An evaluation of community policing partnerships in combating human trafficking in South Africa

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Abstract

Human trafficking is not a recent phenomenon, as it is believed that acts of human abduction for various reasons can be traced back to time immemorial. The manifestation of this crime is escalating, with elusive trends and patterns across the globe, and South Africa is no exception. This study attempt to evaluate community policing partnerships in combating human trafficking. This study was carried out utilising a qualitative approach. Forty interviews were carried out among officials deployed in the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI), the South African Police Service (SAPS), the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), the Department of Social Development (DSD), the Gauteng Provincial Office, as well as with the victims regarding their views and experiences on the stakeholder's involvement in combating and investigating human trafficking.

The key findings indicated that the challenges are lack of resources, capacity, budget and lack of cooperation from victims of human trafficking in supporting ongoing investigations, in adequate awareness was also a major challenge for law enforcement agencies, training, knowledge and skills to deal with human trafficking was identified to be also a big challenge for the relevant stakeholders, the findings also indicated a lack of clear strategy and response by stakeholders to successfully investigate, prosecute and incarcerate the perpetrators of human trafficking. Based on the findings, the author provided, possible recommendations such as; the South African government should develop internet regulations and policies to regulate the internet, advanced training and better education including improved awareness strategies; and collaboration with community police forums to strengthen partnerships, improve support and ensure relationship between the SAPS and the community.

Keywords: Human trafficking, Community policing, law enforcement agencies, Criminal justice system, South Africa.

Introduction

As wars and instability continue to ravish Africa, a bygone scourge of humanity is making a devastating comeback: the sickness called human trafficking (Motseki, 2018). Globalisation has (re)shaped the supply and demand side of the increasingly transnational human trafficking market in several ways (Aronowitz & Koning, 2014; Kotiswaran, 2019; Motseki & Mofokeng, 2020). Human trafficking has been on the rise globally, and Africa has been an integral part of the worldwide market in human beings (Mofokeng and Olutola, 2014; Motseki, 2018). Human trafficking has been on the rise globally, and Africa has been an integral part of the worldwide market in human beings (Cucumanova, 2010:4). Even in South Africa there is no exception; the extent of this problem is despite no official statistics, the problem is real, hidden

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in plain sight and tearing at the social fabric of the nation as the demand for cheap labour, and sexual services keeps growing. Unaccounted thousand victims if not more of the victims of human trafficking for sexual, forced labour and other forms of exploitation South African are yet to be known as well as the modus operandi (MO) utilised by criminals. Without doubt, the human and economic costs of this take an immense toll on individuals and communities in South Africa (Motseki, 2018).

The international definition of human trafficking shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, using the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or a position of vulnerability or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for exploitation (United Nations Human Rights, 2018; Dess, 2013; Mofokeng & Olutola, 2014; Motseki, 2018 and Motseki, 2020). This article aimed to evaluate community policing partnerships in combating human trafficking and identify the existing challenges of combating this problem and suggest practical solutions based on international standards and procedures.

Community policing: International perspectives

Since its presentation in the United States of America during the 1970s, Community police (CP) has accomplished a lucky position and is currently a standard philosophical and strategy model directing statements of purpose, objectives, and change projects of most police powers across the world (Marenin, 2009). All things considered, CP as a system stays irresolute, as there are contending sees on the job that networks ought to act in the policing structure (Wisler and Onwudiwe, 2009). This absence of lucidity represents misconception and irregularities with regards to the execution of CP in various nations. Internationally, there are various models of CP and diverse police organizations have executed it in an unexpected way.

The Chicago strategy: United States of America

The Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) was begun in 1993 as an experimental run program in five assorted neighborhoods in Chicago in the United States (US). The objective of CAPS was to support local area individuals and the police to cooperate to decrease wrongdoing. During this period, the crime percentage was on the ascent, people in general was becoming progressively unfortunate of wrongdoing and the police were disappointed by their failure to control wrongdoing while at the same time working in disengagement from the local area. Relations between the police and the local area were stressed and there was no trust between the police and the local area (Skogan and Hartnett, 1995). The Chicago Police Department, related to other city offices and the local area, tried to draw in general society in local area policing (Stevens, 2002). The foundation of CAPS depended on an agreement that, if police, inhabitants and different organizations cooperated, crime percentages could be decreased. The adage of the system turned out to be "Together We Can." Crime declined in the period after the organization was framed fundamentally, and the personal satisfaction improved. The people group and the police trust one another and cooperate on tackling issues.

