



Challenges of Effective Policing in Ghana: The Central Regional Command in Perspective

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Abstract

The police plays an important role in maintaining peace and security within the state. Yet, they are faced with numerous challenges that hinder them from performing their duties effectively. Informed by the Democratic theory of Policing and drawing on the narratives of fifteen participants using the purposive and convenient sampling techniques, the study investigated the challenges that hinder the police from effectively performing their duties. The findings revealed that challenges including inadequate/lack of logistics (such as vehicles, bulletproof vests, reflectors, arms, and ammunition), inadequate personnel, language barrier, and political interference are negative factors that hampered the efforts of the Ghana Police Service in carrying out their mandate effectively. These challenges further affected the morale of personnel of the Police Service, which in turn negatively influenced their motivation to effectively carry out their duties (*i.e.*, crime control and prevention). The findings also showed that the inefficiencies in the service hamper their day-to-day operations and negatively impacted the confidence of service men and women in going all out to undertake their duties when the need arises. The study recommends that efforts should be made to meet the challenges, especially the improvement in the staff strength and improved logistical and equipment support to enhance the activities of the Police Service.

Subject Areas

Criminology

Keywords

Policing, Crime, Crime Prevention, Central Region, Challenges, Ghana

1. Introduction

The history of policing in Ghana dates back to the colonial era. In the early

1830s, British colonial authorities introduced professional police services to what was then called the Gold Coast. The police then aimed at safeguarding the security of trade and helping to expand colonial space in the hinterland to increase agricultural and mineral exploitation (Ward, 1948) [1]. The police was undoubtedly used to protect the ruling and propertied classes and did not perform essential duties for ordinary citizens. In consequence, the inefficiency of the police was a major problem in the era. The inefficiency, together with the non-stationing of police officers in the neighbourhoods, led to a major confidence problem for the police (Ward, 1948) [1]. It is noteworthy that police effectiveness is needed for effective police work. It has been widely established that without citizens' approval and consent, the police can hardly carry out their mandates (Frazier, 2007) [2]. Second, police legitimacy depends on numerous factors, including the effectiveness and efficiency of the police, respect of citizens, satisfaction with police performance, level of accountability, and how the police adhere to procedural rules when interacting with citizens (Flexon, Lurigio & Greenleaf, 2009 [3]; Mazerolle, Bennett, Davis, Sargeant & Manning, 2013 [4]). The public would defer to authorities and directives of the police when they perceive the police to be effective in using procedural means to accomplish their goals and when they are satisfied with the services provided by the police. Similarly, scholars such as (Aning, 2006) [5] argued that an effective police service can be a good measure of governance, democracy, and development. The expectations and reality—between what the Police are supposed to do and what they can realistically do in a democratic state like Ghana—is one of the major issues at the heart of policing in the country and indeed the whole African democracies. The universal expectation of the role of the police is to protect citizens by preventing crime and ensuring access to justice and the rule of law (Oppong, 2011) [6].

Although an effective police service can result in positive policing outcomes, in Ghana, the police service is faced with human resource constraints. The staggering constraints in the police service coupled with the shortfall in staff strength have led to the rise in violent crimes, including armed robberies, which in most cases occur at night. Data from the Ghana Police Service shows that violent crime results in more than 500 deaths per year (GPS archives, 2019) [7].

The Gold Coast police system known as the Constabulary Gold Coast was renamed the Ghana Police when Ghana obtained political independence in 1957. Like the Gold Coast Constabulary, the Ghana Police Service faces several major problems, both structural and behavioural. Structurally, the police lack the basic equipment and amenities needed for the successful performance of their duties. Most police officers are poorly housed and poorly paid. More so, postcolonial policing in Ghana inherited many components from colonial policing. For example, the total workforce of the Ghana Police Service (GPS) continues to hamper the efforts of policing and crime detection/prevention in Ghana (Boateng, Makin & Yoo, 2014) [8].

Citizens ought to have access to the Police and feel safer as a result of the protection they offer. Yet most African Police Services have failed to meet the stan-

