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REGENERATIVE POLICING PROPOSITION (RPP): A PILOT STUDY ON SOCIAL CAPITAL AND POLICE PERFORMANCE IN EPE DIVISION, LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This paper formulates and presents initial empirical findings of the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP), an interdisciplinary model aimed at improving the police performance by restoring social capital, trust, and institutional legitimacy. As a solution to the long-term problems of poor public trust, lack of accountability, and inefficient community participation in policing systems especially in fast urbanizing areas like Lagos State, Nigeria this study employs a mixed-method pilot study to test the association between social capital and the performance of the police in Epe Division. The study measures the key constructs such as mutual trust, relationships between the police and the community, accountability and transparency, institutional responsiveness, and social capital using a structured questionnaire to 40 participants (35 successful responses). Cronbach alpha coefficients for reliability analysis were found to be between 0.79 and 0.90, which is a high internal consistency. The descriptive and thematic analyses have discovered that trust, reciprocity, and civic participation have a significant effect on perceptions of police legitimacy and police effectiveness, and there are information-sharing, technological integration, and public accountability gaps. The results support the Regenerative Policing Proposition in a preliminary empirical way in the form of a cyclical model that is guided by ethical accountability, regeneration of trust, collaborative interaction, institutional learning and Adaptation, renewing social capital and Sustainable peace and performance back to Ethical Accountability. The paper provides value to policing research by means of combining the knowledge of social capital, procedural justice, community policing and regenerative development, and presenting a context-specific model that is consistent with Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). The paper concludes by noting the promise of RPP as a scalable model of sustainable policing change in Nigeria and other developing environments, and suggests a need to further confirm these findings with large-scale empirical modeling of the model with advanced statistical methods.

Keywords: Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP), Social Capital, Police Performance, Police Legitimacy, Procedural Justice, Accountability and Transparency, SDG 16.

1. Introduction

Police in the contemporary societies have evolved into more contemporary policing whereby the police are

found engaging in community policing, legitimacy building and problem solving. This change is especially important in the fast urbanizing setting like Lagos State, Nigeria, where population density, socio-economic disparities, infrastructural demands, and crime rates are growing and pose challenging security challenges. The latest city safety evaluation shows that Lagos is still witnessing a high rate of public safety issues, which highlights the importance of radical and sustainable policing measures.

Although Nigeria has implemented community policing programs, there are still endemic issues like lack of trust in the police, alleged corruption, selective application and lack of accountability provisions that make the police ineffective and illegitimate. These institutional and structural shortcomings frequently lead to poor citizen cooperation, criminal underreporting, and ineffective intelligence collection, thus decreasing the overall law-enforcement capacity of the law enforcement agencies to guarantee the safety of people.

Current policing models, such as the community policing and procedural justice models, have made a significant contribution to the betterment of relationships between the police and the community. Nevertheless, such methods frequently are disjointed and mostly reactive, in the sense that they are unable to reflect the cyclical, dynamic, and adaptive aspects of trust-building, institutional learning, and collaborative governance within complex urban environments. More integrative and regenerative framework is thus required which recreates the conceptualization of policing as an ever-changing system that is able to confer legitimacy, improve accountability, and maintain community trust.

This paper fills this gap by developing the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP), which is an interdisciplinary model that incorporates the lessons of social capital theory, procedural justice, community policing, collective efficacy, and regenerative development. The RPP is a conceptualization of policing as a living system with iterative cycles of

ethical responsibility, regeneration of trust, engagement with others, learning within an institution, and renewing social capital; resulting in sustainable peace and better performance of the police.

Empirically, this study offers the results of a pilot study in Epe Division of Lagos State, a fast developing peri-urban region, which is a combination of rural, industrial and commercial activities. The population of the area is estimated at more than 543,000 inhabitants, which makes the area a topical location to investigate the dynamics of police-community relations and experiment with innovative policing models. The Epe Division has a lot of strategic and economic value especially considering the fact that it is close to the major industrial and infrastructural projects like the Dangote Refinery. The refinery is one of the largest industrial projects in Africa, which has increased the need of effective and trust-driven policing systems to support security, stability, and sustainable development. It is against this backdrop that Epe Division, is a suitable location within which to analyze a new model of policing like the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP).

The study, based on the mixed-method approach, examines the connection between social capital and police performance with the key constructs, including mutual trust, accountability, institutional responsiveness, and community engagement.

This research has four objectives: (1) to determine the most important social, institutional and infrastructural forces, which influence the mutual trust between law enforcement and the community; (2) to explore the role of police-community relationships on crime prevention, community safety, and perceptions of police legitimacy; (3) devise evidence-based solutions to enhancing the accountability, transparency and responsiveness of the police to the community; and (4

To guide the empirical investigation, the following research questions are posed:

1. What are the key factors that influence mutual trust between the police and the public in Epe Division of Lagos?
2. How do police-community relationships shape crime prevention, public safety, and perceptions of police legitimacy in Epe Division of Lagos?
3. What practical strategies can be adopted to enhance police accountability, transparency, and institutional responsiveness in Epe Division of Lagos?
4. In what ways can social capital and community engagement be leveraged to foster peaceful, inclusive, and regenerative societies in Epe Division of Lagos?

Integrating both theoretical and empirical data, this study will advance the current study about policing and security reforms through provision of new, context-sensitive, and sustainability-oriented framework. The implications of the findings also have practical implications to policy makers, law enforcement bodies, and development practitioners who would like to establish the institutional legitimacy and make sure that policing systems are geared towards the priorities of global policing, including those of INTERPOL, and Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16): Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions..