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CAPS is a community-oriented philosophy of policing and crime prevention including the police, local area, and other government organisations cooperating to distinguish and solve crime. The technique was intended to meet the particular necessities of Chicago (Stevens, 2002). Four key components characterise the methodology to be specific: extended police presence on the beat, local area inclusion, support from different organizations and proactive critical thinking. Five regions in Chicago were chosen to steer the system. The methodology was an extraordinary achievement and, in view of this, was subsequently extended to different locale. CAPS set an illustration of what viable associations can achieve.

Policing is seemingly an establishment portrayed by difficulties and deterrents regularly hard to survive. Subsequently, numerous nations experience experienced issues in definitively managing crime, inferable from worldwide mechanical progressions and improvements. Besides, improvements and headways in crime have likewise overpowered mechanical assets in a weird and indefinable manner. Consequently, the explanation the above worldwide nation was picked as an illustration is that policing procedures, strategy structures, frameworks and models are compelled to expect the situation with adaptability as on account of worldwide business sectors, to fulfill the needs of advancing adaptable crimes. Henceforth, to decide if South African policing frameworks, approaches, models and structures are successful and serviceable, it was important to contrast such and overall patterns and frameworks in policing.

Community policing in South Africa
Contemporarily, the police have come to understand that their work can be made simpler when the local area gives them data concerning crime. This is not just the situation in South Africa, yet has been a standard in different nations too. CP has been a stage for getting sorted out the police, the local area and other job players to shape organisations in policing. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 endorses that CP should be received so the SAPS can get more noteworthy public authenticity and acknowledgment and overall further develop administration conveyance to all South Africa's residents. Through these arrangements, the Ministry of Safety and Security created and carried out a few approaches, plans and procedures to offer importance to the prescripts of the Constitution.

CP has commonly been seen as the obligation of a specific capacity inside the South African Police Services (SAPS) (Pelser, 2002, 24). This obligation is deciphered at different levels, fundamentally as far as the foundation and upkeep of the CPFs and CP has been deciphered by SAPS individuals as an extra capacity to different duties of the police (Pelser, 2002). This is a sign why, in some police headquarters in South Africa, CP is not viewed as a significant part of policing. The after effect of this mentality is that CP cannot be supported in the long haul. Oliver (2004) thought that for CP to be successfully executed, there is a need to anticipate its short, medium and long haul maintainability. Koning (2000) contends that the public authority has the good and protected commitment to ensure a free from any and all harm living climate for the general public by maintaining the rule of law. This is generally done through the foundation and execution of policing constructions, projects and procedures

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Vol. 5 No. 3
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along with sufficient designated power to carry out these. Thus, CP was established in the post-apartheid South Africa to help in securing a safe and secure environment for its people.

Advantages of community policing in South Africa
According to Masogo, Obioha, and De Vries (2014) local area policing unites police and residents to solve crime and take care of neighborhood issues. With people group policing, the accentuation is on halting crime before it occurs, not reacting to calls for administration after the crime happens. Local area policing gives residents more authority over the personal satisfaction locally. Local area policing implies police become part of the area. This assists police with improving feeling of occupant's requirements and assists inhabitants with creating more prominent trust in the police. Fundamentally the local area joins the police division. The individuals who accept that local area policing is drilled in their area are bound to state good viewpoints of the police. Together, in association, the local area and police division cooperate to accomplish a shared objective of a more secure, better spot to live. It is "majority rule government in real life (Smith, 2000).