dard set by the United Nations for effective policing of the citizens. The United Nations says that at least the ratio of police officers to the populace should be 1:450 to maintain security, law, and order (Aning, 2006) [5]. Unfortunately, in Ghana, the situation is different. Police to civilian ratio in Ghana stands way below the required standard put forward by the United Nations. With a population of about 30 million people and counting and a police staff strength of about 28,000, this puts the police-to-civilian ratio to about 1:1200. This situation makes policing and maintaining law and orders a difficult task for the men and women in uniform (Aning, 2006) [5]. As a result, the inadequacies in the staff strength of the Ghana Police Service also result in inefficiencies such as the capacity for rapid response and thus arriving late at crime scenes (Oppong, 2011) [6]. The deficit of police effectiveness in Ghana is caused by several factors, such as inadequate personnel and the lack of logistics. The police are ineffective in controlling and preventing crime and in detecting and apprehending criminals. Their ineffectiveness has created a heightened sense of insecurity and fear among Ghanaians. Ghanaians are worried not only about crime rates rising but also about being attacked. Today, people do not feel safe wherever they are, whether at home, in the shopping mall, at the community park, or even taking a walk in the neighborhood. These inefficiencies and inadequacies have led to crime increasing in various communities in the country. While there exists extant literature on the increase in crime rates in Ghana, there is a paucity of the total output of the staff strength of the Ghana Police Service in crime detection and prevention in the literature rarely documented with regards to Central Region. This, then necessitated the study to question how do the challenges of the Ghana Police Service in the Central Region contribute to crime, crime control, and prevention? The study is useful to the state, especially the Ghana Police Service, as it provides them with an in-depth knowledge of strategies that can be employed to detect and prevent crime despite the challenges bedevilled by the service.

However, the study was limited to the Central Regional Police Headquarters and not the entirety of the Divisional Commands within the Central Region. Thus, caution should be exercised when interpreting the findings. The study also focused on Junior Rank officers stationed at the Central Regional Headquarters of the Ghana Police Service.

2. Literature Review

This study aimed to examine the challenges of police numbers on crime control effectiveness. The literature review covers three areas thus theoretical, conceptual, and empirical reviews. The outline of the review is as follows:

2.1. Theoretical Issues

This review focuses on the theoretical perspective that forms the basis of the study. The main theory that guides this study is the democratic theory of policing. The model has been explained about its relevance and application to this study.

2.2. Democratic Theory of Policing

The democratic theory of policing developed by Kuykendall and Unsinger (1982) [9], policing is based on the democratic principle that “anyone who exercises authority on behalf of the community (like the police) is accountable to the community for the exercise of that authority” (Kuykendall & Unsinger, 1982) [9]. The democratic theory of policing rests on the belief that policing involves the empowerment of a new level of social organization to generate work for the police, namely, groups, neighbourhoods, communities, businesses, civic groups, and so forth (Kuykendall & Unsinger, 1982) [9]. The theory also maintains that the success of a democratic government depends, in large measure, on the voluntary compliance of citizens with society’s laws and norms of conduct (Kuykendall & Unsinger, 1982) [9].

Police in democracies are always in a dilemma, for in a free society, there is a delicate balance between enforcing laws and maintaining order effectively on the one hand and being repressive on the other (Kuykendall & Unsinger, 1982) [9]. Policing in a democratic society has the following roles to perform: acts as a democratic role model for citizens in society by being impartial, fair, and objective, showing restraint, compassion, and tolerance; practices consistent enforcement of the laws; investigates crimes and apprehends suspected criminals; educates the public to protect themselves and their property; management of interpersonal and inter-group conflicts with minimum reliance on force; and works with other community and criminal justice agencies to alter the causes of crime and to cope effectively with its occurrence (Kuykendall and Unsinger 1982) [9].

Bayley (2005) [10] was of the view that the essential features of democratic policing are responsiveness and accountability. A democratic police force, according to him, is one that responds to the needs of individuals and private groups as well as the needs of the government. Strengthening these mechanisms will strengthen the quality of democratic policing. The police, in truly democratic countries, according to Bayley (2005) [10], serve the disaggregate members of the public and their needs are uppermost in the mind of a democratic police force. He, however, maintains that the problem that most countries face is that democratic policing, especially in its concern with human rights and accountability, is under attack all the time because of reported increases, firstly, in serious crime and, secondly, in terrorism, assassination, and collective disorder (Stone & Ward, 2000) [11]. When there are increases in individual as well as collective threats to law and order, democratic policing becomes vulnerable to being labelled a “soft strategy” (Bayley, 2005) [10].

The democratic theory of policing also derives its ideas from the model of deliberative democracy (Bayley, 2005) [10]. Deliberative democracy signifies a democratic system that deliberates to the extent “that the decisions it reaches reflect open discussion among the participants, with the people ready to listen to the views and consider the interest of others, and modify their own opinions accordingly” (Ramasamy, 2004) [12]. In deliberative democracy, decisions are taken

wholly by consensus. It values the manner of open discussion that hears all points of view and reaches a decision. For deliberative democracy to work well, people must exercise democratic self-restraint; they must think it is more important that the decision reached should be a genuinely democratic one and a decision that they favour (Ramasamy, 2004) [12].

