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### Promoting urban security through community participation: Evidence from Wa, Ghana

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#### ABSTRACT

Crime remains one of the major threats to urban communities in Ghana. Ostensibly, the hitherto approach in crime control had been targeting statutory institutions, notably the Ghana Police Service, to the neglect of community level participation, which has become critical due to the increase in crime levels and manpower challenges facing the law enforcement agencies. Against this background, this paper examined how community members contribute to the promotion of security in Wa, a cosmopolitan community in the Upper West Region of Ghana, which often escapes official reports. Forty-three (43) community crime control actors in addition to three key informants were selected purposely in a case study design. Primary data were gathered through interviews and focus group discussions. The study found that community actors complement the efforts of the police by supplying relevant information on crime and offenders resulting in the arrest and prosecution of offenders in the law courts; providing logistical support such as motorbikes and fuel to the police; arresting and handing over suspected criminals to the police; engaging the services of private security operatives; as well as undertaking community patrols often known as 'neighbourhood watch'. Given the critical role of citizens in crime prevention and control, and the promotion of communities' safety, the paper recommends that the police should periodically organise workshops to educate community members on modern crime trends and strategies so as to improve their skills in crime control and detection.

#### 1. Introduction

Vanderschueren (2013) has expressed that urbanization worldwide has reached more than half of the world's population. Many more people across the globe now live in urban communities than before (Security and Defence Agenda Report, 2011). The report indicated that urban communities face varying degrees of security threats including terrorism, organised crime and political and economic unrest. It concluded that urban security demands a holistic approach involving the police, judiciary as well as other functionaries.

According to Aguiar et al. (2018), urbanization, conceptualised as the portion of a nation's population living in towns and cities, presents a double-edged sword. They expressed that while urban areas offer certain advantages over rural areas such as economic opportunities, increased socialization and relatively high living standards, they also pose evolving and complex security and development challenges. These authorities have indicated that certain threats such as drug-related violence, gender-based attacks, ethnic strife, terrorism and outright warfare are more predominant in urban contexts. In their view, many cities suffer from weak or illegitimate governance, as well as ineffective structures for providing security.

Srimoolanathan (2014) asserted that cities represent the economic might of their nations and compete to attract more

global talent and investments. He, however, admitted that they are targets and hub of anti-social, criminal, illegal and terrorist activities. He noted that in many cities across the world, high crime and violence rates undermine growth, threaten human welfare and impede social development. Satterthwaite et al. (2010) have expressed that urbanization involves the expansion of urban land use that results in a more dispersed settlement and competition. Consequently, indiscipline and conflicts in land markets, sometimes result in loss of lives and property as espoused by Awedoba (2009). This invariably threatens urban security (United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), 2007).

Brown et al. (2007) earlier hinted that societies are exposed to common threats such as terrorism and other criminal acts, pandemics and natural disasters. These authorities conclude that societies in contemporary times require an integrated approach in protecting the people. It is in this regard that May (2016) views citizens' participation in crime prevention as an ideal approach towards crime reduction and the promotion of public safety. The central premise of community participation in crime control is that the police alone cannot maintain safety and social order in communities, without the active involvement of citizens (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe 2008). Vanderschueren (2013) has expressed that the growth of urbanization and the increased complexity of crime requires the co-production of security

involving the participation of both state and local actors such as civil society.

The voluntary and complementary roles undertaken by communities will help in minimizing the vacuum created by the absence of the police and other law enforcement authorities in controlling crime (Manaliyo, 2016). Community participation is thus seen as an essential component of a much larger crime prevention and control efforts. Wanda (2008) indicates that many criminal issues emerge from a local, specific context, and this makes community participation in crime control very useful. UN-Habitat (2007) indicated that the role of communities is crucial in addressing urban security challenges.

Like other countries across the globe, the increasing population of Ghana has consequently led to more urbanized communities in the country. The Ghana Demographic and Health Survey (2015) indicated that Ghana's population increased from 8.6 million people in 1970 to 12.3 million in 1984, 18.9 million in 2000 and 24.7 million in 2010. It noted that the population of people living in urban areas has tremendously increased in the last 50 years from 23 percent in 1960 to 51 percent in 2010, with its attendance security threats. This indeed is a matter of concern for urban planners.

Tankebe (2008) and Haining (2012) argue that rapid urbanization of towns and cities challenge the pursuance of securing urban spaces, particularly in developing countries. Obeng-Odoom (2010) and Songsore et al. (2014) claimed that due to the failure of city authorities to plan for increasing population growth, it has resulted in unplanned and poorly managed cities. These authorities further argue that increasing development of slums and informal settlements has exposed some inhabitants to crime. In this regard, Badong (2008) is of the view that this state of affair has raised the public's sense of fear of crime. Consequently, as noted by Owusu et al. (2015), some individuals and households have employed various means and alternative methods including magic, superstition and fortification of buildings in promoting peace, security, and justice. This development, according to Alexander and Pain (2012), has exposed the inequality in the provision of security for all in urban communities. It is against this background that UNHSP (2007:50) has expressed that both formal and informal institutional arrangements have to be utilised in dealing with crime. It noted that 'victims and perpetrators are affected by rules, decisions and programmes that flow from public policy, as well as by socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels.