Community policing is viewed as a successful method to elevate public security and to upgrade the personal satisfaction locally. Community policing assumes a significant part in the two characterizing components of policing: police-local area relations and critical thinking. To start with, it ought to expand police association objectives. Second, it ought to change the manner in which police are coordinated to achieve their objectives. Masogo, Obioha, and De Vries (2014) illustrated that dynamic support is needed from the nearby government to the normal resident all together for local area policing to work. Everybody is answerable for defending the government assistance of the area. Not at all like customary policing techniques, the objectives of policing are extended and the impression of local area is changed. Conventional policing accepts that the issues of society are not inside the domain of the police office. Conventional police divisions are rigorously responsive and don't look past productively settling the prompt occurrence nearby.

Implementing community policing changes the design of policing and how it is overseen. Community policing assists work with increasing and fortify the local area. It likewise connects the police and the local area together. The organization that creates after some time can eventually help the police track down the hidden reasons for crime inside the area. By getting the local area included, the police have more assets accessible to them to help in crime counteraction. By acclimating themselves with the individuals from the local area, officials are bound to acquire important data about criminals and their exercises. Additionally they are bound to get a dependable assessment of the necessities of residents and their assumptions for the police.

As recently expressed, community policing has a significant impact in police-community relations and problem-solving. To foster an association with the community, first the police must form a great relationship with the neighborhood. The police should attempt to include the neighborhood in its interest to control crime. Most community concerns and solutions are distinguished through problem-solving. The objective is to lessen crime and disorder by diligently examining the attributes

of concerns in communities and then applying the most suited problem-solving solutions (Smith, 2000).

Methodology

For this study, a qualitative research approach was used to properly research the phenomena, challenges and effective responses to human trafficking. The research design was exploratory, which allows the researcher to listen to and understand the participants regarding their ideals and personal experience (Creswell, 2014:30). Qualitative research provides people with a means of attempting to understand a world that cannot be understood in terms of numbers and objectivity. Qualitative approaches provide ways of transcribing and analysing the discursive construction of everyday events and of exploring the historical nature of life within a social group or local setting (De Vos, 2011:108).

Study Population
Table 1: Selected Study Population

SAPS	DPCI	DHA	DSD	Survivors of Human trafficking	Total
24	4	5	3	4	40

The population of this study consists of officials from Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation unit which deals with human trafficking, four officials were interviewed and their ranks were Lieutenant Colonel, Warrant Officer, and Captain, all of them were males in terms of gender, and three of them had between 24 and 34 years of experience. In terms of the South African Police Services, 24 officers in total were interviewed from three selected areas of Gauteng Province, namely Pretoria, Springs and Kempton park, the ranks were Constable, Sergeant, Warrant officers, Lieutenant, and Captain, in terms of the gender, it was 8 females and 16 males and their experience were between 10 years to 27 years. In terms of the Department of Social Development, two officials were interviewed from a head office in Pretoria, they were both males, holding the position of Deputy Director: Coordinator of the prevention combating of the trafficking in persons and Director: social crime prevention, and one female from Gauteng provincial office, their position was Social Work Policy Developer (Trafficking in Persons Coordinator).
n terms of the Department of Home Affairs, five officials were interviewed, three of the officials were females and two were males, three were holding positions of assistant directors: analysis, one was the assistant director: immigration service and assistant director: tracing and monitoring, four of them had between 2 to 3 years of experience and only one had 28 years of experience. 4 survivors of human trafficking were also part of the study and were trafficked between 2 to 8 years from different parts of South Africa and other countries.

Sampling Procedures

The selection of participants of this study was conducted using two sampling methods: Purposive sampling and Snowball sampling. Purposive sampling allowed for maximum variation, which was looking for participants who had different ideas concerning the topic and a broad range of experience from each other. This was used to pick participants from the SAPS, DPCI, DSD, and DHA, as these participants are knowledgeable about human trafficking in Gauteng Province. Snowball sampling, is a type of sampling where the researcher gets help from one participant to another. The choice of the participant is guided by the aims and objectives of the study. This method was used to select members of the community who have been victims of human trafficking to ensure that the participants are aware of the phenomenon to be studied. Unfortunately, most of the survivors of human trafficking did not feel safe to participate in the study due to security reasons, fear of victimization, and shame, only four survivors was interviewed.