Similarly, the developmental model of democracy is concerned with the development of human individuals and the community. It holds that citizens are “free” only when they participate directly and continuously in shaping the life of their community (Ramasamy, 2004) [12]. Policing is also based on a similar belief that members of a community can lead a peaceful and orderly life only if they directly participate in Policing activities (Bayley, 2005) [10]. The theory also focuses on the continual tension between the desire for order and the desire for liberty that exists in every democratic society. The theory maintains that both are essential (Kuykendall & Unsinger, 1982) [9]. While, as the case of the Police State suggests, one can have the former without the latter, it is not possible to have a society with liberty that does not also have a minimum degree of order (Manning, 2015) [13]. The balance between these, however, will vary depending on the context and period. The democratic theory of policing seeks to avoid the extremes of either anarchy or repression. According to this theory, Policing is an explicit effort to create a more democratic police force (Kuykendall & Unsinger, 1982) [9]. It is based on the assumption that policing will be more effective if it has the support of and input from the community and if the community recognizes the social service and order maintenance aspects of the police role (Bayley, 2005) [10].

2.3. Concept of Crime

In ordinary language, a crime is an unlawful act punishable by a state or other authority. The term crime does not, in modern criminal law, have any simple and universally accepted definition (Farmer, 2008) [14] though statutory definitions have been provided for certain purposes (Martin, 2003) [15]. The most popular view is that crime is a category created by law; in other words, something is a crime if declared as such by the relevant and applicable law (Farmer, 2008) [14]. One proposed definition is that a crime or offense (or criminal offense) is an act harmful not only to some individual but also to a community, society, or the state. Such acts are forbidden and punishable by law (Farmer, 2008) [14]. The notion that acts such as murder, rape, and theft are to be prohibited exists worldwide (Martin, 2003) [15]. What precisely is a criminal offense is defined by the criminal law of each country. While many have a catalogue of crimes called the criminal code, in some common law countries, no such comprehensive statute exists (Olivelle, 2004) [16]. The state (government) has the power to severely restrict one’s liberty for committing a crime. In modern societies, there are procedures that investigations and trials must follow. If found guilty, an offender may be sentenced to a form of reparation such as a community sentence or, depending on the nature of their offense, to undergo impri-

sonment, life imprisonment, or, in some jurisdictions, execution (Olivelle, 2004) [16]. Usually, to be classified as a crime, the “act of doing something criminal” must, with certain exceptions, be accompanied by the intention to do something criminal (Martin, 2003) [15]. While every crime violates the law, not every violation of the law counts as a crime. Breaches of private law (torts and breaches of contract) are not automatically punished by the state but can be enforced through civil procedures (Martin, 2003) [15].

2.4. Policing

The Greek word “politeia” meant all matters affecting the survival and well-being of the state (polis). The word and the idea were developed by the Romans (the Latin word “politia” can be translated as the state), largely disappeared with their Empire, but were resurrected in the medieval universities to justify the authority of a prince over his territories (Emsley, 2007) [17]. “Police” refers to a particular kind of social institution, while “policing” implies a set of processes with specific social functions. “Police” is not found in every society, and police organizations and personnel can have a variety of shifting forms (Emsley, 2007) [17]. “Policing,” however, is arguably a necessity in any social order, which may be carried out by several different processes and institutional arrangements. A state-organized specialist “police” organization of the modern kind is only one example of policing’ (Reiner & Newburn, 2000) [18]. Attempts to define policing have focused on the range of different aspects of the diverse roles that the service performs. First, a traditional “common-sense” definition of police work that primarily a matter of law enforcement considered (Blair, 2005) [19]. Although this approach does not account for the many other aspects of police work that do not, directly or indirectly, relate to crime control and law enforcement, it has the advantage of providing a relatively clear, concise definition. Other perspectives that seek to reflect the wider activities performed by the police are then considered. One approach has been to define the police service in terms of its recourse to the use of force and its power over ordinary citizens (Rowe, 2007) [20]. Certainly, the police service exerts a coercive power over citizens not available to many other agencies. However, approaches based on the centrality of force to policing need to account for the recourse that other institutions have to physical force (Rowe, 2002) [21].

