ASSESSMENT OF THE GAMBIAN POLICE FORCE ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CONTROL

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Abstract

The study assessed the Gambia Police Force (GPF) on Crime Prevention and Control in the Greater Banjul Area of The Gambia from 2017 to 2019. The study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected using questionnaires and interview guides. The targeted population for this study was serving members of The Gambia Police Force (GPF), and 254 members were sampled out of 700 populations using the Taro Yamane formula. The distribution of the sample size was based on convenient sampling in terms of accessing major police stations and police posts. In the course of the fieldwork, 254 copies of the questionnaire were administered with the aim of retrieving the required number meant for the study. The study used descriptive and inferential statistical tools to analyse the data. Three interviews were conducted with officials from GAF, NAATIP, and WANEP who are knowledgeable on the subject of investigation. The selection and distribution of the numbers of respondents were purposively interviewed. The findings of the study revealed that the GPF used outdated gadgets and human intelligence as methods and approaches in responding to crime prevention and control in the country. The study also revealed that GPF faced certain operational limitations in using modern security tools. This was due to inadequate exposure in terms of training and the challenge of the apolitical among the ranks and files of the GPF. The study identified copious challenges facing GPF which is a general issue in most African countries based on the extant literature. The challenge of funding; corruption; political interference; indiscipline; non-compliance and reporting of some citizens and so on, have constituted

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some level of hindrances to the GPF on crime prevention and control in The Gambia. This paper evaluates the effectiveness of the methods and approaches used by the GPF on crime prevention and control; and assess the challenges facing the GPF on crime prevention and control in the Gambia (GBA).

Keywords: Police, Intelligence, Crime Prevention, Crime Control, The Gambia.

Introduction

Crime prevention and control is an important implementing strategy that requires an understanding by the policy makers or strategies. The different levels of government must show leadership roles. Government, therefore, has a responsibility to contribute effectively towards crime prevention and crime control in the Greater Banjul Area. Cross-cutting issues ranging from social, economic, educational, employment, healthcare, housing, urban planning, and justice service should be incorporated into the crime prevention strategies. Its evident crime prevalence is existing in many areas of human activities hence the need to integrate in a cross-cutting manner. Therefore, both the line ministries and government needs to build upon a cooperative partnership with the community and non-governmental organizations and business sector, and civil society (Shaw & Travers, 2007).

Boas and Gans-Morse (2009) and Becker (1974) have situated crimes in developing states as a function of poor leadership motivated by corrupt leaders and poorly designed policies on crime. Corruption which is a common denominator in most developing states like the Gambia, especially during the former regime is seen as an inducing device that instigates or causes crimes such as rape, armed robbery, burglary, and so on. The many years of an authoritarian system that Gambians have experienced have led to deplorable conditions for the citizens arising from the dearth of social infrastructure and a high level of illiteracy in the country. This situation was expected to improve since the ushering of a new political and democratic dispensation in The Gambia in 2017, yet the issue of crime in the country has the attention of human rights organisations especially the high rate of rape, burglary, and murder. This has led activists and groups to ask questions about the existence and functions of the security institutions like the Gambia Police Force (The Gambia, 2019).

Finally, the absence of well-defined and enforced policies for police operations in the Greater Banjul Area has made the institution (Gambia Police Force) vulnerable to malpractices and corruption underpinned by difficulties to enforce standing operational procedures. Guiding the

standards of performance in the GPF eventually led to an increase in the misappropriation of funds meant for police operations in the area (Office of the National Security of the Gambia, 2019). Arising from the above background, the study seeks to examine the Gambia Police Force in managing, preventing, and controlling crime, the patterns of reproduction of order, methods of law enforcement, and the weapon of engagement within its jurisdiction

Methodology

The study adopted a case study research design focused on Greater Banjul Area due to the high rate of incidents of crimes that needs prevention and control by the GPF. The study used probability sampling and non-probability for the interview in terms of selection and distribution of respondents from the population. This is informed by the knowledge acquired by the respondents on crime control and prevention. The study adopted Taro Yamane sampling to arrive at the required sample size of 254. The study also adopted qualitative and quantitative research techniques where content analysis and statistical tools were utilised to analyse data in the study using SPSS tools.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The information presented on the distribution of senior administrative cadre, middle administrative cadre, and junior administrative cadre is shown in Table 1. The information gathered on respondents' length of service showed that the majority of the respondents (58.1%) during the exercise had served between 5-10 years; 23.2% had served between 11-15 years, 6.5% had served between 16-20 years, 2.4% had already served between 21-25 years, and 9.8% had served 26 years and above. The information gathered on the educational qualifications of respondents also showed that about 20% had attained a junior secondary school certificate about 32% attained senior secondary education about 25% attained a diploma/higher national diploma about 12.6% attained their first university degree, and about 3% attained Master's degree whilst about 8% have attained professional or vocational training. The data gathered on the marital status of the respondents revealed that about 78% were married about 20% were single while 2% represented "others" which could be either divorced or widowed. Thus, from the data gathered the majority of the respondents were married as shown in the table below. All these are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: The Frequency and Percentage distribution of personal information of the Gambia Police Force personnel in the GBA