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Social Capital and Police Performance

The conceptualization of an effective policing system has taken a center stage, and this is due to social capital which is a broad concept that includes networks, norms and trusts that facilitate coordination and cooperation towards common benefit (Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 2000). Social capital as applied to law enforcement takes the form of trust in the police, cooperation, and commitment to keeping the community safe. The strong social capital is linked to better crime reporting and better intelligence collection, as well as better adherence to the law.

As empirical research has always shown, trust-based relations between police and communities play a significant role in policing. Indicatively, Adebajo and Ijeoma (2023) established that the more the people believe in the city, the more they see the police as legitimate and effective. On the same note, Skogan (2006) states that a community involvement based on trust improves crime prevention and the level of satisfaction among people with policing.

Nonetheless, in most developing situations, like in Nigeria, social capital in the policing setups has been undermined by the endemic problems of corruption, power abuse, and transparency deficit. Adejoh (2023) and Akinyemi and Bello (2019) observe that low trust prevents information disclosure to law enforcement agencies thus weakening the effectiveness of the investigations and the safety of the community. These data indicate that restoring social capital is not just a social goal but a strategic need to enhance the performance of police.

Procedural Justice and Police Legitimacy.

A background on why people obey laws and why they cooperate with the government is evident in the Procedural Justice Theory (Tyler, 2006). According to the theory, the sense of fairness, respect, neutrality, and transparency in police contacts is likely to play a bigger role in influencing the compliance of the population than deterrence or coercion.

Research by Boateng (2018) and Tankebe (2020) in the African contexts shows that citizens tend to consider the police as legitimate when they are acting with integrity, fairness, and accountability. Legitimacy of the police, in its turn, leads to increased levels of voluntary compliance and cooperation of the people, which are essential in effective policing.

However, in Nigeria, procedural injustice in the form of selective enforcement, extortion, and absence of due process has drastically undermined the trust of the people in the police. This is a lack of legitimacy especially by the youth and the marginalized groups. To overcome these challenges, institutional reforms

need to focus on fairness, transparency and ethical behavior as key components of policing practice.

Community Policing and Collective Efficacy.

The Community Policing Theory focuses on the relevance of collaboration between the law enforcement and local communities to deal with crime and disorder (Skogan, 2006). It promotes active involvement, decentralization of decision-making and involvement of communities in security governance.

The concept of Collective Efficacy that is closely related is that of a belief in the capability of a community to hold social order by trusting one another through informal social control (Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls, 1997). The greatest benefit of high collective efficacy among the communities is that it is in a better position to prevent crime, solve conflicts, and assist in law enforcement.

Nigeria has introduced such structures as Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC) to help the police to work together with citizens. There is some evidence that, in cases where they operate successfully, these platforms increase communication, trust, and mutual problem-solving. Their success however is not equal in all regions because there are differences in terms of institutional backing, community engagement, and leadership determination.

Accountability, Transparency and Sustainable Development (SDG 16)

Effective governance involves accountability and transparency, and these are the main elements of the Sustainable Development Goal 16, which reinforces peace, justice, and good institutions (United Nations, 2015). The Accountability Framework (Bovens, 2007; Bovens et al., 2014) stresses that the institutions have to be accountable to the people and be controlled by control mechanisms.

Accountability mechanisms in policing consist of internal disciplinary mechanisms, external oversight mechanisms, citizen complaint mechanisms and public access to information. Research, like that of Ambali and Araba (2020), points to the use of digital technologies in the form of body-worn cameras and surveillance systems to improve transparency and minimise misconduct.

These mechanisms notwithstanding, a significant number of the policing institutions in developing nations have challenges that are associated with laxity in accountability enforcement, political misalignment and inadequate trust among the citizens. These systems are thus important to be strengthened to enhance the legitimacy and to align the policing practices with the sustainable development objectives.

Regenerative Development and Policing Systems

Regenerative Development Theory goes further than the usual sustainability by concentrating on systems that can be renewed, adapted and improved upon (Mang & Reed, 2012; Mang & Haggard, 2016). Regenerative approaches do not aim to preserve the status quo but to rebuild and improve the connections between social, institutional, and ecological systems. In the policing context, this view of law enforcement institutions treats them as dynamic systems that need to constantly adjust to shifts in social circumstances, regain credibility, and be exposed to community interactions to learn. According to recent research (Adejoh, 2023; Ogunsanya, 2021), it is possible to use the methods of regeneration as a way to overcome institutional fatigue, legitimacy crises, and a lack of trust in policing systems.

The Theoretical Synthesis of the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP): A Theoretical Synthesis.

Based on the above theoretical backgrounds, this paper is suggesting the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP) as an integrative theory which redefines policing as an adaptive and cyclical system. RPP is a synthesis of the most important findings in social

capital theory, procedural justice, community policing, collective efficacy, accountability structures, and regenerative development into one.

The RPP operates as a continuous cycle consisting of the following interconnected components:

- i. Ethical Accountability.
- ii. Trust Regeneration.
- iii. Collaboration, Engagement, Participation, Satisfaction and Co-operation.
- iv. Institutional Learning and Adaptation.
- v. Social Capital Renewal.
- vi. Sustainable Peace and Police Performance.
- vii. Back to Ethical Accountability.