2.5. Types of Policing

Literature suggests that there are various types of Policing, and they include: predictive policing this type of policing refers to the usage of mathematical, predictive analytics, and other analytical techniques in law enforcement to identify potential criminal activity (Rienks, 2015) [22]. Predictive policing methods fall into four general categories: methods for predicting crimes, methods for predicting offenders, methods for predicting perpetrators’ identities, and methods for predicting victims of crime (Rienks, 2015) [22]. Second, the preventive police also deal with that aspect of law enforcement intended to act as a deterrent to the

commission of a crime (Neocleous, 2000) [23]. Preventive policing is considered a defining characteristic of the modern police, typically associated with Robert Peel's London Metropolitan Police, established in 1829 (Neocleous, 2000) [23]. Third, Proactive policing is the practice of deterring criminal activity by showing police presence, the use of police powers by both uniformed and plain-clothed officers, and engaging the public to learn their concerns, as well as investigating and discovering offenses and conspiracies to commit crimes, thereby preventing crime from taking place in the first place. In contrast, responding to a complaint after a crime has been committed is reactive policing (Ankony & Kelley, 1999) [24], and lastly, this is a policing strategy that involves the identification and analysis of specific crime and disorder problems to develop effective response strategies (Telep & Weisburd, 2012) [25]. This approach requires police to be proactive in identifying underlying problems that can be targeted to reduce crime and disorder at their roots (Telep & Weisburd, 2012) [25].

Empirical Review The empirical review covers various studies that have been conducted by different authors and researchers that are about this study. The empirical literature review was done in line with the objective that is guiding this study, an outline of areas where researchers agree and areas where research findings are inconsistent.

Research has outlined various challenges and problems police personnel face in their line of duty. For instance, research conducted by Haberman and Ratcliffe (2012) [26] investigated the predictive challenges of policing. The researchers collected data from 450 police personnel in New York using a questionnaire. The findings demonstrate that repeated armed street robbery chains tend, and prolonged response time to emergency police calls was among the major challenges they face in their line of duty.

Also, Hussain, Hussain, Ahmed, and Alam's (2016) [27] paper attempts to analyse the various administrative and socio-cultural problems faced by prospective women to be recruited into the police force, as well as the same nature of problems faced by the already serving women police staff in Pakistan. The study was based on a secondary analysis of reported problems faced by women police in Pakistan. The findings of the study reveal that certain administrative problems such as male officers' strict attitude, access problems to the crime scenes, police station's infrastructure, recruitment, and training problems, and other sociocultural factors such as sexual harassment, general perception towards women policing, male officers authoritative attitude and lack of cooperation from them have been the salient pulling factors that hamper the efficiency of the already employed women police force as well as discourage the general women folk from entering into the police department.

Hoggett, Redford, Toher, and White (2019) [28] studied challenges in policing. The study was a nationwide survey that sampled 12,549 police personnel in England and Wales. The study required participants to outline various problems they encountered as police officers. The findings of the study revealed that major problems include harassment from the public, limited logistics in some

police stations, attacks from criminals, lack of cooperation from the public, and limited support from other security services.

Recent research by Chinwokwu (2017) [29] also examined how police authorities manage their personnel, as well as the factors militating against police authorities in managing their personnel for effective crime control and prevention in Nigeria. The study used both quantitative and qualitative designs to attempt to identify the criteria used in posting police officers. Data were obtained through questionnaires from 360 randomly selected police personnel. Simple percentages and chi-square tests were employed to analyse the collected data. The qualitative data were content analysed. The findings of the study revealed that police personnel were of the view that crime control was effective in some areas while it was not so in other areas. The study findings also showed that police and civilian cooperation was a factor in the effectiveness of policing. Also, it was found that police effectiveness was influenced by proper personnel management.

2.6. Methods

The methodology explains the research design, the study area, sampling size and procedure, data collection instruments and procedure, data analysis, and ethical considerations for the study.

A research design is the procedure for collecting, analysing, interpreting, and reporting data in research studies (Creswell 2013) [30]. It is the overall plan for connecting the conceptual research problems with the pertinent (and achievable) empirical research. In other words, the research design sets the procedure for the required data, the methods to be applied to collect and analyze this data, and how all of this is going to answer the research question. The qualitative research design was employed in the study. This design was appropriate for the study because it provided a systematic and essentially narrative perspective of the challenges of effective policing in Ghana (Ulin, Robinson, Tolley & McNeill, 2002) [31]. Further, the design was suitable for the study because we do not know much about the phenomenon hence, the design helped us explore more about the phenomenon of the challenges of effective policing in Ghana with emphasis on the Central Regional Command of the Ghana Police Service (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007) [32]. The purpose of the study was to provide participants the opportunity to share their experiences regarding the challenges faced by the police regarding effective policing; hence, employing this design helped me explore the research topic with varying levels of depth. This approach also helped in the process and understanding of the various perceptions participants have regarding the police effectiveness in crime control and prevention. Besides, the purpose of the study was not to provide objective responses but rather to allow participants to express their views on the challenges faced by the police. This approach best fits the study as it emphasizes the interpretive process of people creating meanings from their experiences with the challenges and perceptions regarding police effectiveness in crime control and prevention (Riesman, 1990) [33].