SN	Items	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)
1	Designation/Rank of the GPF Senior Cadre Middle Cadre Junior Cadre	36 80 130	14.6 32.5 52.8
2	Distribution of respondents by age 18-22 YEARS 23-27 28-32 33.37 38 years and above	5 33 45 46 117	2.0 13.4 18.3 18.7 47.6
3	Distribution of respondents by the length of service 5-10 YEARS 11-15 YEARS 16-20 YEARS 21-25 YEARS 26 YEARS AND ABOVE	143 57 16 6 24	58.1 23.2 6.5 2.4 9.8
4	JNR SECONDARY SCH CERTIFICATE WASSCE DIPLOMA/HND BSc/BA MASTERS OTHER/PROFESSIONAL TRAINING	48 78 62 31 8 19	19.5 31.7 25.2 12.6 3.3 7.7
5	MARITAL STATUS Married Single Other	191 50 5	77.6 20.3 2.0

Identification of Methods and Approaches used by The Gambia Police Force on Crime Prevention and Control in the Greater Banjul Area

With a view to gathering information relevant to the study, various police ranks working with the Gambia Police Force were approached to seek their opinions on the statement below. The study gathered that 41.1% and 35.4% disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively, with the statement that the police use hostile techniques during the interrogation session while 11% and 3.3% agreed and strongly agreed, respectively with the statement. However, 8.9% said they do not know. In addition, police personnel was asked whether the Police Intervention Unit uses batons and water cannon vehicles to manage and control crowds with hostility during the period January 2017 to date. Of the respondents, 34.1% and 12.2%

agreed and strongly agreed with the statement, and 27.2 and 18.3% disagree and strongly disagree respectively. However, 8.1% said they do not know. Respondents were also asked whether the police traffic uses motorcycles to track motorists violating the traffic on public highways from January 2017 to date. Of the respondents, 63% and 25.6% agreed and strongly agreed with the statement whilst 2.8% and 6.1% disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement respectively. However, 2.4% said they don't know.

Furthermore, respondents were asked whether the Anti-Crime Unit of the police force partners with the communities in reporting crime. While 56.9% and 26.8% stated they have agreed and strongly agreed with the statement, 5.3% and 5.4% had disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. However, only 5.3% said they do not know. Similarly, 50.4% and 21.5% of the respondents agree and strongly agree with the statement that the police designed zones to track criminals and prevent crimes in the GBA while 10.2% and 8.5% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, and whilst 9.3% of the respondents stated that they don't know. Furthermore, police personnel was asked whether the police had enough patrol vehicles for crime prevention and control. Of the respondents, 36.2% and 51.6% disagreed and strongly disagreed while 4.9% and 3.3% agreed and strongly agreed, respectively. However, 4.1% said they don't know. In addition, police personnel was asked if they were using security drones to monitor and detect crimes in the GBA; 30.9% and 30.5 of the respondents indicate that they disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement whereas 7.7% said they don't know. However, 6.5% and 19.9% stated they have agreed and strongly agreed with the statement respectively.

In an attempt to gather data on whether the police used security CCTV cameras to monitor and detect crimes in the GBA, 39% and 43.1% disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement while 4.9% and 5.3% agreed and strongly agreed; however, 7.75 said they don't know. In an attempt to find out whether the police used operational VHF radios in their operations. 47.2% of the respondents disagreed whilst 16.7% agreed and strongly agreed with the statement whilst 17.5% and 15% disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement respectively. However, 3.7% said they don't know. Furthermore, respondents were also asked whether the police used crime scene investigation techniques to conduct investigations. 56.1% and 36.2% agreed and strongly agreed with the statement whilst 2.4% and 2.4% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. However, 2.8% said they don't know. Respondents were asked whether the police had proper data recordkeeping of crime in the GBA. 45.1% and 26.8% agreed and strongly agreed with the statement whilst 17.9% and 3.7% responded

that they disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively. However, 6.5% stated they don't know. In an attempt to elicit from the respondents' information on whether the police had an effective forensic laboratory for their forensic investigation, 43.1% and 23.6% agreed and strongly agreed with the above statement whilst 16.7% and 7.3% disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively. However, 9.3% decided to say they do not know.