Data Collection Techniques

The researcher used the interviews to collect data. The interviews are gathered from more than one person because the goal is to identify differences and similarities across participants in a sample. In-depth interviews were used by the researcher, and the reason being that in-depth interviews are conducted with unique individuals or a small number of people (Creswell, 2014:15). The advantages of the interviews are: Firstly, considerable input from each participant and an independent view is obtained on a situation. Secondly, participants can discuss intimate and confidential issues without fear, and no peer group pressure creates bias. Additionally, allows a rapport to build between participants and interviewer and can accommodate widely scattered participants. Thirdly, better for heterogeneous participants who may not gel in a group and allows the interviewer to see the surrounding home or office of the respondent. The study used a semi-structured interview schedule as it allowed the researcher to use the pre-planned schedule, and it allowed for elaborate discussions between the participants and the researcher. The interviews where in-depth and done on a one on one this was done to illicit detailed information. The interviews took place at locations that were chosen by the participants and the duration ranged from 20–40 minutes, this was dependent on how much information the participants were willing to share.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data as it organises and describes data in detail (Braun & Clarke, 2006). At the heart of thematic analysis, the familiarisation of data by the researcher is important. Data familiarisation was possible because the researchers personally conducted audio-recorded interviews and transcribed them. This process allowed the researchers to familiarise themselves with the data for expedited and insightful analysis.

Following this thematic transcription, the scripts were analysed using NVivo version 8 software. This software organised the raw data so that it was possible to link and

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Vol. 5 No. 3
October, 2021

compare thematic issues within and across documents. The list of "starter nodes" was generated from an initial entry in a project journal in the software where the questions and assumptions brought to the report were outlined. The software gave results that allowed for a deeper examination and management of the qualitative data that might not be possible in traditional coding.

Two distinct types of coding were used in the analysis. The first was descriptive coding, which described the cases in this study. This process-related both to the coding of information in categories and the creation of attributes to clarify them. The second type was analytical coding, which was done by selecting source content to interpret and reflect on the meaning of the data to arrive at new ideas and categories. The process entailed gathering material that could be rethought and reviewed given the growing understanding of the inter-relationship of the categories in the data.

Ethical Clearance

The research received ethical clearance from Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), and permission to conduct interviews was granted by the following organisations: The SAPS, DPCI, DSD, DHA, and NPA.

Findings and discussion

Human Trafficking Survivors Response to the Human Trafficking Scourge and the Stakeholders Challenges

It should be noted that findings such as those given below were similar among all the selected participants, regardless of the study location. Examples of some of the remarks regarding their experiences in terms of dealing with cases of human trafficking were similar. The selected participant were asked to give their opinions on the extent, and challenges of human trafficking, factors that contribute to the current spate of human trafficking in Gauteng Province.

Significantly, participant shared their own experiences in this regard (related verbatim):

"When I was trafficked, everyday there was a new girl, it's something that happens every day. Every week there was ten girls trafficked. It's not like something that happened once in a while it's something that happened every day. Woman and young girls are trafficked every day and the traffickers are making profit out their bodies" (Participant 21).

When asked about the profile of victims and profile of traffickers in Gauteng Province, this is what they had to say:

"When I was trafficked, most the victims were girls from rural areas of South Africa and to a smaller number from the urban areas, and also foreign nationals from SADC countries, Thailand and Brazil. The age of victims from South Africa was between age of 12 to 25 years, and all the races were trafficked. The age of victims from other countries was between 18 to 31 years. The victims all had similar characteristics, because they were all desperate for opportunities, jobs, modelling careers, and looking for scholarships, they were vulnerable desperate for a better life (Participant 30).

"I can say the profile of traffickers when I was trafficked included lot of women and men benefiting from human trafficking, most of the women were South Africans and majority of men were from Nigeria and Ghana, and small number from South Africa" (Participant 8).