3. Study Setting

The study institution was the Central Regional Police Headquarters of the Ghana Police Service. The Regional Headquarters is located at Pedu junction, Cape Coast. The Command has seven (7) Police Divisions, twenty-four (24) Police Districts, and seventy-seven (77) Police Stations and Posts. The Central Regional Police Headquarters is located in Cape Coast. The Metropolis is bounded to the South by the Gulf of Guinea, to the West by the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality (at Iture bridge), to the East by the Abura Asebu Kwamankese District, and to the North by the Twifu Heman Lower Denkyira District. It is located at longitude $1^{\circ}15'W$ and latitude $5^{\circ}06'N$. It occupies an area of approximately 122 square kilometers, with the farthest point at Brabedze located about 17 kilometers from Cape Coast, the Central Regional capital (GSS, 2014) (Figure 1).

Cape Coast Metropolis is one of the six Metropolis in Ghana and the only among the 20 districts in the Central Region. The Assembly is divided into two Sub Metros: The Cape Coast South Sub Metro and the Cape Coast North Sub Metro. It has two constituencies that are coterminous with the Sub Metros. The

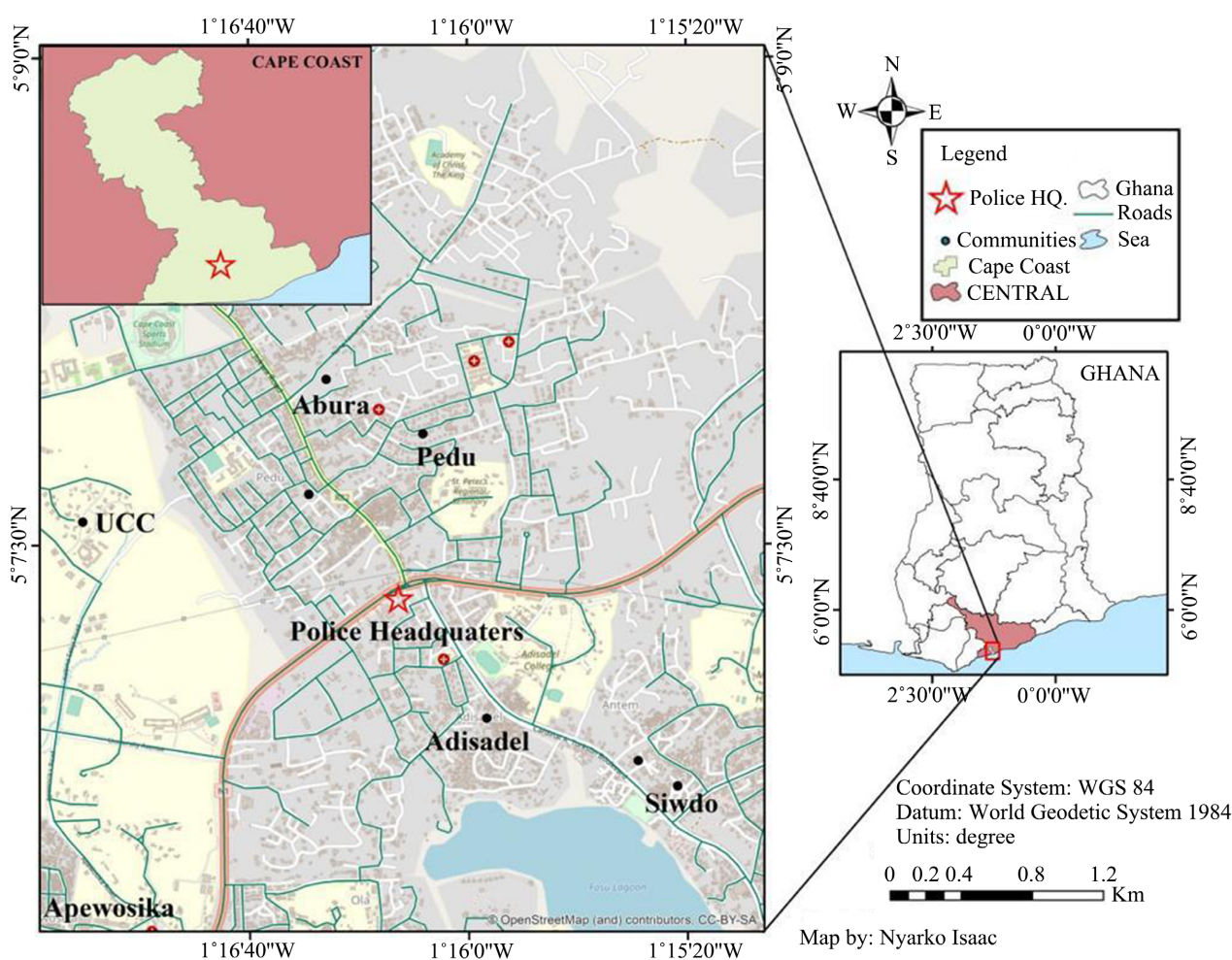


Figure 1. Map of cape coast Metropolis showing the study area. Source: Nyarko (2023).