Table 2: The frequency and percentage distribution of Police personnel responses on the identification of methods and approaches used by the Gambia Police Force on crime prevention and control in the Greater Banjul Area

SN	Items	Strongly agreed Freq. (%)	Agreed Freq. (%)	Don't know (%)	Disagreed Freq. (%)	Strongly disagreed Freq. (%)
1	The police use hostile techniques during the interrogation session	3.3	11	8.9	41.1%	35.4%
2	Police manage and control crowds with hostility during the period under review	30 (12.2)	84 (34.1)	20 (8.1)	67 (27.2)	45 (18.3)
3	Police use motorcycles to track vehicles violating road traffic	60 (25.6)	155 (63)	6(2.4)	7 (2.8)	15 (6.1)
4	Anti-Crime Unit partner with communities in reporting crime	66 (26.8)	140 (56.9)	13 (5.3)	14 (5.7)	21 (8.5)
5	Zones are designed to prevent crime and track criminals in the GBA	53 (21.5)	124 (50.4)	23 (9.3)	25 (10.2)	21 (8.5)
6	Patrols vehicles are available for police patrols to prevent and control crime	8 (3.3)	12 (4.9)	10 (4.1)	89 (36.2)	127 (51.6)
7	Police use modern drones to monitor and detect crime in the GBA	16 (6.5)	49 (19.9)	30 (12.2)	76 (30.9)	75 (30.5)
8	CCTV Cameras are available to monitor and detect crime in the GBA	13 (5.3)	12 (4.9)	19 (7.7)	96 (39)	106 (43.1)
9	Police use VHF radios during police operations	41 (16.7)	116 (47.2)	9 (3.7)	43 (17.5)	37 (15)
10	Police used Crime Scene Investigation techniques to conduct criminal investigations	89 (36.2)	138 (56.1)	7 (2.8)	6 (2.4)	6 (2.4)
11	Police have a proper recordkeeping for crime data	66 (26.8)	111 (45.1)	16 (6.5)	44 (17.9)	9 (3.7)
12	GPF have a Forensic laboratory to conduct analysis	58 (23.6)	106 (43.1)	23 (9.3)	41 (16.7)	18 (7.3)

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Methods and Approaches of Crime Prevention and Control used by the GPF in the GBA

The section evaluates the responses of the police in the GBA on the evaluation of the effectiveness of the methods and approaches of crime prevention and control used by the GPF. Questions were asked to seek the opinions of various ranks found in the hierarchy of the Gambia Police Force on whether the police were enforcing their duties as expected. Thus, among the respondents, 52.4% and 33.7% agreed with and strongly agreed with the statement whilst 10.2% and 2.0% disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement respectively. However, 1.6% said they don't know. Furthermore, opinions were elicited from respondents on the subject of whether the decisions of the police were unduly influenced by pressure from politicians and pressure groups. Among the respondents, 30.9% and 15.4% agreed and strongly agreed with the statement whilst 21.5% and 14.6% disagreed and strongly disagreed. However, 17.5% said they don't know. In addition, the police personnel was asked whether the police response on time to prevent violent crimes from happening. Of the respondents, 43.9% and 16.3% agree and strongly agree with the statement whilst 27.2% and 7.7% disagree and strongly disagree with the statement. However, 4.9% say they do not know.

Similarly, respondents were asked whether the police responded on time to control violent crime. Among them, 50.4% and 14.6% agreed and strongly agreed with the statement whilst 24.4% and 5.3% disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. However, 5.3% said they don't know. An attempt was made to investigate whether the PIU had the ability to handle large-scale demonstrations in the GBA. Of the responses, 42.3% and 27.6% agreed and strongly agreed with the statement whilst 17.9% and 6.1% stated they disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. However, 6.1% said they don't know. Furthermore, questions were asked to obtain the opinion of the police personnel as to whether they felt safe from threats when walking alone during the night in the GBA. Among them, 38.2% and 10.2% agreed and strongly disagreed with the statement whilst 30.5% and 14.6% disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. However, 6.5% said they don't know. Again, police officers were asked whether they had a good working relationship with the community regarding public safety. Among them, 52.8% and 26% agreed and strongly agreed with the statement whilst 10.6% and 8.1% disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. Still, 2.4% said they do not know.

Furthermore, police personnel was asked whether GBA is a safe region to live in. Among them, 41.9% and 40.2% disagree and strongly disagreed

with the statement whilst 7.3% and 3.7% agreed and strongly agreed with the statement. However, 6.9% stated they don't know. The last question regarded the evaluation of the effectiveness of methods and approaches used by the GPF on crime prevention and control in the GBA. Information was obtained from respondents on the following statement that the GBA has recorded a decrease in the crime rate during the past 12 months. Of the respondents, 42.3% and 12.6% agreed and strongly agreed with the statement whilst 16.3% and 13% disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. However, 15.9% stated that they don't know.

