

Community Policing: An Essential Strategy for Checkmating Crime and Terrorism in Nigeria: A Case Study Of Gombe State

GOODNEWS OSAH, ADAH OSITA
Babcock University, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Abstract. This study interrogated the philosophy and strategy of community – oriented policing as an instrument for curbing terrorism in Nigeria. The study employed descriptive method and adopted Asset to liability shift theory. The study revealed that community-oriented policing is a potent weapon in the quiver of the government and various communities to stem the flow or tide of terrorism in Nigeria. Community-oriented policing is comprised of three key operational strategies namely, Trust Partnership, Organizational Transformation and problem solving. The study further revealed that the implementation of the operational strategies of community-oriented policing is one besieged by many and various challenges which include lack of trust, corruption, and human right abuses. The study concluded that the adoption of community-oriented policing is warmly welcomed to create safe environment in Nigeria. The study recommended a shift in the culture of the conventional law enforcement agencies to integrate the paradigm of community-oriented policing. A comprehensive training approach involving the community members and law enforcement agencies is also crucial in order to institutionalize the philosophy and strategy of community-oriented policing in the world of law enforcement agencies in Nigeria.

Keywords: Terrorism, Community policing, Community partnership, Organizational Transformation

1. Introduction

Terrorism is an age long phenomenon that dates back to many Millennia. It is a domestic as well as international concern and have posed real threat to security at the national, regional and international levels. At the domestic level terrorism seeks to gain control of the political and economic power of a state, while at the international scene, the greatest challenge it poses is the ability of its members to execute transnational terror or attacks that leads to huge loss of properties and human lives.

Since the dawn of the present Millennium, terrorist incidents have begun to occur with increasing rapidity. According to Awake (June 2006) cited in Okolie and Lortyer (2014) the phenomenon of terrorism which was initially plaguing the Western world has today assumed a global dimension. The global prevalence of the terrorism has become evident in Africa in general and in Nigeria in particular. Of note is the emergence and growth of an Islamic fundamentalist group dubbed Boko Haram. This sect has been terrorizing the North-eastern Nigeria since 2010. Since its violent transmutation, the sectarian insurgents have wrecked immense havoc in the country, especially “using explosives and firearms with gruesome, fatal” consequences” (Awake June, 2006:6). The brutality with which the group has inflicted on people have enlisted them amongst one of the deadliest fundamentalist groups globally. This has posed devastating threat to Nigeria’s security and governance.

To fight these, the Nigerian government has already made a home grown strong weapon to counter and curb the phenomenon within its domain to the lowest ebb. This weapon is the community-oriented policing which is indigenous to many global communities including Nigeria. Community-oriented policing is actuated by the growing need for the community or people at the local level and their immediate environment to have the benefit of local police services to supplement the effort of the conventional law enforcement agencies in order to ensure or guarantee the safety or security of their lives and properties.

It is common knowledge that the services of the conventional security agencies are not available to many distant communities in the country. There is also increase in crime motion and terrorist activities in the country with the devastating impacts sounding in loss of properties and human cost. It is also trite knowledge that the terrorists live within the native population, strike with hidden identity and return to the same native population to dwell. It is a truism that the law enforcement agencies in Nigeria do not have established strong and efficient information network that involves members of the native communities. This paper thus examines how the integration of the mechanism of community-oriented policing into the anti-terrorism measure will enable the security agencies in Nigeria receive early warning of overhanging crimes and terrorist activities thereby putting them in a vantage position to nip terrorist activities in the bud. The study also interrogates the philosophy and strategy of community policing as an instrument in curbing terrorism in Nigeria.

2. Theoretical Framework

Several theoretical postulations exist to explain and analyze the rampant incidence of terrorism today. This study adopts “Asset to Liability Shift Theory” which stands out in explaining the prevalence of terrorism in Nigeria. The “Asset to Liability Shift Theory” which was propounded by Cumingham (2003) discusses that asset to liability shift is a changing factor that is fundamental to terrorist attack or strategy.