people of Cape Coast are part of a larger group of people known as Fantes found in the central part of Southern Ghana and are among the Akans ethnic group of Ghana. The language spoken by the people is Fante. People belonging to other ethnic groups are also found in the Metropolis. The entire Metropolis constitutes one traditional area with the Oguaa Omanhen as the Paramount Chief. Christianity has long been the dominant religion in the Metropolis, although there are a significant number of Muslims and traditionalists (GSS, 2014) [34]. Choice, convenience, and duration of the study underscore the reasons for selecting this area for the study.

A population refers to the group of persons, artifacts, or entities that describe a common characteristic of the investigation objects (Ogula, 2005) [35]. In this study, the population comprised all officers of the Ghana Police Service within the Central Regional Command, specifically the Cape Coast Regional Headquarters. The choice for selecting officers within the Regional Headquarters was based on convenience and the researchers position as an insider. Although some scholars argue that operating as an insider can pose some challenges and biases, some scholars (Bonner & Tolhurst, 2002) [36] also argue that operating as an insider can be useful. For instance, an insider approach allows researchers more rapid and complete acceptance by their participants. Therefore, participants are typically more open with researchers so that there may be a greater depth to the data gathered. In terms of sampling and sampling procedure, Purposive and convenient sampling techniques were used in this study. Purposively, the researchers know some police officers at the Cape Coast Regional Headquarters. The researchers purposively contacted them to discuss the challenges of effective policing in Ghana. Some of the issues discussed with participants purposively contacted included: what are the challenges of the Ghana Police Service in the Central Region, and how do the challenges of the Ghana Police Service in the Central Region contribute to crime, crime control, and prevention? The purposive sampling technique was useful in the study because it helped in effectively identifying potential participants that were engaged in the study (Bryman, 2008) [37]. The purposive sampling technique helped the researchers identify samples with particular characteristics, such as individuals who worked with the police service, had a fair knowledge about the workings of the police service, and overall, were interested in taking part in the study. The convenience sampling technique on the otherhand, was also employed to reach out to other potential participants (*i.e.*, police officers) who were available and willing to participate in the study. Although convenience sampling does not provide representative data, this sampling technique was useful because it helped me to conveniently elicit information from participants.

In selecting the sample size, it was dependent on the willingness of the participants and saturation. The willingness of participants was based on their own voluntary after they had understood the nature and purpose of the study. Thus, they can then decide whether or not to participate in the study. In qualitative studies, there are no strict rules for sample size determination; however, the

sample size needed is dependent on the questions to be asked, the data to be gathered as well as the available resources needed for the study (Patton, 2002) [38]. The sample sizes for qualitative research are, therefore, often limited to allow for a thorough analysis of a particular subject (Patton, 2002) [38]. The standard is that the study has to provide enough information to answer the questions of the research. Moreover, the concept of saturation was applied in the study when no new information or themes were observed in the data being obtained (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006) [39]. Thus, the researchers ended the sampling of new participants when subsequent interviews were not bringing in new information regarding the research questions. In all, a total of 15 participants took part in the study. This included some police officers and community members who resided in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

The study made use of an in-depth interview (IDI) guide as the instrument for the collection of data. The in-depth interview guide was used to collect data from participants. The study used the in-depth interview technique because it offered us the opportunity to use questioning techniques so that insight into responses can be obtained through further probing and explanations. The questions that guided the study were semi-structured and based on the objectives of the study. The data collection instruments were structured into two sections. The first section was about the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. This included participants' age, educational level, religion, occupation, ethnicity, and place of birth. The second section focused on the challenges of the Ghana Police Service in the Central Region. Questions on how the challenges of the Ghana Police Service in the Central Region contribute to crime, crime control, and prevention were asked which include: How do the challenges influence crime, crime control, and prevention? What sort of crimes are committed due to the challenges faced by the police service? How can these challenges be resolved? What other means can the police use in preventing and controlling crime despite these challenges?

The interview sessions were one-on-one with the various participants. The format of the interview process was explained to them, including their rights as a participant. The information obtained was captured on the tape recorder. Based on the objectives of the study, the interviews followed the structure as captured in the interview guide. The field data were transcribed first. The transcripts were carried out in the Microsoft Word document for all participants. The transcribed data were double-checked and updated to ensure that all the answers and information provided were correct for all the questions posed to participants. Themes were then developed manually based on the research objective, and the result was presented based on the study's themes and objectives.