Table 3: The frequency and percentage distribution of the evaluation of the effectiveness of methods and approaches of crime prevention and control used by the GPF in the GBA

SN	Items	Strongly agreed Freq. (%)	Agreed Freq. (%)	Undecided Freq. (%)	Disagreed Freq. (%)	Strongly disagreed with Freq. (%)
1	Police discharged their functions as expected	83 (33.7)	129 (52.4)	4 (1.6)	25 (10.2)	5 (2)
2	Decisions of the police were unduly influenced by pressure from politicians and pressure groups	38 (15.4)	76 (30.9)	43 (17.5)	53 (21.5)	36 (14.6)
3	the police response on time to prevent violent crimes from happening	40 (16.3)	108 (43.9)	12 (4.9)	67 9 (27.2)	19 (7.7)
4	the police responded on time to control violent crime.	36 (14.6)	124 (50.4)	13 (5.3)	60 (24.4)	13 (5.3)
5	PIU had the ability to handle large scale demonstrations in the GBA	68 (27.5)	104 (42.3)	15 (6.1)	44 (17.9)	15 (6.1)
6	Residents felt safe from threats when walking alone during the night in the GBA	25 (10.2)	94 (38.2)	16 (6.5)	75 (30.5)	36 (14.6)
7	Police had a good working relationship with the communities towards public safety.	64 (26)	130 (52.8)	6 (2.4)	26 (10.6)	20 (8.1)
8	GBA is a safe region to live	9 (3.7)	18 (7.3)	17 (6.9)	99 (40.2)	103 (41.9)
9	GBA recorded a decrease in crime rate during the period under review	31 (12.6)	104 (42.3)	39 (15.9)	40 (16.3)	32 (13)

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Assessment of the Challenges faced by the GPF on Crime Prevention and Control in the GBA

This section covers the challenges faced by the GPF on crime prevention and control in the GBA. The first question was whether there is adequate police personnel for crime prevention and control in the GBA. Among the respondents, 45.5% and 23.6% stated that they disagreed and strongly disagreed with the above statement whilst 17.9% and 8.9% also stated that they agreed with the statement respectively. However, 4.1% decided that they don't know. Secondly, in an attempt to identify from the police whether the police have modern scientific gadgets or equipment for their operations, 39% and 35.8% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that the police have adequate scientific equipment for their use whilst 6.1% and 9.8% stated that they agreed and strongly agreed with the statement whereas 9.3% said they don't know. Furthermore, respondents were asked whether there is proper maintenance of police vehicles and funds available during police operations. Of the respondents, 33.3% and 29.3% disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement whilst 15.4% and 5.3% agreed and strongly agreed with the statement. However, 16.7% said they don't know.

On the issue of criminal justice delivery, respondents were asked whether the police prosecution department got monetary compensation from the Justice ministry after court fines against guilty persons. Of the respondents, 23.2% and 18.7% disagreed and strongly disagreed with the above statement whilst 7.7% and 5.3% had a divided opinion. However, 45.1% said they don't know. Again the respondents were asked whether there were inadequate offices and infrastructure in the GPF. Among them, 35.8% and 21.5% agreed and strongly agreed with the statement presented. 16.3% and 20.3% disagreed and strongly disagreed whereas 6.1% said they don't know. In addition, respondents were asked whether the budgetary allocation from the government was sufficient for handling issues of crime prevention and control. 36% and 38.2% disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement whilst 5.7% both indicate that they agreed and strongly agreed. However, 13.8% state they don't know.

Furthermore, respondents were asked whether the Gambia Police Force was actively involved in partisan politics. Among the respondents, 52.8% and 26.7% disagreed and strongly disagree with the statement whilst 9.3% and 3.3% agreed and strongly agreed, respectively.

However, 7.7% say they don't know probably because they do not want to express anything about politics. On the issue of security coordination between police stations on information sharing on crime prevention and control, police personnel was asked whether there was any problem with signal responses from various police units and at major hot-spots in The Gambia. Of the respondents, 43.1% and 15% express that they agreed and strongly agreed with the statement above whilst 17.5% and 11% expressed they disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively. However, 13.4% said they don't know.

The researchers attempted to elicit and gather data on the importance of resources for training police personnel. Respondents were asked whether there was a challenge in training police personnel in the Gambia Police Force due to inadequate resources. Among them, 43.9% and 28.5% express their acknowledgment and, agreed and strongly agreed with the statement above whilst 13.8% and 9.8% stated they disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement.

However, 4.1% said they don't know. The final questions regarding the challenges faced by the police in the GBA on crime prevention and control were centered on corrupt practices in the police force. Respondents were asked whether corruption in the GPF affected the operations of the police on crime control and prevention. While 28% and 17.1% agreed and strongly agreed with the statement, 24.4% and 19.9% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. However, 10.6% stated they don't know.

