

CHAPTER FIVE:

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the major findings of the study on strengthening community policing and crime prevention in Mtakataka, Dedza District, Malawi. It also provides conclusions drawn from the findings and offers recommendations for improving community policing.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study revealed the following key findings:

5.2.1 Community Policing Practices

- Community policing structures such as forums and neighborhood watch groups exist in Mtakataka.
- However, their implementation is inconsistent and not fully effective.

5.2.2 Level of Community Participation

- Participation is moderate, with many community members not actively involved.
- Key barriers include lack of trust, fear of victimization, and limited awareness.

5.2.3 Challenges Affecting Community Policing

- Lack of trust between the community and the Malawi Police Service
- Inadequate resources (transport, personnel, funding)
- Low public awareness
- Weak coordination among stakeholders

5.2.4 Crime Situation in Mtakataka

- Common crimes include theft, assault, land dispute, and gender-based violence.
- Socio-economic factors such as poverty and unemployment contribute significantly to crime.

5.2.5 Effectiveness of Community Policing

- Community policing is moderately effective but not sufficient to significantly reduce crime.
- There is a need for strengthening existing structures.

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings, the study concludes that:

1. Community policing in Mtakataka has the potential to reduce crime but is currently underutilized.
2. Weak trust between the police and the community is a major barrier to effective collaboration.
3. Limited resources and inadequate training hinder the performance of police officers.
4. Low community participation reduces the effectiveness of crime prevention strategies.
5. Strengthening community policing requires a coordinated effort involving the police, community members, and other stakeholders.

5.4 Recommendations

The study proposes the following recommendations:

5.4.1 To the Malawi Police Service

- Improve community engagement through regular meetings and outreach programs.
- Enhance training in community policing and public relations.
- Increase resource allocation (vehicles, personnel, equipment).

5.4.2 To Government

- Provide adequate funding to support community policing initiatives.
- Develop policies that promote accountability and transparency in policing.
- Support socio-economic development programs to address root causes of crime.

5.4.3 To the Community

- Actively participate in community policing activities.
- Report crimes and cooperate with law enforcement agencies.
- Promote collective responsibility for safety and security.

5.4.4 To Local Leaders and NGOs

- Conduct awareness campaigns on the importance of community policing.
- Facilitate dialogue between the police and the community.
- Support community-based crime prevention initiatives.

5.5 Areas for Further Research

The study suggests further research in the following areas:

- The impact of technology on community policing in rural areas
- Gender perspectives in community policing
- Comparative studies of community policing across different districts in Malawi

5.6 Conclusion

The study has demonstrated that strengthening community policing is essential for effective crime prevention in Mtakataka. While progress has been made, significant improvements are needed in trust-building, resource allocation, and community participation. Implementing the recommended strategies will contribute to a safer and more secure community.

REFERENCES

- Bullock, K. and Tilley, N. (2003) *Police reform: Process and prospects*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chimwala, L. (2015) 'Community policing in Malawi: Challenges and prospects', *Journal of African Security Studies*, 4(2), pp. 45–60.
- Cohen, L.E. and Felson, M. (1979) 'Social change and crime rate trends', *American Sociological Review*, 44(4), pp. 588–608.
- Goldstein, H. (1990) *Problem-oriented policing*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Kainja, J. (2016) 'Evaluating community policing effectiveness in Malawi', *Malawi Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(1), pp. 23–37.
- Marks, M. and Wood, J. (2010) *Police and community in post-apartheid South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Ruteere, M. and Pommerolle, M. (2003) 'Democratizing security or decentralizing repression?', *African Affairs*, 102(409), pp. 587–604.
- Shaw, C. and McKay, H. (1942) *Juvenile delinquency and urban areas*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Sherman, L.W. and Eck, J.E. (2002) 'Policing for crime prevention', *Evidence-Based Crime Prevention*, pp. 295–329.
- Skogan, W.G. (2006) *Police and community in Chicago*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Trojanowicz, R. and Bucqueroux, B. (1990) *Community policing: A contemporary perspective*. Cincinnati: Anderson Publishing.
- Wilson, J.Q. and Kelling, G.L. (1982) 'Broken windows', *Atlantic Monthly*, 249(3), pp. 29–38.