Ethically, the issue of informed consent was strictly adhered to in this study. Participants were assured of a high level of confidentiality; thus, information obtained from them was not shared with anybody. Audio recordings and transcriptions of the interview were kept safe. The issue of anonymity was also upheld in this study. Participants were assured that their identities would not be revealed. By so doing, pseudonyms were assigned to each participant so that the

information obtained could not be traced back to them.

4. Views of Participants

The study sought to examine the challenges of the Ghana Police Service in the Central Region and also ascertain how the challenges of the Ghana Police Service in the Central Region contribute to crime, crime control, and prevention.

4.1. Participants' Socio-Demographic Background

A total number of 15 officers participated in the study. Participants were reached through the purposive sampling technique. With this technique, the researchers were able to reach participants who were interested in the study. The age of participants in the study ranged from 22 to 45 years. All participants had attained some form of formal education. All participants were police officers during the time of the study. In all, a total of fifteen participants (*i.e.*, 9 males and 6 females) participated in the study.

Table 1 gives a summary of the sociodemographic characteristics of the participants who took part in the study.

4.2. Challenges of the Police Service Influence Crime, Crime Control, and Prevention

This section discusses how the challenges facing the Ghana Police Service influence crime, crime control, and prevention of crime.

Table 1. Participants' socio-demographic background.

Pseudo name	Gender	Age	Level of Education	Department/unit	Rank
Yaw	Male	22	SHS	DOVVSU	Constable
Esi	Female	25	SHS	Comms. Unit	Lance corporal
Nana	Male	23	Tertiary	Logistics	Constable
Akos	Female	37	Tertiary	Comms. Unit	Corporal
Abena	Female	29	Tertiary	Operations	Constable
Ama	Female	35	Tertiary	Public Affairs	Lance corporal
Aba	Female	38	Tertiary	MTTU	Sergeant
Afua	Female	39	Tertiary	Public Affairs	Inspector
Kwame	Male	37	Tertiary	Crime office	Inspector
Kwaku	Male	29	Tertiary	Arms/ammunition	Constable
Kojo	Male	22	SHS	Highway Patrol	Constable
Nii	Male	25	SHS	Crime office	Lance corporal
Osei	Male	26	Tertiary	Public Affairs	Constable
Boakye	Male	45	Tertiary	Comms. Unit	Chief Inspector
Owusu	Male	29	Tertiary	Operations	constable

Source: Field data (2022).

The participants indicated that challenges, including inadequate/lack of logistics (*i.e.*, vehicles, bulletproof vests, reflectors, arms, and ammunition), inadequate personnel, language barrier, and political interference in crime rates inadvertently influenced crime control and prevention of crimes. For most participants, these challenges result in delays in justice delivery as crime perpetrators are sometimes not apprehended immediately. Also, inadequate personnel and lack of logistics sometimes create inefficiencies that hamper their day-to-day operations. For instance, some participants indicated these challenges affect the morale of men and women in going all out to undertake their duties when need be. Some participants expressed varying reasons on how the challenges of the Police Service influence crime and crime control/prevention. A participant said this:

The inadequate personnel is a problem for the service. Sometimes the stress on the job is difficult to deal with. It is challenging, but what can you do? For instance, I am saying, you might think you have come for eight hours of duties, and as a married person or not even a married person, you have to get enough time for yourself, but instead of the eight hours shift then, you end up with twelve hours. Thus, your time factor is taken whether you like it or not (Aba: 38 years, Sergeant).

Another participant also said this:

With this, for instance, every day, you have to get night patrols and day patrols which will be moving in this jurisdiction. So, if there are not enough vehicles around, the patrols won't be effective because Cape Coast is big, so you can't tell a police officer to walk in all towns on Cape Coast. With this, if something happens at a particular place, with enough vehicles, we can go there swiftly and respond, but without the vehicles, by the time we get there, the crime might already happen. So, this affects crime control and crime prevention. The criminals, too, know the terrain, so areas where they know the Police are unable to patrol, are places where they usually operate (Owusu: 29 years, Constable).