In addition, respondents were asked whether corruption in the police affected the effective fight against drug trafficking in the police. While 25.6% and 17.9% express that they agreed and strongly agreed with the statement 23.6% and 21.5% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. However, 11.4% stated that they don't know. They probably don't want to share information out of the fear of public outcry against them. Based on individual responses, there were variations pertaining to their agreement and disagreement on the assessment of items on the challenges faced by the police. However, based on the cumulative average response of the majority on challenges, more respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the prevailing challenges. On the other hand, fewer respondents stated the contrary and others stated they don't know which may depict that they do not want to share information for unknown reasons.

Table 4: The frequency and percentage distribution of the challenges faced by The GPF on crime prevention and control in the GBA

S/N	Items	Strongly agreed Freq. (%)	Agreed Freq. (%)	Undecided Freq. (%)	Disagreed Freq. (%)	Strongly disagreed Freq. (%)
1	There is adequate police coverage in the GBA	8.9	17.9	4.1	45.5	23.6
2	Police have enough modern scientific equipment for their operations	9.8	6.1	9.3	39	35.8
3	Funds and maintenance of police vehicles are a priority during police operations	5.3	15.4	16.7	33.3	29.3
4	The prosecution department got incentives from the Ministry of Justice from court fines.	5.3	7.7	45.1	23.2	18.7
5	There are inadequate offices and infrastructure in the police	21.5	35.8	16.1	16.3	20.3
6	Budgetary allocation by the government is sufficient for police operations	5.7	5.7	13.8	36	38.2
7	Police Force was actively involved in partisan politics	3.3	9.3	7.7	52.8	26.7
8	There are sufficient coordination and information sharing among stations in the GBA	15	43.1	13.4	17.5	11
9	Gambia Police Force lacks adequate resources for training and recruiting	28.5	43.9	4.1	13.8	9.8
10	Corruption in the police affected effective police functions.	17.9	25.6	11.4	23.6	21.5

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Discussion of Findings

The study was conducted in the Greater Banjul Area of The Gambia among 246 police personnel from the senior cadre (Strategic Level), middle administrative cadre, and junior cadre (Operational Level) respectively. The study was not only limited to the police personnel but also to those that have a security background with a wealth of experience. In the findings, the study revealed that respondents to the questionnaire were drawn from the senior level, middle level, and junior level. The primary functions of the police force in the Gambia are to protect lives and property and maintain law and order in the country thus such an institution needs able and young junior police officers to discharge such functions, especially personnel at the tactical level. In addition, for the purpose of command and control of the middle and junior police personnel, senior police command must ensure security coordination at the strategic and operational level in the police becomes a major priority.

The study also revealed that the majority of respondents were male police officers (77.2%). This, therefore, indicates that male police officers are the main elements that are at the centre of security providers at the GBA. However, female police officers who comprise (22.8%) are indeed available to complement their male counterparts in crime prevention and crime control in the GBA. Furthermore, findings have revealed that the majority of the respondents in the study are aged 38 and above 47.6% while 18.3% are aged between 28 and 32 followed by those aged between 23 and 27 comprise 13.4% of the respondents. Again 77.6% of the respondents are married according to findings from the study. This shows that the majority of those that are actively performing police duties are married. However, it is not a secret that the police as an institution requires young and energetic police officers to discharge their duties effectively.

The study on personal information revealed that most of the police on deployment in the Greater Banjul Area attained the West African Senior School Certificate (WASSC) with a percentage of about 38%. This was followed by those with Diploma/HND holders with about 25%. The study also revealed that in the history of the Gambia Police Force, a significant improvement in terms of capacity building is in good footings. Thus, the study showed about 13% and 3% had a bachelor's degree and master's degree respectively serving in the police force. Literacy, therefore, contributes greatly to both the institutional growth and individual police officers' well-being. With regard to the length of service among the respondents, the majority of the police officers 58.1% and 23.2%, have served between 5-10 years and 11-15 years respectively. Those that served

26 years and above were **9.8%** but these categories of police officers also have a wealth of experience in police duties, especially in crime prevention and control. Therefore, the Gambia Police Force is gradually improving and growing to become a police force that discharges its duties with efficiency and effectiveness and moves away from traditional policing to modern policing.

Identification of the Methods and Approaches used by The Gambia Police Force on Crime Prevention and Control

The basis of Almond and Powell's (1960) structural-functionalism theory lays emphasis on the relationship between institutions and their functions. Thus, they theorise that every existing institution has certain functions and roles to play in society to ensure there is law and order and identification of each institution's main functions. Some of the institutions are security in nature such as the military and the police service, while some are civil society organisations. To understand the functions or roles of the police force, it is recommended to first identify internal police structures and their functions. It is also relevant to understand all the functions of each component of the police force and adopt recommended methods and approaches used by the police in the crime management spheres globally. These methods and approaches are identified as part of the internal structures and their primary functions in the Gambia Police Force are discussed below.