The gist of this is the triadic engine of Awareness, Understanding and Orientation (AUO) that leads to behavioural alignment, institutional responsiveness and continuous regeneration within the policing system. The RPP has a cognitive and behavioural foundation called the three step process that ensures

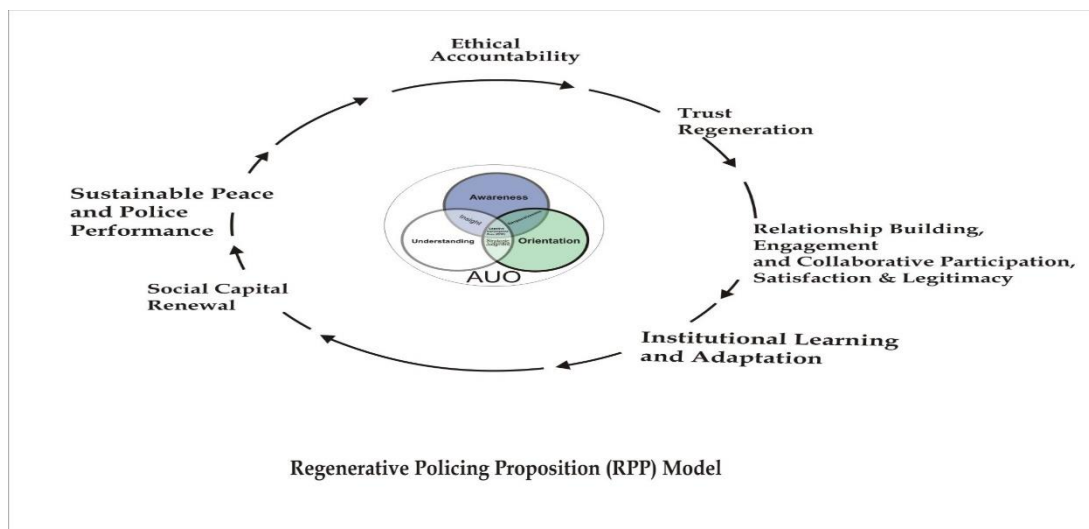
that the activities of the institution are informed, understood and aligned with the expectations of the society and ethics.

Unlike the more traditional linear models of policing, the RPP emphasizes feedback loops, continuous learning and co-production of security products between communities and the police.

This integrative model fills a significant gap in the literature by offering a holistic, context sensitive, and sustainability-based model of policing reform. It is also consistent with the modern international endeavours to enhance inclusive governance, participatory security and institutional resilience.

Figure 1 shows the structure and the cyclical dynamics of the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP).

Figure 1: Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP) Framework.



Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP) is a dynamic and evolutionary model that explains the connection between processes in a policing system in order to establish a sustainable peace and achieve better performance. The model has at its heart the triadic

driver of Awareness, Understanding, and Orientation (AUO) with the Cognitive Convergence Core (CCC) as the intersection of AUO, which leads to behavioural alignment and responsiveness of the institution which for instance is the Higher-order Policing Intelligence.

The external cycle encompasses ethical accountability, regeneration of trust, collaborative engagement (including participation, cooperation, satisfaction, and legitimacy), institutional learning and adaptation, social capital renewal and sustainable peace and police performance. The cyclical design focuses more on the ongoing feedback, regeneration, and co-production of security results between community and police institutions.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

According to the RPP, the current study will employ a conceptual model according to which the performance of the police is determined by a chain of interconnected variables:

Social Capital into Mutual Trust into Accountability and Transparency into Police Performance into Peaceful and Inclusive Societies.

This framework is based on the transforming of reactive enforcement on regenerative governance whereby the trust, collaboration and learning in institutions is upheld in cyclic sense, and through continuous reinforced repetitions of the same. It offers the analytical basis of studying the connection of major variables in the empirical aspect of this study.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study follows a mixed-method research design, which combines both the quantitative and qualitative method to present an in-depth insight into the linkage between the social capital and police performance. The mixed-method research design will enable the research to not only determine the measurable trends (e.g., the levels of trust, accountability, and involvement) but also the situational specifics (e.g., the impressions and experiential realities of police-community relationships).

The study will be designed as a pilot study, which will help to validate the research instrument, measure the

reliability of measurement constructs, and produce preliminary empirical evidence to support the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP). Pilot studies are especially useful in exploratory research because they allow the researcher to formulate a basis to streamline research instruments and to inform large-scale empirical studies.

3.2 Study Area and Population.

The study area and population are as follows:

The research was carried in Epe Division of Lagos State, in Nigeria, which includes Epe, Ibeju-Lekki, Eredo, Agbowo, and Lekki. The area is a fast developing peri urban area with different socio-economic activities such as agricultural activities, trade, and industrial development.

The National Bureau of Statistics (2025) estimated that the study area has a population of about 543,919 residents. Urban growth, infrastructural changes, and the socio-economic diversity of the region contribute to the area being the right environment to study the relationships between police and the community and implement new policing models.

The selection of Epe Division as the study area is guided by its increasing strategic significance as an industrial and economic center especially as a result of the presence of major infrastructure like the Dangote Refinery. This background gives a topical environment when analyzing the relationship between policing, trust, and community interaction.

3.3 Research Instrument

The structured questionnaire consisted of six parts:

- i. Section A: Demographic Information.
- ii. Section B: Mutual Trust, Institutional and Infrastructural Factors.
- iii. Section C: Police-Community Relationships and Legitimacy.