The theory assumes governments view states and local government areas within its jurisdiction as assets that must be defended against internal or external aggression. It noted further that “acts of terrorism would cost the government valuable lives and money in defending these assets against a sustained terrorist campaign as experienced with the Boko Haram. The theory assumes that after the government suffers significant losses, the asset will become instead, a liability and the government will decide to forfeit the asset and cut their losses” (Alao 2015:81).

The Boko Haram group aims at destabilizing Nigeria and creates a state of confusion thereby making the country ‘ungovernable’ as to allow a breakup or establishment of an Islamic state in a hitherto secular state. This is anchored on the assumption that during anti-terrorist campaigns government will overreact and become oppressive to combat the terrorists as this will expose the weakness of the government to the populace like the extra-judicial killing of Mohammed Yusuf, the founder of the Boko-Haram sect. This in turn will make the members of the public withdraw their support for the government and develop sympathy for the sect. Though the theory had been criticized but it reflects significantly the philosophy behind terrorism and to a large extent explains why the government has been unable to overcome the challenges posed by the sect (Alao 2015:81).

Anchored in the context of this discourse, the Asset to Liability Shift Theory is quite relevant to comprehending the true nature, character and behaviour of the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria in their efforts to take over the country and thereat Islamize the country or impose Muslim culture and tradition on the citizens.

3. Conceptualizing Terrorism

That terrorism is an age long concern notwithstanding, the phenomenon lacks a precise or generally accepted definition and the debate over what constitute terrorism exists (Osah, 2017). While one may justify it as “war of liberation or freedom fight” (Rourke 2004:316). Of course, many individuals and

institutions have denoted different definitions. These definitions however spring from the diverse perspectives which are ultimately tainted or coloured by the environment, academic discipline and experience of the definers. It is therefore common place to see many nations oppose terrorism while others condone or overtly and actively support terrorism and terrorist groups.

The US State Department definition of terrorism contains four elements. The first being threat of violence or an act of violence; political objective; violence and threat of violence as a direct attack on civilians making civilians a primary target and its perpetration by a supporting nation or nations of terrorism. It further noted in Title 22 of the U.S. Code, Chapter 38, Section 2656f(d)(2): that terrorism is a "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents." This follows the conception of the British Home Office (1974) which sees terrorism as "the use of violence for political ends and include any use of violence for the purpose of putting the public, or any section of the public in fear."

Similarly, the Federal Bureau of Intelligence (FBI) own definition states terrorism is "the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives."

The United Nations (1992) defines the phenomenon as "an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-) clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby - in contrast to assassination - the direct targets of violence are not the main targets."

Of all the several definitions, the one advanced by UN (1992) has been adopted by many. In a fair summation, terrorism may be defined as the use of violent act or the threat of violence by a group of persons to intimidate or coerce a given population or government into granting their

request. It is a systematic use of terror by a group of people as a means of coercion to achieve political objectives through the psychological impact created by the terror (Cunningham, 2003:10, Rourke 2004:316).

Undoubtedly, one of the greatest challenges to peace and security today is terrorism. At the domestic level the major goal of the terrorist group is to have control over the political and economic power of the targeted state. At the global level the greatest danger posed by terrorism is the ability of the group members to strike or launch terror or an attack with devastating impacts across or beyond the borders of the state of their formation or origin against unsuspecting third party. The major terrorist operations within the global communities are the September, 11th 2001 attack on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon in United State of America, war against terrorism in Afghanistan, Al-Shabaab attacks in Kenya and Somalia, Boko Haram in Nigeria launching attacks in Cameroon, Niger and Chad and ISIS (which is the new Al-quada) in Syria (Agbede 2010, Botha 2014).

Terrorism originated in Nigeria between 1970 and 1980 with the emergence of the notorious maitatsine group in the Northern part of Nigeria, when one Mohammed Marwa, a Cameroonian dissident preacher popularly believed to constitute threat to peace and unity of Nigeria formed the sect. He inspired his members to uprising which resulted in the death of many Nigerians. The maitatsine uprising instilled in some analysts the belief that Boko Haram is an off-shoot of the maitatsine sect (Alao 2015).

