-existent due to lack of trust. Secondly, local institutions and community leaders should be prioritised in defining whether community policing works or not, and empowered groups therewith. Crimes must engage religious leaders, social activists and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Community liaison officers, whom they keep in close contact with the leaders, can be deployed to fill the gap between the residents and the police to provide greater cooperation and communication. Thirdly, rather than having so much centralized police, there should be more decentralized policing where there should be more officers in certain local neighborhoods working on police work with a little more autonomy to make decisions and take actions appropriate to that local community. It will assist the police in being more sensitive to the unique needs of their communities and more adaptable to crime patterns as they arise. Public awareness campaigns must run in parallel with community policing to educate the public regarding the importance of partnership with the police and the responsibility of the public to ensure public safety. These programs can foster trust among law enforcement officers and counter resistance in neighborhoods that are far away from, or aloof to, the police. Employing social media sites, crime mapping programs and community reporting apps to enable police and public interaction. They can also provide residents with a safe method of reporting crime and receiving information on police activity, all of which will help the Paris police become more transparent and more trusted.

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