- iv. Section D: Accountability, Transparency, and Institutional Responsiveness.
- v. Section E: Social Capital, Community Engagement, Peaceful and Inclusive societies.
- vi. Section F: Open-Ended Qualitative Responses.

3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The pilot phase used a purposive-convenience sampling method to obtain a heterogeneous cross-section of the stakeholders, such as police officers, community leaders, traders, artisans, and students. This method was important in ensuring that there was a representation of people with different degrees of interactions with policing institutions.

Forty questionnaires were distributed among the five sub areas of the division with only 35 valid responses received, which translated to an 87.5 percent response rate. The sample size is deemed to be sufficient in a pilot study to test the instruments and pre-analyze them.

It is worthwhile to mention that pilot study is not intended to achieve statistical generalization but to test the clarity, reliability and contextual relevance of the measurement instrument. The main study is suggested to use a larger sample size (about 400-440 respondents), which is calculated with the help of the formula of Taro Yamane.

3.5 Data Collection Instrument

A structured questionnaire that was divided into six sections of demographic data, mutual trust, police-community relationships, accountability and transparency, social capital and qualitative insights were used to gather the data.

All the quantitative items were rated based on a five-point Likert scale between 1 (Strongly Disagree) and 5 (Strongly Agree). The open-ended questions also allowed more qualitative information to be gathered in order to understand more subtle attitudes towards police actions, trust, and community involvement.

3.6 Instrument validity

Face validity and content validity were used to guarantee validity of the research instrument. Expert review was done by scholars and practitioners in the field of policing, security studies, and social sciences, who rated the clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness of the questionnaire items in establishing face validity.

Content validity was attained through alignment of the instrument to theoretical constructs established such as social capital, procedural justice, community policing, and accountability frameworks. Also, the respondent feedback on the pilot phase was utilized to revise ambiguous or redundant items, thus enhancing the quality of the instrument.

3.7 Reliability Testing

Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to measure reliability of the instrument to establish internal consistency of the main constructs. The findings showed that the reliability was high, and the alpha values were found to be between 0.79 and 0.90.

These values are higher than the recommended threshold of 0.70 and therefore the measurement scales are valid and can be used to do additional empirical testing in the primary research.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

Face-to-face administration of the questionnaires at the selected locations in the study area was used as a method of data collection which included the police stations, community centers, markets, and public spaces. The exercise was conducted in two days' time so as to cover the study area adequately.

The participants were made aware of the objective of the study and voluntary consent was obtained before participation. The respondent was made to understand the questionnaire items clearly and especially those who were not of an academic background.

3.9 Data Analysis Techniques

Descriptive statistical methods such as means scores and standard deviations were used to analyse and examine data concerning patterns in the perceptions of trust, accountability, community engagement, and police performance in the respondents. Cronbach alpha was used in reliability analysis to determine internal consistency.

Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data derived on open-ended responses through coding responses, identification of recurring themes, and pattern interpretation that were based on trust, collaboration, accountability, and technological integration in policing.

No sophisticated statistical methods were used at this point like Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) because of the

small sample. Nevertheless, such methods are suggested to the primary research, which will imply a bigger and more representational sample.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The research was conducted in accordance with the common social science research ethics. The sample was voluntary and the participants were notified of their right to drop out at any point of the research. The information was not gathered using personally identifiable information and this ensured confidentiality and anonymity.

The data obtained were all made with the purpose of academics and the opinions of respondents were handled with confidentiality and integrity.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographics Information of the Respondent

Table 1: Demographics Information of the Respondent

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	22	62.86
Female	13	37.14
Age		
40-49	16	47.06
50 and above	10	29.41
30-39	6	17.65
18-29	2	5.88
Marital Status		
Married	23	69.70
Divorced/Widowed	5	15.15
Single	5	15.15
Educational Level		
Tertiary	20	60.61
Postgraduate	11	33.33
Secondary	2	6.06
Occupation		
Police Officer	15	45.45
Artisan	6	18.18
Trader	5	15.15
Student	4	12.12

Community Leader	3	9.09
Length of Residence in Epe Division		
Over 10 years	18	52.94
<1 year	8	23.53
1-5 years	5	14.71
6-10 years	3	8.82
Which part of Epe Division do you reside work?		
Epe	10	28.57
Ibeju	8	22.86
Eredo	7	20.00
Agbowo	6	17.14
Lekki	4	11.43
Have you interacted with the police in Epe Division in the past year?		
Yes	26	81.25
No	6	18.75

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The pilot study provided 35 valid responses to 40 questionnaires which is 87.5 percent response rate. The demographic analysis shows that most of the respondents were men (62.9%); 37.1% were women. Most of the participants were aged between 40-49 years (47.1) and 50 years and above (29.4), indicating that the sample was dominated by mature people with a lot of life and community experience.

A considerable number of the respondents were married (69.7%) and had tertiary or postgraduate education (more than 90%), which means that the group of participants was rather informed and could offer informed views on the issue of policing. The police

officers occupied 45.5 percent of the sample, and the rest of the respondents were artisans, traders, students, and community leaders. Moreover, over 52.9 percent of the respondents had lived in the study area more than ten years, meaning that they were well aware of the security dynamics in the area.

These demographic traits increase the credibility of the findings, since they represent the views of experienced people who have either direct or indirect involvement in policing and community security.