Later, in the 1990s Nigeria witnessed the rise of another radical group that called itself the 'Nigerian Taliban'. This was the first direct evidence of the importation of Middle East terrorist ideology into Nigeria. In 2003 the members of Nigerian Talibans migrated out of Maiduguri bush to around kanamma in Yobe State. The group and its members were crushed by the Nigerian Security Forces (Agbede 2010).

Upon the demise of the Nigerian Talibans another group known as Boko Haram emerged. The group was founded by a preacher called

Mohammed Yusuf. According to Alao (2015:84) Boko Haram was founded in 2001 by late Mohammed Yusuf, in the town of Maiduguri. The resident of Maiduguri adopted the term “Boko Haram” for the sect. In 2004 Yusuf relocated to his home state, Yobe and settled in the village called Kanamma.

The Sunday Tribune (February 12:2012) has submitted that it is the sojourn of the slain Mallam Mohammed Yusuf that successfully radicalized the group and opened it to foreign collaboration, especially with the Al-Qaeda in Islamic Magreh (AQIM).

The Northern parts of Nigeria though a hotbed of conflict and bloodbath occasioned by inter-ethnic cum religious crises, the region was never a harbour for terrorism. With the emergence of Boko Haram in the North, Nigeria as a nation – state is rated as one of the World’s Terrorist States (WTS). Nigeria though has been inflicted with many acts of religious and ethnic crises that tended to project it as a violent prone nation; the state has never been involved in any direct international terrorist act until what became known as the Farouk Mutallab Saga. Boko Haram has also successfully launched transnational terror in Cameroon and Niger with grave or devastating effects. Thus, Nigeria as a nation-state manifests a growing transnational threat to international security and Boko Haram represents the face of Africa in global terrorism (Agbede 2010, Botha 2014).

4. Challenges of Curtailing Terrorism in Nigeria

Like many states in Africa, terrorism in Nigeria is intricately linked with political, economic religious, ethnic and social dynamics of the country. Political instability, poverty, disease, hunger, ethnic and religious tensions, porous borders, illiteracy and ignorance are all propitious conditions for the growth of violence which overtime would mature into terrorism (Agbede, 2010:279)

One of the greatest security concerns to Nigeria remains its inchoate borders with its neighbouring states. Nigeria shares common

borders with four sovereign states namely, Benin, Chad, Cameroon and Niger. None of these states has a precisely defined and delineated boundary with Nigeria. The inchoate borders has given birth to uncontrolled population movement from the neighbouring states into Nigeria. Through the inchoate borders small and medium arms are illegally moved into Nigeria by the dissidents or unscrupulous citizens for the purpose of unleashing terror, and executing armed banditry, religious and ethnic strife in Nigeria. The inchoate or porous borders has brought to the fore the corrupt tendencies of Nigeria security agencies. Again the free movement of ECOWAS citizens under the ECOWAS Protocol on free movement poses a great threat to security in Nigeria (Echezona; 1992, Anyadike, 2013).

One major problem facing counter – terrorism measures in Nigeria is that the terrorists are difficult to identify. Terrorists live or are mixed with the civilian population. They do not carry arms openly nor do they wear uniform or insignia either before or during attacks. Again the mode of operation of the terrorists poses a great challenge. Terrorist attacks are spontaneous. They spring surprise attacks on their victims. They also do not obey the laws of engagement or laws of war, and they do not seek economic gain in most occasions (Alao 2015)

That terrorism is ideological/religious makes it a great challenge facing counter terrorism measure in Nigeria. Religious fundamentalist may be either Christianity or Islam. Religious bigot was the reason why Christian authority killed many people during the dark ages. Today Islamic fundamentalism is the major cause of terrorism the globally and in Nigeria in particular. The Boko Haram sect is committing the various acts of terrorism based on the belief that Western education or civilization is forbidden. It should be noted that one of the easiest means of mobilizing people for any cause is religion. Political and economic uses of religion have caused many conflicts. Political intolerance is a major challenge to counter – terrorist measures. Many nation states are populated by people of diverse origin, cultural, educational ethnic, religious and social background. This diversity

has the potency to reflect on their perspectives of the world they live in. Nigeria is composed of people of heterogeneous background. The inability of the Nigerian population to see or understand their fellow citizens from their own view is a major challenge facing the counter – terrorism efforts (Alao 2015).