The Crime Management Coordination Department continues to coordinate all the units including the CID, Fraud Squad, Serious Crime, and Major Crime as the existing internal structures in the Gambia Police Force and their activities. The majority of the respondents (77.5%) in the study disagree with the statement that police use hostile techniques during investigation and interrogation sessions from January 2017 to date. These departments mentioned above operate through investigative, probative, and surveillance applications as the methods and approaches employed by the Crime Management Unit of the Gambia Police Force. The department has improved steadily in the performance of its duties in crime prevention and control. Their main responsibilities are to gather evidence for the purpose of identifying suspects in specific crimes through DNA Testing, fingerprints and photography, and so on. Thus, the findings corroborated the study by Ben (2018) on Forensic DNA Testing.

Based on the findings, it is evident that a total of **46.2%** of the respondents, which is above the cumulative percentage of **87.8%** respondents, agree

that the PIU has been hostile during crowd control management exercise from January to date. The methods and approaches cited in the work of Ben, Mark, and Murphy, (2004) have been reflected in the research findings. Coercive applications as cited in the work of Ben et al. (2004) were also employed by the Police Intervention Unit of the GPF. However, the findings established that the PIU operates using force or coercion to prevent, control and manage crime during police operations. The findings established that 46.2% of the respondents disagreed with this assertion thereby indicating that on average there is room for improvement. The findings revealed that the Mobile Police also perform their traditional functions and this has corroborated the studies conducted by Ben et al, (2004) that Police Traffic Units as well adopt a probative application to ensure an accident-free environment on public highways. In addition, Geason and Wilson (1998) revealed that for effective crime prevention and control, wide consultations and cooperation with the public are indispensable before the deployment of the police in any police operations.

Based on the findings, the Anti-Crime Unit is presented as effectively discharging its assigned roles and responsibilities. Ben, et al cited some of the methods and approaches designed for effective information and communication were the same methods used by the Police Intervention Unit of the GPF. In the study, Robert (1986) concluded that the most successful intervention against crime is those involving actions by both the local police and local people. Lindsay and McGill's, (1986) findings attach the importance of community to crime prevention and went further to affirm that no amount of money or manpower could prevent crime in the absence of public support.

This section shows how innovative the police force in the GBA was in terms of effective monitoring alleged criminals or those under their 'watch list'. The majority of the respondents (75.9%) agree with the effectiveness of the police force's monitoring strategies. These are in line with the methods highlighted by the findings of Ben et al, (2004). The employment of surveillance applications as modern technology is an important tool to monitor and observe people and their places. It is necessary as a police force to be effective and efficient in identifying and designing zones. This, in fact, is indispensable in crime management and control. Thus, it is incumbent upon the institution which was obliged to prevent and control crime in their area of responsibility. According to Geason and Wilson (1998), environmental designs are methods or approaches used in crime prevention that requires authorities to focus on improving street lighting and free flow of traffic along public highways, restricting pedestrians, and dividing residential spaces into identifiable areas referred to as zones.

Vehicles are a major necessity for the police force as a national security institution mandated to provide security on crime prevention and control in the country. The findings of Ben et al, (2004) highlight the importance of equipment in the provision of effective and efficient security service delivery. The significance of mobility resources is also accentuated in this study by the concerns expressed by the police personnel on the need to have enough vehicles for police operations. Surveillance applications are indispensable in the crime management discourse. This has been revealed by Ben et al, (2004) findings and confirmed by this research. Ratchliffe (2007), modern technological equipment is essential for a security institution mandated with the responsibility to prevent, control crime and provide law and order in society. To ensure law and order in this modern generation, among the technological equipment required, are security drones. This is in concordance with Hough's (1980) definition of situational crime prevention as the use of measures directed at highly specific forms of a crime involving the management, design, and manipulation of the immediate environment in systematic and permanent ways as much as possible, as well as the use of drones to monitor the environment.

According to Ben et al, there is an emphasis that modern policing requires modern technological equipment such as CCTV cameras, police operational VHF radios, etc. These will complement the efforts of a police force more professionally in terms of monitoring and detecting crime in society and on public highways. The GPF lack all these basic requirements which make it difficult to effectively carry out its basic functions in crime prevention and control. To further consolidate the police force requires more involvement in strengthening its institutional capacity. Towards this direction committed police force command is steadily trying to put the institution on its right footing. Crime scene investigation techniques are essential ingredients for the effective prevention of crime and control. Police need better training in the area of crime scene investigation techniques and approaches.