Nii, during the interview, confirmed the views of his colleagues. He expressed:

We don't have enough vehicles. For instance, now you are seeing a lot of vehicles around now, but the majority of those vehicles are not working. So, if we're to go outside and for instance to do some enquires about some places which abhor criminals, we can't go there on foot or by taxi but by the police vehicle. But if we do not have a vehicle, then it will become difficult for us to go there, and with this, anytime there will be a crime and other things we can't do anything about (Nii: 25 years, Lance Corporal)

Some participants also shared their views:

It doesn't make the officer work effectively. If I say effectively, I am trying to say that when someone is doing an investigation, and there is an implication of someone, and he is supposed to be arrested, you know, we can't. We can't go according to the law. The law won't work properly in this instance because anything you want to do, someone will intervene. It doesn't give you the flow to do

the work effectively (Afua: 39 years, Inspector)

Hmm, yes, yes. It affects us; as I said earlier when there is intervention, there is not enough equipment or gadgets to do your work as you should be doing. For instance, when you're supposed to go for patrols, there's no vehicle, or maybe after patrol and you arrest someone and come back, and a senior person intervenes for the person, it doesn't make you do what you're supposed to do in terms of crime prevention. Do you get it? Men are willing to work, but sometimes the, hmmm, the things which will ginger you to work are not there (Kwakur: 29 years, Inspector)

Some participants revealed that these challenges negatively impacted their ability to carry out their duties. For instance, some indicated that interference in their work from senior officers and some persons politically and socially connected to affluent people within the society negatively impacted the morale of personnel. This, they claim, sometimes creates a sense of disaffection for the men and women who are genuinely committed to the work. A participant said this:

Yeah, it always dims our morale. Let's assume that we're supposed to go for a patrol, and there is no vehicle, then we have to stand by and wait. So, the morale to go and work is already down when the vehicle is in. Also, let's assume you arrest someone and bring the person to the station, and there's an intervention from a higher authority; it dims your morale; thus, next time you are supposed to arrest someone again, I don't think you will make up your mind to even do it (Boakye: 45 years, Chief Inspector).

The narratives of participants show that challenges (*i.e.*, inadequate/lack of logistics, political interference, inadequate personnel) confronting the service hampers efforts at controlling and preventing crime. The challenges highlighted by the participants concur with studies from scholars such as Appiahene-Gyamfi (2002) [40], and Bradford (2011) [41], who argue that challenges such as lack of logistics, inadequate personnel have the propensity to influence law enforcement officers in controlling and preventing crime rates. The findings show that challenges in all forms, including human resources and which resulted in a prolonged response rate to crime, inadequate logistics, and lack of corporation from political authorities were inhibiting factors that negatively influenced the Police from effectively carrying out their duties. The findings further emphasize how these challenges negatively impact crime control and prevention. For instance, a lack of logistics such as cars limits the ability of the Police to adequately respond to robbery attacks. According to Bayley (2005) [10], an effective Police force responds to the needs of individuals and that of the larger society. However, the findings show that the ineffectiveness and challenges of the Police Service hamper efforts at effectively controlling and preventing crime.

Summarily, findings revealed that challenges including inadequate/lack of logistics (such as vehicles, bulletproof vests, reflectors, arms, and ammunition), inadequate personnel, language barrier, and political interference are negative

factors that hampered efforts of the Ghana Police Service in carrying out their mandate effectively. These challenges further affected the morale of personnel of the Police Service, which in turn negatively influenced their motivation to effectively carry out their duties (*i.e.*, crime control and prevention). Consequently, challenges such as inadequate/lack of logistics, inadequate personnel, language barrier, and political interference result in a delay in justice delivery as crime perpetrators are sometimes not apprehended immediately. Also, inadequate personnel and lack of logistics sometimes create inefficiencies that hamper their day-to-day operations. For instance, the findings showed that such challenges negatively impacted the confidence of service men and women in going all out to undertake their duties when the need arises.

5. Conclusions

The study sought to examine the challenges of effective policing in Ghana with emphasis on the Central Region Command. Law and order, protect lives and property, maintain peace and security, prevent crime, apprehend criminals, maintain public order and safety, enforce the law, and detect and investigate criminal activities within the society, yet challenges including inadequate/lack of logistics, inadequate personnel, language barrier, and political interference are negative factors that hampered efforts of the Ghana Police Service in carrying out their mandate effectively. These challenges act as impediments to the effective function of the Ghana Police Service in crime control and prevention.

Despite the significance of democratic policing for the nation's progress, there are numerous obstacles facing the police. Law and order cannot be maintained at any moment when there is an insufficient number of police officers. The study further showed that inadequate logistics sometimes create inefficiencies that hamper their day-to-day operations. For instance, the findings showed that such challenges negatively impacted the confidence of service men and women in going all out to undertake their duties when the need arises. This, then, based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommend that the Ghana Police Service should be insulated from external influences and given the utmost autonomy to operate. This will help ensure that the Police Service function effectively without any interference from political heads and appointees in their day-to-day operation. To comprehend and build on this study in the foreseeable future, the authors suggested that the topic under study should be replicated in the other divisions of the Central Regional Command in particular and the other divisions across Ghana. Again, future studies could expand the scope of the methodology using both qualitative and quantitative approaches focusing on both senior and junior rank officers within the Police Service.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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