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European Journal of Economics, Law and Social Sciences
IIPCCL Publishing, Graz-Austria

Vol. 5 No. 3
October, 2021

Based on the above statements from the survivors of human trafficking, it is clear that the extent and nature of human trafficking in South Africa is very deep and needs lot attention, resources and adequate skills from the law enforcement agencies and stakeholders involved. The victims were from rural arears of South Africa, SADC countries, Thailand and Brazil. The perpetrators of this scourge were South Africans mostly ladies, Nigerian and Ghanaians males.

The participant highlighted their frustrations in terms of the lack of awareness by the relevant stakeholders, they stipulated that awareness campaigns are not enough and they are done at the wrong places not actually targeting those who has potential of being the victims of human trafficking. They have explained that the relevant stakeholders to human trafficking are not reaching the impact level in terms of raising awareness in the communities of South Africa, especially in three selected area of Gauteng Province. Some examples of their responses are given verbatim, as follows:

"Awareness is not enough as it is very national, which means it happen one day. It is not much like twenty-one (21) days of activism, it has to happen 365 days a year and it's not a collaborative effort of all the relevant stakeholders involved in combating human trafficking" (Participant 14).

The participant stressed the problem of causes of crime (like poverty, unemployment, dysfunctional families, and lack of opportunities etc) and the pressure the social media put on the women to live a fleshy, expensive lifestyle that they cannot afford, when they were asked about the contributing factors to human trafficking in three selected areas of Gauteng Province. This is what the participants shared (related verbatim):

"Social media put pressure on women to live a fleshy, wealthy lifestyle, they like material things. They want to be in intimate relationships with rich guys because it's the lifestyle they see on the social media. The new trend of blessers and blesse has increased among our communities because women want to drive expensive cars, wear designer clothe, and put in expensive Brazilian hairs. Poverty life that young women face or undergo in the rural areas or townships contribute to the problem of human trafficking. Dysfunctional families contribute to human trafficking, because many households don't have parents or guardian because maybe they died due to HIV and AIDS. You will find a young girl who has to take care of her siblings in terms of making sure they go to school wearing uniform, provide for food for them and all the needs they want in the house" (Participant 25).

Barriers that hinders the Relevant Stakeholders to successfully combat Human Trafficking

The participant highlighted the following challenges when they were asked about the barriers that hinders the relevant stakeholders to successfully combat human trafficking in three selected areas of Gauteng Province. This is what the participants shared (related verbatim):

"Human trafficking is a hidden crime and very complex, so the relevant stakeholders do not know what they are doing or they don't know how to deal with it. Instead of fixing the root of the problem, the stakeholders use the health care services to help the victims. Government and law enforcement agencies don't know what human trafficking is so they don't know how to deal with it. Corruption is very rife within the human trafficking environment, police are involved in corruption a lot, because they protect the traffickers not to get caught. Department

of Home affairs allow illegal immigrants to enter our borders gates, airports and seaports, immigration officers from this department are also corrupt and protect those who do not have proper documents to enter South Africa. Department of social development sell the victims back to the traffickers after they were rescued from the trafficking ring" (Participant 11).

"Victims status affect the whole investigation, if the victim is subjected to threats or intimidation. Lack of cooperation from victims, corruption is also a problem, language barrier from the victims who are from outside South Africa, delays in the court proceedings, courts are taking long to deal with cases of human trafficking, no specialized courts in South Africa dealing with cases of human trafficking" (Participant 4).

"The problem is the resources on our part, we don't have that can enable us to respond effectively to human trafficking. I will also say we still lack intensive training on issues of human trafficking. We can't different between victims of human trafficking and those working as sex workers on the night clubs, brothels so we need an intensive training on that. Lack of cooperation and support from other stakeholders. Another challenge is the budget, for any program or imbizo, a proper budget has to be prioritized for the event" (Participant 15).

"To be honest, I feel that the challenge is that we as government officials we don't take this human trafficking very serious. Stakeholders that are involved are not meeting, I don't know about the task team, we don't attend the meetings of the task team, although Home Affairs form part of the Gauteng task team" (Participant 23).