The findings also revealed that the majority of the respondents 45.1% and 26.8% agree that the police had a fairly good recordkeeping office and a fairly structured and well-packed filing cabinet in most of the police stations. In modernising the police force, the forensic unit of the police needs a major improvement in modern forensic skills and to prepare for more tasks ahead and responsibilities in the country.

Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Methods and Approaches of Crime Prevention and Control used by the GPF

The study findings revealed that the majority of the police personnel commend the efforts of the police in the discharge of their work. However, the findings reveal that continued influence and interference by politicians and activists greatly affect police operations. Furthermore, based on the findings, the respondents revealed that policemen's reactive approach to duty has a negative effect on the peace and stability of the country. The police personnel responded that police riot officers have the ability and know-how to manage and control public disorder when called upon. Again, findings also indicate that with an average ratio of respondents in the study, the Greater Banjul Area has become relatively unpredictable as a result of polarized socio-political and security dynamics of the country. Apparently, the presence of foreign troops (peacekeeping force) in the security architecture of the Gambia had added to the unpredictable status of security in the GBA due to the reactionary approach of the country's security institutions.

The findings show a steady working relationship between the police and the community they served and this shows that public safety is a major priority to the police force during the period under review. The information in the tables (see appendix-iii; a, b, and c) was collected from the records compiled by the GPF in 2017, 2018, and 2019 respectively. Thus, in 2017 the total number of cases crimes recorded by the police numbered 1,608 cases. In 2018, a total of 1,426 crime cases were recorded and in 2019 a total of 1,620 cases were recorded during the period under review (See the attached appendix-iii yearly returns crime cases reported, number of crimes and persons involved, gender, nationality, and ages). Thus, findings indicate that the crime recorded in 2018, was higher than the 2017 crime records. However, findings revealed that in 2019 the crime rate recorded was higher than in 2017 and 2018 respectively. The level of crime rate as stated by the GPF in 2017, 2018, and 2019 respectively revealed a significant increase in crime rate in the Greater Banjul Area.

The Identification of Challenges faced by The Gambia Police Force on Crime Prevention and Control

This section identifies challenges facing the Gambia Police Force on crime prevention and crime control in the Greater Banjul Area. This section is vital to the study because the study findings reveal that, the police force as an institution is facing challenges that are more likely to be effective

and efficient. Key challenges were also highlighted by the senior staff of the West African Network for Peace Building, National Agency against Trafficking in Persons, and the Gambia Armed Forces as well as a few individuals with security knowledge in the study area. Based on the findings, these mentioned sets of institutions highlighted relevant points which are discussed below: With regard to inadequate police personnel in crime prevention since 2017, there has been no recruitment of new intakes conducted. This has had a significant impact on the manner the police conduct their duties because of inadequate personnel in the GBA. With the increasing number of people living in the GBA and one of the most populated urban settlements, there is an ever-increasing demand for more police personnel to provide the needed security in the fight against crime in the area.

Concerning the provision of modern scientific equipment for police operations to be effective and efficient, the study has revealed a significant observation. The findings confirm that modern scientific equipment is a requirement for 21st-century democracy and modern policing. The researcher observed that scientific equipment such as CCTV, DNA testing equipment, and computerised systems are not available for the police force in The Gambia. This is corroborated by one of the respondents who lamented the status quo: "The police are lacking behind. If for instance, a DNA test is to be conducted, they have to travel to Senegal for the annalistic process". These challenges indicate that the police investigation requires more scientific equipment for its operations. The lack of such vital equipment could derail the work of the investigators and even compromise their operations. Another respondent confirmed this to the researcher in the following statement: "Police lack standard forensic laboratory for forensic investigation and security drones to monitor and detect crime at strategic or hot-spots, locations within the GBA; there is a general lack of modern facilities".

The findings of the study reveal further the significant inadequacy of police operational vehicles. This challenge is a severe impact on the security sector service delivery in the area of crime prevention and control in the GBA. The current vehicles allocated to the Police Intervention Unit are not functionally designed for riot control management for the task ahead. The research has found that the vehicles provided to the riot police are insufficient and not the type of vehicles meant for their assigned tasks. Again, the police paramedics lack ambulances at their stations and this has affected most of their operations. The Mobile Traffic Unit also lacks towing vehicles for their task, especially where there are traffic jams or road traffic accidents by a motorist on the main road.

Additionally, there are not enough mobile police patrol vehicles and motorcycles for traffic patrol. The police headquarter also lack utility vehicles meant for administrative tasks. At some point, the mobile police unit relied almost entirely on donor agencies for logistics and traffic equipment support. The study revealed no functional mobile traffic patrol vehicle at the main regional police headquarters. The lack of proper logistics in place for the police to respond swiftly to crimes, and the shortage of manpower to cover simultaneously different crime scenes are challenges confronting GPF. Accentuating a dire status of neglect, the findings show that a lot of fleets of vehicles are parked at the police garage due to a lack of proper maintenance. Some of the vehicles are parked as a result of faulty fuel pumps and other parts which could have easily been fixed, but insufficient fuel supply had rendered most of the vehicles road-unworthy.