4.2 Reliability of Measurement Constructs

Table 2: Reliability Test

Section	Number of Items	Mean Score	Std Deviation	Cronbach Alpha
Section B	12	3.75	1.16	0.84
Section C	13	3.92	1.03	0.90
Section D	15	3.69	1.05	0.87
Section E	13	3.84	0.92	0.79

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The reliability test showed that there is high internal consistency among the key constructs. The alpha values of Cronbach were between 0.79 and 0.90, which is higher than the recommended value of 0.70. This supports the fact that the measurement scales of

mutual trust, police-community relationships, accountability and social capital are sound and can be used in further empirical research.

The scores of high reliability gives statistical evidence to the strength of the research instrument and strengthens validity of further analysis.

4.3 Mutual Trust, Institutional and Infrastructural Factors

Table 3: Mutual Trust, Institutional and Infrastructural Factors

Items	Mean	SD
I believe police officers in my area conduct themselves with honesty and integrity	3.85	1.17
The police in my area respond quickly during emergencies	3.71	1.15
Police stations and patrol points are easy to locate and accessible when needed.	4.14	0.88
Police officers interact with citizens professionally and respectfully.	3.83	1.25
The police treat all individuals fairly, regardless of their social or economic background.	3.60	1.35
Police handle reported cases and complaints in a timely manner.	4.03	0.98
I often see police patrols in and around my community	3.74	1.24
The police respect citizens' rights and dignity during their operations	3.74	1.38
Information shared by the police about security issues is usually reliable.	3.91	0.98
I feel confident reporting crimes or suspicious activities to the police.	3.66	1.21
The police use modern technology (phones, social media, or apps) to communicate with the public.	3.91	0.92
Corruption among police officers is a major problem in my area.	2.83	1.34

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The mutual trust and institutional factors analysis showed mean scores of moderately high in most indicators, and it implies an overall positive perception of police behaviors and accessibility. The respondents had a comparatively good level of agreement with statements that concern the availability of police, responsiveness, and professionalism.

But in matters of fairness and confidence with reporting crimes, there was relatively a lesser perception, so this is a sign of lack of trust. Interestingly, the image of corruption was still a topic of concern, as there is still a high level of distrust towards ethical conduct in policing organizations.

These results are aligned to the Procedural Justice Theory (Tyler, 2006) that highlights that fairness, transparency, and ethical practices are at the heart of generating trust in the people. Even though the findings indicate that underlying factors of trust are in place, it is important to note that there must be consistent attempts to deal with corruption and promote fairness in the policing processes.

4.4 Police-Community Relationships, Crime Prevention, Safety and Legitimacy

Table 4: Police-Community Relationships, Crime Prevention, Safety and Legitimacy

Items	Mean	SD
The police and community members hold regular meetings to discuss security issues.	3.89	1.08
Women, youth, and vulnerable groups are included in community policing activities.	3.86	0.88
I participate or have participated in community policing or neighbourhood security programs	4.09	1.04
The police provide feedback to the community on reported cases or crime prevention outcomes	3.34	1.16
Community policing forums (such as PCRC) function effectively in this area.	4.14	0.97
Police officers and community members work together on joint patrols or initiatives	3.80	1.05
Police officers respect the cultural and religious values of residents	4.31	0.83
People in my community willingly assist the police with investigations	3.86	1.24
The police can be misted to protect witnesses and informants	3.86	1.06
Residents are willing to share security information with the police	3.46	1.20
The police apply the law, fairly and without discrimination.	3.66	1.14
The police help to settle community disputes peacefully.	4.17	1.01
I believe the police in my area have legitimate authority and deserve public support	4.54	0.70

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The results show that, on the whole, the perceptions of the police-community collaboration are good, and high mean scores are provided in the area of community participation in the security programmes, efficacy of the community policing forums and perceived police legitimacy.

Of specific interest is the high perceived legitimacy, which indicates that the respondents are aware of the legitimacy of the police and are likely to endorse their position in ensuring that the society is in order. There was also the inclusion of cultural and religious considerations in policing which was rated positively as it is sensitive to local settings.

Nevertheless, there were two important gaps that appeared: a shortage of feedback on the part of the police to the community and moderate willingness of

residents to provide information. The results indicate the existence of an asymmetrical communication, which is not complete between the two sides but only partially.

This concurs with the results of Akinlabi (2021), according to which, community policing structures might exist, but their performance is limited by the communication gaps and the absence of feedback mechanisms. The findings also confirm Community Policing Theory and Collective Efficacy Theory, which state that communities need to have mutual trust and constant interaction to maintain effective cooperation.

4.5 Strategies for Accountability, Transparency and Institutional Responsiveness

Table 5: Accountability, Transparency and Institutional Responsiveness

Items	Mean	SD
There are clear systems within the police to discipline officers who not wrongly.	4.31	0.90
External bodies (such as the NHRC or CSOs) effectively monitor police activities.	3.57	1.04
Citizens' complaints against the police are handled in a fair and transparent manner.	3.77	1.11
Police performance reports and statistics are made available to the public:	3.51	1.12
The police allure public and media scrutiny of their operations.	3.11	1.13
Police use digital monitoring tools (like body cameras or CCTV) to promote accountability.	2.80	1.51
The police respond appropriately the requests for public information	3.83	0.86
People in my community are aware of how to report police misconduct.	3.71	1.07
Police officers who engage corruption or misconduct are punished.	4.09	1.04
Police officers understand the procedures for accountability within the force.	4.09	0.92
I trust that police disciplinary processes produce fair outcomes.	3.97	0.89
The police in my area operate without political interference.	3.34	1.24
The police promptly act on government or policy directives	4.26	0.85
Oversight institutions (e. g., Police Service Commission) are independent in their functions.	3.86	0.88
Promotions and transfers within the police are based on merit and fairness	3.11	1.23

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The findings indicate that the perceptions about the internal accountability mechanisms in the police are moderate to strong, especially on the disciplinary procedures and responsiveness to the orders. The respondents tended to agree that there are mechanisms in place to deal with misconduct and that officers are knowledgeable on accountability mechanisms.