When conflict is structurally rooted it may pose danger to efforts to curb terrorism. When conflict is rooted in the institutional arrangement in the country it will activate terrorism. Structural or institutional violence occurs when people have a sense of social and political injustice that would make them take to terrorism as a means to redress the political, social or historical wrong. Example of this is the compulsory acquisition of land belonging to a community or group without paying any or adequate compensation to them. The Niger – Delta case is a good example of structural violence. Cultural violence is another inhibiting factor to the fight against terrorism. Culture is the way of life of a people. The cultural violence occurs when people believe that violence or its threat will be effective or usher in the desired change. When terrorism is structurally or culturally based it is difficult to address. Structurally and culturally based terrorism is a cog on the wheel of efforts to fight or curb terrorism (Sandole:, 2003, Victoroff: 2005).

5. Conceptualizing Community Policing

Dreadful, terrible and insurmountable terrorism though might seem, Nigeria possesses the potentials or prospects of curbing this phenomenon within its domain to the barest level. These potentials include among others using community policing as an instrument. The concept of “Community Policing” is indigenous to many global communities. In African state 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 own perspectives which are greatly coloured by the norms, values and practices and indeed the ethos of the environment within which they live. According to 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 disconnect between theory and realities of implementation. According to Trojanowinez (1986) cited in Udefuna et al (2014)), “community policing entails an organization-wide philosophy of full-service, personalized and decentralized policing where the community is empowered to work in proactive partnership with the police at solving the problems of crime, fear of crime, disorder, decay and other societal issues”.

Stipak (1994) views community policing as a management strategy that promotes the joint responsibility of citizens and the police for community safety, through working partnership and interpersonal contact. Ikuteyijo and Rotimi (2012) assert that community policing entails community partnership in creating a safe and secure environment for all in which people take active part in their own affairs. According to the International Association of Chiefs of Police (2014), the philosophy of community policing promotes organizational strategies that support the systemic use of partnership and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public

safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime. Similarly, Docobo (2005) opines that “community policing is the primary prevention strategy for Homeland Security at the Local Law Enforcement Level.

It is trite knowledge that the services of government established or conventional security agencies are unavailable to many distant ends of Nigeria. Again the increasing crime wave across the nation together with the emergence of Boko Haram terrorist group with the devastating effects of their activities sounding in loss of properties and human tragedy have indeed reinforced the need for community oriented policing as a counter-terrorism measure to boost the efforts of the various government security agencies in curtailing terrorism in Nigeria.

6. Key components of Community Policing

It is common knowledge that terrorists and violent extremists dwell with the native population. This singular factor commends community-oriented policing as a veritable counter-terrorism measure or instrument. Community-oriented policing as an approach or a measure to counter social disorder has existed across time in Nigeria but with no generally adopted or set standard for its implementation. Method of implementing community-oriented policing varies from one community to the other. Despite the varying definitions and lack of set standard for implementation, it is generally agreed that the philosophy of community-oriented policing is composed of three key components or operational strategies (Docobo 2005, Okeshiola and Mudiare 2013, IACP 2014).

According to IACP (2014) community policing “promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnership and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder and fear of crime” Thus, achieving the philosophy or noble objectives of community-oriented policing requires successful execution or implementation of three primary or essential operational

strategies. And these are: community partnership, organizational transformation and problem-solving. We agree with Docobo (2005) that the three key components of community policing philosophy include the creation and reliance on effective partnership with the community and other public/private-sector resources, the application of problem-solving strategies or tactics, and the transformation of the police organization and culture to support the philosophical shift.

The necessary implication is that community-oriented policing in Nigeria is a philosophical system on how the services of the various security agencies can be effectively delivered to the citizens of the state. Central to community policing in Nigeria is that the residents of a community or people within a neighbourhood and the relevant law enforcement agencies have a shared or common understanding and jointly strive to identify and relentlessly fight to reduce the scourge of terrorism or violent extremism in their domain to the lowest ebb.