Emerging themes

Limited awareness and information about the human trafficking scourge
It was clear during the data collection that all the stakeholders dealing with human trafficking use awareness as the main strategy to fight and combat human trafficking. The study recommends that all the relevant stakeholders should ensure that awareness is done in the areas where there are lot of potential victims of human trafficking. The study further recommends that all the social media platforms should be used by stakeholders in terms of raising awareness. Human traffickers use different social media platforms to lure and recruit their potential victims, as a result even the stakeholder combating human trafficking should also use the different social media platforms to raise awareness about human trafficking on potential victims.

Lack of capacitated and multi-disciplinary unit within the DPCI
The current unit within DPCI which deals with human trafficking does not have capacity to effectively and successfully combat human trafficking in three selected areas of Gauteng Province. During the data collection, members of DPCI stressed the fact that they cannot deal with human trafficking only by investigations and operations, but they need support of other government department to collectively fight this scourge.

Lack of capacity, resources and training to deal with human trafficking
All the stakeholders highlighted that they do not have capacity in their respective departments to deal with human trafficking. Members from the DSD highlighted that Staff capacity is demotivating as only one coordinator and manager is assigned to deal with TIP Matters during and after-hours all throughout the year. No time off. They explained that this creates burn out and frustration from their side, limited

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airtime provided is not enough due to the high volumes of cases received especially afterhours, no overtime compensation and this discourages officials to go the extra mile after hours, no transport is offered to attend to afterhours matters. DHA officials explained that limited budget allocated to them, they do not have specialised skills to deal with human trafficking as they go to training once a year for one day. They also stressed the fact that they have their primary functions at DHA which they are expected to perform and human trafficking is a secondary function, as a result they neglect human trafficking because they cannot multi task and are being given lot of workload.

Recommendation and conclusion

This study recommends that the Gauteng Task Team should be disbanded with immediate effect as it cannot be used as a tool to effectively and successfully deal with human trafficking. The sub-unit within the DPCI dealing with human trafficking should be multi-disciplinary, expanded, capacitated and be equipped with personnel members from the Department of Home Affairs, Department of Communications and Public Relations, Department of International Relations and corporations, Department of Social Development, Department of Justice, National Intelligence Agency and National Prosecuting Authority.

This study further recommends that members from these departments should fall under the subunit of DPCI dealing with human trafficking and should solely and primarily deal with human trafficking. These members before considered for appointment in DPCI should be subjected to a security screening investigation in terms of section 17E (1) of the SAPS Amendment Act. The study recommends that the South African Government, like developed countries (Germany, USA, Australia and Canada), should also develop the internet policies to regulate the internet users. This will help the sub-unit and stop traffickers to promise people jobs, scholarships and modelling agencies in the internet. Internet regulations will help the Government and law enforcement agencies to make follow-up investigations, and background checks of the people and companies wanting to post job opportunities, scholarships and opportunities of modelling careers. The study recommend that the police work with communities in combating human trafficking to strengthen partnerships between the community and the police to promote joint problem identification and problem solving; and enhance consultation and communication between the police and the community.

In conclusion, the study has made a huge impact in terms of closing the gaps in combating human trafficking in South Africa. The study would significantly help the relevant stakeholders and the role players involved in combating this scourge. The literature review has indicated that human trafficking in South Africa does not have statistics and that SAPS does not release the statistics of human trafficking annually with other crimes committed. The participants of the study highlighted that perpetrators of human trafficking use social media platforms to lure their victims into trafficking ring and they use Uber transport to lure their victims, they target victims who are between the age of 16 and 28 from South Africa, and those who are

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European Journal of Economics, Law and Social Sciences
IIPCCL Publishing, Graz-Austria

Vol. 5 No. 3
October, 2021

from abroad their age is between 20 and 32 years of age. The participants highlighted that in South Africa one girl is trafficked every day. Participants also highlighted that budget is one of the major challenges when it comes to human trafficking, lack of training among the officials who deal with human trafficking is also another challenge. Corruption within the SAPS, DHA and DSD was also found to be the major challenge in terms of combating human trafficking.

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