The external checks and balances such as the availability of information to the public, the media coverage and control by independent agencies were however rated low. What is more, the use of digital tools (e.g., body cameras and surveillance technologies) was identified to be way behind its time.

These results indicate that though internal accountability structures can be able to work

effectively, transparency and public-facing accountability are not extensive. This fact is in line with the Accountability Framework (Bovens, 2007) that emphasizes on the role of both internal and external mechanisms in securing institutional legitimacy.

Moreover, the low uptake of digital technologies can also be used to emphasize the necessity of cybersecurity and digital monitoring technologies integration to promote transparency and evidence-based policing.

4.6 Social Capital, Community Engagement, Peaceful and Inclusive Societies

Table 6: Social Capital, Community Engagement, Peaceful and Inclusive Societies

Items	Mean	SD
Families and community member works together to prevent crime	3.97	0.79
There are active neighbourhood watch groups in my area.	4.00	1.06
People in this community trust one another in matters of safety and security.	3.31	1.18
Religious institutions play a role in promoting peace and tolerance.	4.29	0.62
Civil society organizations contribute positively to community security discussions.	3.94	0.73
The police collaborate with NGOs and community-based organizations on security issues	3.80	0.99
Marginalized or vulnerable groups (such as persons with disabilities or minorities) are included in policing initiatives.	3.43	0.92
Citizens receive civic education on their rights and responsibilities in policing matters	3.57	1.07
The community responds collectively when crime or violence occurs	4.03	0.98
I feel safe walking or moving around public spaces in my area.	3.94	1.06
Collaboration between police and the community has reduced violent crime.	3.91	0.82
I am satisfied with the quality of community-police partnerships in this area.	3.66	1.06
Cooperation between the police and citizens contributes to peace and social inclusion in my area.	4.09	0.70

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The evaluation of the indicators of social capital showed that the overall community cooperation and involvement were high. The respondents recognised the role of families, religious institutions and civil society organizations in fostering peace and the encouragement of security efforts.

The existence of the active neighborhood watch groups and the collective response to crime proves the existence of the high level of collective efficacy. Also, the respondents have stated that the partnership between the police and citizens leads to peace and social inclusion. Nevertheless, the reduced means of interpersonal trust and the inclusion of the marginalized groups indicate that not all layers of the population have equal access to social capital. These differences indicate that more inclusive and specific engagement tactics are necessary.

These results are consistent with the Social Capital Theory (Putnam, 2000) and the Collective Efficacy Theory (Sampson et al., 1997), which state that

integrative and participative communities are more efficient in crime prevention and law enforcement.

4.7 Spatial Variations in Police-Community Relationships

The comparative analysis between various regions in the study area had shown that there were differences in the quality of policecommunity relationships. Although regions like Lekki and Eredo had high perceived legitimacy, other regions portrayed a high sense of community engagement and participation. Nonetheless, one of the common obstacles in all regions was a rather low readiness of the residents to disclose information to the police. This means that there is structural co-operation, and the informational trust is weak.

The latter outcome signifies that there is a drastic imbalance in the policing structures: the difference between the perceived power and the actual cooperation based on trust. In order to address this lack, transparency, information protection, and

assurance of trust in information-sharing processes need to be improved.

4.8 Qualitative Insights and Thematic Analysis

Qualitative Insights.

The qualitative data received in Section F of the pilot study questionnaire provided me with deeper information on the perception of the residents of the Epe Division of the relationship between the police and the community. These open-ended questions (F1-F6) provided a delicate insight of mistrust, cooperation, accountability, technology and sustainability in local policing situations.

Using the thematic analysis, 6 dominant themes were retrieved in the responses provided by the participants that when together indicates the truth, issues, and desires of the police and people to achieve regenerative policing.

F1. Reasons behind Mistrust between the Police and the Community.

The respondents were recurrently establishing unprofessional behavior, corruption, ineffective communication, selective application of law, and misuse of power as the greatest factors contributing to the mistrust of the population.

Common expressions were:

- *“Not law abiding and unprofessional behavior.”*
- *“On their part, to put the young boys in the areas under arrest to make a profit.”*

Such remarks represent a general view of the fact that police legitimacy has been destroyed through untoward conduct and a lack of consistency in justice administration. The respondents also reported that mistrust may also be caused by certain members of the community who protect offenders or provide false

information which adds to the difficulty of cooperation.

The results indicate that the deficit of trust is not a behavior problem but a structural problem as well since in this involves the ethical re-alignment and transparency practices of law enforcement offices to restore trust in the offices.

F2. Solutions to Enhance the Relationships between the Police and Communities.

Discussing the ways police-community relationship could be enhanced, the respondents prioritized such solutions as professionalism, respect, transparency, and frequent interactions. It was demanded by many that town-hall meetings, community dialogue sessions and anti-corruption reforms be made in the police.