The findings also reveal that there is an inadequate supply of riot protective gear, batons, truncheons, and tear gas for riot control management. Tapelines, traffic vests, and other traffic equipment are also lacking. A senior police officer added during an interview that "The main problems are lack of modern facilities such as modern and full-fledged offices for the policemen and women in uniform. From the discussion with another interviewee, the research discovers a severe challenge that could have a destructive impact on the morale of the police force. The interviewee expresses concerns about the lack of insurance for police officers in the case of unfortunate incidents. The interviewee bemoans thus: "There are no insurances to cover the police personnel after when police got injured during police operations and welfare needs is hampering a lot of performance". It may be observed from the basis of findings that the preponderance of these challenges stems from a severe budgetary issue. In fact, this observation is emphatically stated by the majority of the respondents (38.2% and 36.6%) who disagreed and strongly disagreed that the budgetary allocations from the government are sufficient for handling issues of crime prevention and control. This shows not only that government funding for police operations is not forthcoming, but may also indicate a major issue that effectively undermines the role of the police in national security.

On the issue of cooperation between the public and the police, the research reveals that despite the huge potential that lies in the police-community relationship for improving security, the GPF has not been able to establish ideal relations with the GBA public and thus remains unsuccessful in tapping the potentials of such relations have to offer. One interviewee made the following comments: "The cooperation of the public is very minimal; people don't bother to report crimes on time, neighbours felt

reluctant to report crimes to the police, and information sharing is lacking. The police at times fail to respond early to a reported crime due to the lack of proper mobility". There is also a lack of access to information to track alleged criminals or secure the full cooperation of the community in information sharing. Training in every institution is indispensable and it is the foundation for an institution's development. However, due to inadequate funding, the lack of training has affected the competency level of police officers. A professional security institution like the police requires training that is in line with best practices of policing on crime prevention and control. In the study an officer was quoted as follows: "For instance, many officers are not trained investigators and they have insufficient exposure to overseas professional police training"

In a well-established and structured security institution, discipline, good conduct, and ethics are the overarching foundation for its existence. Therefore, without discipline and good ethics, institutions like the police would perish. Again, in most cases, people tend to lose confidence in the police due to corrupt activities many associates with the police. Where corruption takes precedence over discipline within the police hierarchy, there is the likelihood for the force to be unable to do its duties as required by the constitution. Thus, the purpose of the institution will be defeated and no meaningful gains will be achieved in the prevention and control of crime.

Conclusion

The study sought to identify the methods and approaches applied by the police in their operations, evaluate the effectiveness of the methods and approaches on crime prevention and control used by the police, and assess the challenges faced by the police on crime prevention and control in the GBA. Overall, the research assessed the GPF on crime prevention and control in the GBA from 2016 to 2019. The results of the study showed that The Gambia Police Force had impacted crime prevention and control in the Greater Banjul Area during the period under study. This is due largely to the fairly-structured methods and approaches to crime management put in place to measure the existing methods and their effects on crime management in the Greater Banjul Area. The effectiveness of these methods and approaches also depends in part, on information and intelligence sharing, communication system among members of staff, regular community policing sensitisation, training of police personnel, fairly-structured record-keeping system, fairly-structured forensic and analysis unit, crime scene investigation unit, and mobile traffic unit and professionals being in place for crime management activities.

However, the performance of the GPF during the period of understudy was hindered by a lack of commitment from the government leading to heavy reliance on logistics from private donors in the socio-political context of unpredictable existing domestic security and political environments. There is a need for the Gambian Government to allocate sufficient funds to the Gambia Police Force to enable the police to purchase operational vehicles for their patrols and riot control operations, develop a digitalized complaint management system for the GPF and procure other equipment for forensic and analysis unit. This would help the police operations and logistics department to provide the purposes needed resources so that the units could perform their responsibilities and improve on their strength and capability to mitigate crime and improve security. By giving this support, the government would complement the efforts of the committed police command and hierarchy to mitigate the problem usually associated with crime. Similarly, a holistic area mapping for the Greater Banjul Area, naming of streets and compound identifications, and the identification of an emergency route for police response teams during emergencies are important for the prevention and control of crime. This study has added to the body of knowledge in the field of security studies and developmental studies. It has identified critical security issues, especially in the Republic of The Gambia. The challenge of the feedback mechanism between the police force and the citizenry has served as a hindrance in crime prevention and control in GBA.

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