Community partnership entails the collaborative partnership between the law enforcement agencies in Nigeria and individuals, community stakeholders, intergovernmental and interagency joint endeavour with the state and federal governments and their agencies to identify the immediate causes of terrorism or violent extremism and proactively seek and provide remedies to stem the tide or rising wave. The imperative of community oriented policing springs from the fact that the efforts of the relevant law enforcement or security agencies alone are insufficient to stem the rising tide of terrorism. There arises therefore the compelling need for the citizens of the particular community or neighbourhood to be empowered to cohere with the law enforcement agencies in the fight to curb terrorism. Trust is the very foundation upon which community partnership is built. A successful partnership in community policing must anchor and foster on mutual trust. Mutual trust admits of transparency, information (communication) flow and respect. Efficient information flow and joint endeavour between the various law enforcement agencies, state and federal government agencies, and community police services will bring about mutual relations that will fertilize understanding that will breed

mutual trust. This in turn will enhance the capacity to curb terrorism in Nigeria (IACP 2014, Docobo 2005).

Organizational transformation is also a component of community-oriented policing. Community-oriented policing and conventional or government organized security agencies have points of convergence and divergence. They converge in the arena of purpose in that central to both community-oriented policing and conventional security agencies is the anxious desire to provide police or security services to the immediate environment and neighbourhood in order to prevent loss of lives and properties. They contrast sharply in the area of origin and organization. Community-oriented policing in Nigeria are indigenous to various communities and pre-date colonial encounter. The structure and organization of community-oriented policing in Nigeria largely depend on the cultural and traditional pattern of the concerned community. They vary according to the normative environment or the ethos of the community (Okeshiola and Mudiare 2013). There is therefore diversity of community-oriented policing in Nigeria. The conventional security agencies arrived Nigeria on the wings of colonial encounter. They are modelled in Western values and traditions. They are therefore alien or foreign to the sense of security of the native communities.

The conventional security agencies therefore require organizational transformation. This means radical changes in the organizational management, structure, personal and communication/information system in order to accommodate or integrate the philosophy of community policing for the overall delivery of security services to the community. Community-oriented policing is a paradigm that focuses on response to the early warning or information of overhanging crimes using the community partnership in order to nip the crime in the bud. The community policing models favours or seeks a shift or disconnect from the traditional paradigm of waiting to respond to distress calls or crime occurrence. Community policing draws the understanding, participation and cooperation of the community and stakeholders within it in the effort to curtail terrorism or violent extremism. It fosters community commitment in

a seamless and reputable endeavour to address matters of terrorism and terrorism-related crime. In summation, community policing focuses on changes in the organizational structure and management system of the conventional law enforcement agencies including their personal and technologies in order to support the paradigm shift that actuate community policing in Nigeria (Okeshola and Mudiare 2013).

7. The Need for Community Policing

A notable feature of terrorist organization is that the group members are not easily identifiable. This is because the members of the dreaded group live and walk in the same community with the civilian population who incidentally is their target. Terrorists the world over do not carry arms openly neither do they wear any insignia like the regular army, that bear them out as members. The modus operandi of the terrorists is quite different. They adopt a type of strategy or tactics otherwise known as guerrilla warfare. The major target of the terrorists is the civilian population. They strike the defenceless civilians with hidden identity and thereafter return to the same community. The fact that the terrorists live and walk in the same community with the civilian population is a sufficient and an eloquent signification that the identity of the terrorists now shrouded in mystery can be unveiled if only the civilian population can muster the strong will, courage and determination to fight the insurgents. The fact that the terrorists strike with hidden identity and thereafter return to the same community to abide with the civilian population makes it all the more imperative to involve the cooperation of the members of the native community in any counter-terrorism measure in order to achieve an enduring success. It is therefore imperative for communities to establish a strong and efficient information gathering network that involves members of our native communities (Adejoh 2014).

Community policing stands as a formidable or veritable instrument in the fight against terrorism in Nigeria. There exist in many modern communities in Nigeria the organized groups' popularly known as and called

vigilantes. The group is composed of members of the native population. The members of the vigilantes are familiar with every nook and cranny of the community and know and understand the members of the native population. The major function of the vigilantes is to alert the police of the presence of suspected criminals, the incidence of crime commission and identify to the police the suspected criminals. The advantage of using community policing are many and various. The first is that the members of the vigilantes are members of the community where the crimes prevail and criminals dwell.