Sample comments included:

- i. *“Act according to the law.”*
- ii. *“Time-to-time meetings with the community on matters of security.”*

Respondents pointed out that constant communication and feedback, and ethical standards would help to build understanding and ease the tensions. They also emphasized that the authentic partnership should substitute the fear-centric policing and the turn of the governance of security is the shift towards the partnership-based security governance.

F3. Contributions of Citizens to Better Police-Community Relations.

Citizens recognized their personal responsibilities towards enhancing better relations with the police. Themes such as sharing of information, vigilance, civic responsibility and involvement in community policing dominated.

Exemplary answers were:

- i. *“There is the contribution of citizens, who will help them monitor criminals.”*
- ii. *“Through community policing and provision of valuable information.”*

The fact that these responses are similar shows that the community understands the shared responsibility in policing and that only cooperation and dialogue can help them to keep safe. Nonetheless, participants also took an interest in the fact that police officers should be credible before the people can give them cooperation. This is indicative of the give and take aspect of trust that is one of the pillars of the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP).

F4. The Community Organizations and their role with the Police.

The community-based organizations (CBOs) were generally recognized to be very important in mediation of peace, security awareness, and grass root participation. The respondents summarized their position as peacebuilders, educators and mediators in conflict resolution.

Examples of representative quotes were:

- i. *“So, they have lots of roles so as not to be violent, killings, and socially disordered.”*
- ii. *“By connecting with the community police to identify crime and sensitize individuals.”*

These reactions underscore the fact that community based organizations fill the disengagement between the police and the population and they assist in establishing communication pathways and the encouragement of civic education. This finding goes in tandem with the Collective Efficacy Theory and the Social Capital Theory which have highlighted collaboration and community cohesion to be the foundations of effective policing.

F5. The Police-Community Relations and the Technology role in improving them.

The participants viewed digital technologies as the solution to improving policing accountability and efficiency. Technologies such as CCTV surveillance systems, body-worn cameras, hotlines and real-time communication with the social media platforms were named as common.

Typical responses were:

- i. *“They should install body cams on police to expose the truth.”*
- ii. *“CCTV must be installed in government to check on activities.”*
- iii. *“It is a fast aid to call in case of any incident to the police.”*

According to the respondents, technology contributes to transparency, enables the investigation to be evidence-based, and increases the trust of the population because it has been proven that the activities of the police can be traced and are just. This observation is in line with the implementation of cybersecurity, digital forensics, and communication technology in the RPP framework, and how technology can be instrumental in sustainable and regenerative policing systems.

F6. Recommendation to Sustainable Police-Community Relationships.

The last open-ended question (F6) was devoted to the long-term trust and cooperation sustainability strategies. Unity, transparency, accountability, and professionalism were some of the principles that were reported through thematic analysis.

Notable quotes include:

- i. *“Unity.”*
- ii. *“Let police do their work as they should be done.”*
- iii. *“All the officers are supposed to be responsible.”*

According to the respondents, the promotion of sustainable peace should be based on institutional accountability, moral leadership, and participatory governance. They also emphasized the fact that unity between the police and the community needed to be cultivated by creating awareness, feedback, and involving policy changes.

The same notions support the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP) that argues that sustainable policing are results of perpetual loops of moral responsibility, trust rebuilding, collaborative practice, and institutional learning based on awareness, understanding and orientation, reflecting the main process of the RPP framework.

The qualitative data of the pilot study indicates that the mistrust in policing is mostly based on the ethical failures and ineffective communication, still the communities are hopeful about the reform and collaboration. The need of regenerative policing practices that transcend the conventional enforcement with its focus on awareness, understanding, orientation, dialogue, and technology-induced accountability can be highlighted by the voices of citizens.

In general, the data of the Section F support the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP) as a theory and practical concept to restore social capital, institutional trust, and sustainable peace in Lagos State and other urban settings throughout the Nigerian Country.

4.9 Implications for the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP)

The findings of this pilot study provide preliminary empirical support for the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP). The reported relationships between trust, accountability, community involvement and police performance are in line with the cyclical model in the RPP framework. Specifically, the results demonstrate that:

- i. Ethical accountability influences trust in policing institutions.
- ii. Trust enhances community cooperation and engagement.
- iii. Collaboration supports social capital development.
- iv. Social capital contributes to improved perceptions of safety and legitimacy.

However, the findings also reveal critical gaps particularly in communication, transparency, and technological integration that can disrupt this regenerative cycle. These loopholes are essential towards achieving sustainable policing outcomes.

In general, the findings justify the topicality of the concept of RPP as the dynamic and complete model of the analysis and enhancement of the police activity under the circumstances of complex and dynamic situations.

5. Conclusion and Policy Implications

This paper aimed at analyzing the connection between social capital and police performance in the framework of the Epe Division, Lagos State, Nigeria, and to come up with a new model, the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP) to improving policing performance through trust-based and adaptive institutional processes. The paper provides an early empirical data on a pilot method that is mixed-method in nature, that social capital (trust, in particular) is crucial in deciding police legitimacy, communal cooperation and general functioning of the organization.

The findings show that the perceived legitimacy, community involvement and institutional functionality are moderate; nevertheless, there are still serious deficiencies in the areas such as transparency, feedback, information-sharing, and technological integration. These lapses are structural and operational loopholes that restrain the full achievement of effective and sustainable policing.