The second is that the vigilantes know the secret nooks and crannies of the native community where criminals can be located. Third, members of the vigilantes know the members of the community, their means of livelihood and understand each other's behavioural pattern. They can easily identify strange fellows and suspicious movements within the community. The members of the community police share ties and affinities with members of the native community which provides them easy access to information about the commission of crimes, the criminals, and their whereabouts. These peculiarities and circumstances facilitate and make information and intelligent gathering within the native environment most effective and efficient. These sterling qualities or characters commend the community policing as a strategy, mechanism or enterprise worthy of importation into the realm of counter – terrorism measure. The adoption should carry with it the mandate to effect the necessary structuring or modification to enable the strategy work in concert and perfect unison with the Nigerian police force and other security agencies postured to fight terrorism in Nigeria. The integration of the mechanism of community policing or vigilante into the anti – terrorism measure will enable the security agencies receive early warning or information of overhanging crimes waiting ominously to descend on the community and thereby put the security agencies on a firmer terra or vantage ground to nip the crimes in the bud (Adejoh 2014).

Community-oriented policing strategy can serve as a veritable means of providing gainful employment to the unemployed, the jobless, poor and frustrated humanities while engaging them in service to their immediate communities or neighbourhoods. The prevailing economic crunch or down turn in Nigeria has given rise to unemployment and poverty. It is true that terrorism is anchored on political grievance and not necessarily economic, there is no doubt that there exist an intrinsic bond between unemployment and poverty on one hand, and terrorism on the other. Unemployment and poverty though have no causal link or relationship with terrorism these twin elements provide the propitious conditions or fertile ground upon which terrorism thrives in Nigeria. Unemployment, abject poverty, frustration, and state of hopelessness have the potency to raise dissident citizens in this country. Food is a basic human need. A hungry man is an angry man. The unemployed man is an idle man and the devil's workshop. The failure by the state to provide this basic need for her citizens will make the citizens vulnerable for enlistment as terrorists against the state or be propelled to withdraw their cooperation with and obedience from the state in the fight against terrorism.

Thus according to Nwogwugwu (2015), where there is youth unemployment, the youth "become an army available to be engaged in a potentially conflict situation. Any inducement in such direction would lead to their willing participation in violent conflict". On the converse a citizen with a growing concern or gainful employment can hardly abandon the excitement and lure of his career or vocation and the luxury of his home for the distress, pains and woe of terrorism. Form the premise of frustration – aggression theory, terrorism is a vendetta by the hungry, poor, frustrated, hopeless and jobless citizens against the state for the failure by the state to provide their basic human needs. This study therefore posits that it now behoves the government of Nigeria to take immediate and stern measures to address the question of poverty and unemployment in the country using the community-oriented policing as a means/instrument. Community members who are employed should be adequately

remunerated to motivate them or promote their interest. In this regard community-oriented policing will become a potent weapon in the quiver of the community and the government in the fight against terrorism.

8. Challenges of Community Policing

The central focus of community-oriented policing is to engage the community and its stakeholders and empower them to be strong and dependable partners with the law enforcement agencies in the dire efforts to curb crime and terrorism within their domain or neighbourhood. Relevant or useful the community-oriented policing might be the implementation and operation of its components or strategies is indeed beset by many difficulties and challenges. These challenges include cultural, religious and social practices, corruption, human right abuses and the lack of trust between the community and its stakeholders, and the law enforcement agencies.