It is important to note that the results support the original theses of the Regenerative Policing

Proposition (RPP) according to which the policing effectiveness is a dynamic phenomenon that is driven by the continuous cycles of the ethical accountability, regeneration of the trust, collaborative interaction, institutional learning, and the renewal of the social capital. The study therefore adds to the existing literature in the field of policing research by reversing the trend of focusing on the reactive paradigm of enforcement to regenerative and adaptive systems that would sustain legitimacy and trust among the people in the long term.

Even though the evidence is founded on a pilot study in which the sample size is relatively small, the results are solid grounds on which future empirical validation through larger sample sizes and more sophisticated statistical methods can be conducted. The research adds to the literature, by providing an interdisciplinary, situational, and sustainability-focused model in accordance with the aims of global policing priorities, including that of INTERPOL, but also with the Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

The paper builds on prior policing theories by proposing a regenerative and cyclic viewpoint, by setting trust, accountability, and social capital as constantly developing processes instead of a set of determinants influencing police performance.

The research results are important to the policing practice, institutional change, and the policy of the population, especially in the developing context.

Short-Term Interventions

In the short run, law enforcement should focus on efforts in restoring trust and refining police-community relations. This includes:

- i. Strengthening community engagement platforms such as town hall meetings and Police-Community Relations Committees (PCRC)
- ii. Ethics and professionalism training on a permanent basis to police officers.

- iii. Improving communication and feedback system so that the citizens are updated on the results of reported cases.
- iv. Promoting public awareness campaigns on citizens' rights and responsibilities in policing

These measures can help address immediate trust deficits and improve cooperation between police and communities.

Medium-Term Reforms

On the medium-term, it is possible to work on enhancing accountability and implementing technology in policing systems. Key strategies include:

- i. Expanding the use of digital accountability tools such as body-worn cameras, CCTV systems, and incident reporting platforms.
- ii. Improving transparency through regular publication of police performance reports and statistics.
- iii. Strengthening the role of external oversight institutions, including civil society organizations and human rights bodies
- iv. Developing secure and anonymous channels for reporting crimes and police misconduct

These reforms will enhance transparency, reduce misconduct, and build public confidence in policing institutions.

Long-Term Institutional Transformation

Sustainable policing needs profound institutional change in the long run based on the ideas of the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP). This involves:

- i. Embedding ethical accountability and trust-building as core organizational values within policing institutions.
- ii. Institutionalizing continuous learning, data-driven decision-making, and adaptive governance frameworks.

- iii. Promoting inclusive policing strategies that actively involve marginalized and vulnerable groups
- iv. Integrating interdisciplinary approaches, including cybersecurity, data analytics, and behavioral science, into policing practice.
- v. Aligning policing systems with national development strategies and global frameworks such as SDG 16.

Such transformative approaches will reposition policing institutions as regenerative systems capable of evolving with societal needs and sustaining long-term peace and security.

Contribution to Knowledge and Practice.

The article is very useful in policing, security and administration of the people. It states the Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP) as an innovative, interdisciplinary, and cyclical framework of police performance enhancement in the first place. The RPP also integrates the trust, accountability and community engagement, as opposed to being separate components as it occurred with the traditional policing models to a mechanism of perpetual renewal through ethical accountability, trust regeneration, collaborative engagement, institutional learning and social capital renewal.

Second, the study provides a preliminary empirical information on the applicability and relevance of the RPP through a pilot study in the Epe Division in Lagos State. The study bridges the gap between the conceptual theory and the realities of policing in a developing country context in that it demonstrates the interaction between trust, reciprocity, civic participation and institutional responsiveness.

Third, the study can be added to the existing theory of policing including social capital theory, procedural justice, and community policing as it offers a more holistic and dynamic concept that carries the dynamic and recurrent interaction of the police with the community. Through this, it does not emphasize on the reactionary and enforcement-based models but rather

a regenerative one that is concerned with establishing trust, collaboration and continuous learning.

Finally, the research provides a set of practical recommendations to the policymakers, law enforcement agencies and development practitioners by highlighting the necessity to take the behavioural, institutional and social factor into account during the police reform. RPP framework therefore does not only add to the theoretical discourse but also to the feasibility of the direction that guides the strategies of sustainable policing that are in accordance with the global policing priorities such as the ones of the INTERPOL and Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

Limitations and Future Research.

This study has limitations in spite of its contributions. The sample size (N= 35) is small and does not allow generalizing the findings, and purposive-convenience sampling may lead to selection bias. There is also primarily descriptive analysis, and no more complex statistical modelling.

The study limitations can be addressed in future by investing in large scale studies of representative samples and using more sophisticated approaches of analysis such as Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Generalized Structural Equation Modeling (GSEM) to verify the hypotheses of the relationships as postulated in the RPP framework. It is also recommendable that comparative research should be carried out in different regions and countries to establish how the model can be implemented in different circumstances.

Final Remark

The Regenerative Policing Proposition (RPP) is a drastic form of re-conceptualization of policing in Nigeria and in similar developing contexts. The framework provides a long-term resolution to police legitimacy, enhancing community safety, and inclusive development by emphasizing trust, accountability, collaboration, as well as sustained

institutional learning. RPP when appropriately implemented and with empirical evidence, can transform policing and security to a regenerative

system capable of instilling the law, as well as restoring trust, empowering communities and adding value to sustainable peace.

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