The carrying out into execution or operation of the philosophy of the community-oriented policing is besieged by diverse cultural, religious and social practices. Many of the cultural practices adopted by many communities across Nigeria as a nation-state cannot be imported and transplanted to fit into the conventional security system existing in the country. Many community-oriented policing outfits in Nigeria bear their origin from the ashes of the culture and tradition of the concerned community which recognize the use of divination and magical techniques as veritable instruments of crime dictation, prevention and warfare. Membership into the community policing group or vigilante group is marked by or involves oath taking ceremonies. These cultural techniques provide the group a good vantage in preventing and curbing crime and terrorism or dealing with security issues. This paradigm of community-oriented policing finds existence or instance in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria. In Gombe in particular in the North-Eastern region there exists a local security group called Yan Banga. This group has demonstrated commendable agility and expertise in the use of magical techniques in dealing with all issues of security

and warfare, including crime, violent extremism and terrorism. There exists also in the Northern Region of Nigeria a local hunters group that go by the appellation Maharba of the Hausa/Fulani tribes. The group is famous in its use of magical powers rooted in the Hausa/Fulani culture and tradition in fighting crime and extreme violence (Umar and Bappi 2014).

Some cultures admit only of same sex interactions. They prefer men interacting with their men-folk and women associating with their female counterparts. Some religious restrain their members from travelling, eating, working or answering phones and responding to emails on certain days (IACP, 2014).

Absence of trust in the relationship between the community members and the law enforcement agencies is a debilitating factor in the community oriented-policing arrangement. This social malady has its origin in Nigeria's historical legacy. The colonial masters left a legacy of authoritarianism, weak institutions and artificial nation-state. The law enforcement agencies in Nigeria such as the police force (as the name appears instead of police service) are authoritarian and weak institutions established by the colonialists not for the purpose of preventing or curtailing crime in the civil society but to repress nationalist movements. The law enforcement agencies in Nigeria still wear the colonial authoritarian mental attire. They still carry with them the centralized structure, and the norms, value and practices, indeed the culture upon which they were constructed within the colonial environment.

The civil society in Nigeria still perceives the law enforcement agencies as authoritarian institutions or agencies. The colonial legacy of authoritarianism is the very basis for the absence of trust between the law enforcement agencies and community members and indeed the bane of community-oriented policing strategy (United States Institute of Peace-special Report 2014). Trust partnership is an essential element in community policing. Balanced communication and information flow and intelligent gathering are cardinal to community policing in that it shapes the perception of the community members about the seriousness or otherwise of the law enforcement agencies. The

law enforcement agencies in Nigeria are still authoritarian or adhere to the centralized structure of their colonial origin. The perception of the public is that the law enforcement agencies are foes and not friends. The law enforcement agencies do not share information, are not open, honest and transparent.

This development makes the community members apathetic and alienated and withdraw their cooperation from the law enforcement agencies in the community-oriented policing strategy.

Lack of balanced communication and shared back information have instilled in community members a deep feeling that the law enforcement agencies have no genuine intention in engaging them in any trust partnership but have a stratagem or ruse to use them for information and intelligent gathering and no more (IACP 2014). This assertion finds countenance in the fact that many law enforcement agencies ignore the communities, their members and stakeholders in identifying and solving problems involving social disorder in the community. Again many law enforcement agencies both overtly and covertly show their dislike and resentment to the philosophy of community-oriented policing (Umar and Bappi 2014).

Community members now lack interest or desire in the community policing arrangement or strategy in that often time many early warning crimes passed on to the law enforcement agencies are neglected until the crimes occur. The law enforcement agencies are reluctant to shift from the reactive model to the modern proactive paradigm that seek to nip the crime in the bud. This attitude defeats the soul and spirit of community-policing arrangement in Nigeria.

One of the majors constrains in implementing community-oriented policing strategy is the attitude of the community members or vigilante groups. The members of the vigilante often act ultra vires. They carry out their activities beyond the province or sphere of their assigned duties. The obligation of the members of vigilante group is confined or restricted to sending early warning signals or information of crime occurrence to the police, locating and identifying

suspected criminals, apprehending and handing them over to the police. Time and over the members of the vigilante misuse the golden opportunity offered them to serve, deviate from the course of their duty and engage in human right abuses. They engage in the unlawful detention of suspected criminals and extra-judicial killing of suspects. These practices are direct antitheses or contrast the very soul and spirit behind the community-oriented policing as a philosophy and a strategy (Okeshola and Mudiare, 2013, Arisukwu and Okunola 2013, Udefuna et al 2014).

Another major drawback in the community-oriented policing is that the Nigeria Police Force and other law enforcement agencies are found to have plunged themselves in the quagmire of corruption. Under the community policing, the police has a duty call to conduct thorough investigations of the activities of suspected criminals handed over to them by the community members or vigilante group. Where there exists a nexus between the suspects and the alleged crimes the police is under obligation to arraign the suspects before a court of competent jurisdiction for the ventilation and vindication of their right to justice. Unfortunately the police and other law enforcement agencies clothed with the power and duty to combat crimes and terrorism are known to have deviated from the stream of their civic duty. They are now enmeshed in the bog or mire of releasing the suspected criminals handed over to them without any endeavour for thorough investigation after collecting money from the suspects or their godfathers. This infamous conduct derogates from the noble objectives behind the community-oriented policing and therefore poses great challenge or danger to the successful implementation of community-oriented policing operational strategies (Okeshola and Mudiare, 2013, Arisukwu and Okunola 2013, Udefuna et al 2014).

9. Nature and Structure of Community Policing in Gombe State and Nigeria

There are in existence in various communities in Nigeria many and different types of vigilante groups but the common or recognized types

from the available literature are, religious vigilantism, ethnic vigilantism, state sponsored vigilantism and neighbourhood or community vigilantism. The central purpose for the existence of the various forms of the vigilante groups is to prevent or control crime and terrorism, their traditional appellations, nature and structure differ from one community to the other (Alimeka and Chukwuma 2004, Adejoh 2013, 2014). The neighbourhood or community vigilante often by stakeholders in the villages in the rural areas and landlords or people resident in a particular area or street in the urban or semi-urban areas. Membership of the neighbourhood or community vigilante is composed mainly of youth, hunters, and retired police and military officers. They keep surveillance over or police the entire community or village by walking round or patrolling the areas at night. The members are armed with light lethal weapons such as cutlasses, bows and arrows, spears and guns. Their strategies including prayer, traditional divination and the use of magical powers or methods.

The practice of divination and magical techniques are employed by the vigilante group called Yan Banga of Gombe State and Hunters group called Maharba of Hausa-Fulani also in Gombe State of Nigeria (Umar and Bappi 2014, Adejoh 2014). In 2012 and 2013 the Governor of Gombe State recruited a total of 2,700 youth as Marshals to assist in security in the State (Umar and Bappi 2014). In 2001, the Governor of Lagos State announced his readiness to engage members of O’odua People’s Congress (OPC) in crime control in Lagos State, and in Anambra State, the House of Assembly passed the vigilante services Act in 2001 (Adejoh 2014). Community policing has been introduced to various extents and depths in States over eighteen (18) pilot states of Nigeria including Abuja, Anambra, Imo, Banue, Lagos, Edo State with commendable success.

10. Conclusion / Recommendations

This study explored community-oriented policing as a strategy and philosophy for curtailing terrorism in Nigeria. The study revealed that community-oriented policing is a

potent weapon in the quiver of the government and various communities to stern the tide of terrorism if its operational strategies are successfully implemented. The study further revealed that the implementation of the operational strategies of community-oriented policing is one besieged by many and various challenges.

For the account of the foregoing this study therefore makes the following recommendations:

Employing community members as members of community policing and paying them reasonable remuneration has the tendency to curb terrorism as members who ordinarily would have enlisted as terrorist group are now gainfully engaged to fight the phenomenon. The community members engaged in the community-oriented policing

Also that there should be should desist from human right abuses and strive to achieve the lofty objectives of their national duty. Organizational changes in the culture and traditional of the law enforcement agencies to usher in and institutionalize community policing. As a corollary a comprehensive training of officers of law enforce agencies and community members is indeed crucial.

Furthermore, law enforcement agencies should see Nigerians as human beings and fellow citizens who they have a duty to protect and not to be brutally assaulted. Nigeria should emulate India, United Kingdom and United States of America and adopt multi-tier Local Government System that will usher in districts sub-districts and Urban Local Government into the System. This will reduce Nigeria population into tiny and manageable units for security purpose. This will usher in a security system in which every resident in the local unit is a participant.

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