Arguably, the Ghana Police Service, a statutory institution primarily responsible for the maintenance of law and order in the country (Article 200(3) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana), has often come under attack from the general public. In the view of Atuguba (2007), most Ghanaians are dissatisfied with the institution called the Ghana Police Service and perceive the police as among the most corrupt institutions. The Police visibility programme, a recently devised security strategy to promote a public sense of safety through frequent presence of the police in communities equally has been criticised by some people in Wa, the study

community, as not being beneficial and described it as a 'police sleeping' concept (Ghana News Agency, 2014).

Wa continues to battle with various criminal activities such as murder, robbery, stealing, assault, human trafficking, causing harm, defilement and rape (Wa Regional Police Crime Report, 2016). The report showed that the incidence of crime committed in the Wa Municipality increased from 298 in 2013 to 659 in 2014. However, in 2015, the total crime committed in the Municipality rose to 852. By the first quarter of 2016, the total number of cases reported was 495 with stealing topping the list. Astonishingly, this is coming at a time when there are continuing reports of police involvement in crime. For instance, the Wa Police Command arrested a former General Constable of the Ghana Police Service while two of his accomplices were on the run. The suspect, Ernest Koranteng, 30 years, was arrested for allegedly attempting to rob an officer of the Ghana Prisons Service, Sergeant Isaac Adams of his Loujia motorbike (Quaye, 2016).

This development calls for the participation of citizens in complementing the efforts of the police in promoting and maintaining security in the country. Ostensibly, the Ghana Police Service continues to adopt the traditional policing strategies that have produced limited opportunities for making use of conventional institutions outside the police as well as limited engagement with the community (Tankebe, 2008) to enhance public and individual safety and security (Lersch, 2007). It is against this background that this study has its main objective of examining how communities participate in crime control to complement the efforts of the police in Wa, a cosmopolitan community.

This study is quite significant in that scholarly works on crime control (Dumenya, 2017; Marfo, 2016) over the years have primarily been focusing on institutional or formal mechanisms, notably the police and other bodies involved in the justice system, to the neglect of the participation of communities. Owusu et al. (2015) and Bagson et al. (2016), whose works touched on the dwindling presence of the police in most urban communities in Ghana and the need for informal crime control mechanisms, did not look intently at crime control from the broader perspective of the community level as this present study has done. This has become critical due to the growth of human population, increase in crime incidence, coupled with inadequate logistics and police personnel. This study seeks to fill such a knowledge gap. The findings will help in fine tuning the role of citizens in crime control strategies in meeting the security needs of contemporary urban communities that are saddled with many criminal threats.

## 2. Conceptual model

The building of effective and accountable institutions capable of promoting justice and peaceful coexistence has been the preoccupation of nations. The Catholic Development Agency for England and Wales (CAFOD, 2015) noted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), for instance, reflect an opportunity for people to come together to advocate for positive change built on the values of solidarity and inclusive participation. It could therefore be premised that without the solidarity and participation of the public in crime control,

societies (especially urban communities) will not see any meaningful and sustainable peace and development as envisaged by the SDGs.

Burns et al. (2004) wrote that active participation of local residents is essential as it enhances social cohesion. They argued that participation enhances effectiveness as various local knowledge and understanding relevant to the local situation are marshalled to bring about the needed outcome. Communities' initiatives are voluntary and adaptive to the local needs of the people. They promote sustainability in that community members own the initiatives and see to it that they survive and progress (Burns et al., 2004).

Craig et al. (2014) suggest that one way to control crime is to encourage the development of a strong sense of neighbourhood where residents take responsibility for their neighbourhoods or communities' security by engaging in crime control initiatives. This is crucial because, as noted by Miranda (2007), the lack of community participation in crime control programmes could result in social security failure. In the view of Choi et al. (2014), the police in contemporary times cannot improve community safety effectively without the support from community residents, which makes citizens engagement in community safety activities a significant issue in criminal justice. This underscores the relevance of Schuttlesworth and Ambrosino's (2001) Systems Theory in this study that examines how communities build strong initiatives in crime control.

The Systems Theory posits that effective functioning of an organism (in this regard society) depends on the active role of various units that continuously interact. The Theory suggests that the contribution of different actors is crucial for the achievement of the overall societal goal. The promotion of urban safety requires inputs from different actors; in that crime is too complex to be controlled using only one body or agent for the collective safety of communities (Mair and Mair, 2003; Tankebe, 2008). Various roles played by institutions and community crime control actors complementary, cumulatively and continuously are required to ensure a sound and secured environment. In the words of Tobi Dress (2005) (cited in Murithi, 2009:7), 'no single organisation, institution, sector, group, gender, or department can singularly shoulder the enormous burden of creating sustainable peace in any given community'. Inclusiveness and collaboration in crime control is therefore considered as the strategic approach to security and development challenges in contemporary urbanised communities.

The safety of society as a whole will be in peril without the effective participation and complementary role of the community in crime control (Aref and Ma'rof, 2009). The dynamics of society in terms of the growth of human population, varieties of criminal activities, and the technological advancement of the criminal modus of operation requires a change in the traditional system of policing where the police is seen mainly as the sole actor in crime control with less community involvement (Karn, 2013). This orientation should be transformed to involve active participation of the community whereby all levels of community actors contribute to crime control and the

maintenance of safety in localities. Thus, the Systems Theory helps us to understand how citizens and groups within the community could work with the police in controlling crime for the collective interest of public peace and safety and the promotion of the criminal justice.

### 3. Research design

This study employed a case study design as it helped the researchers to gain a wider perspective of the problem from the viewpoint of the respondents. The study was conducted in Wa, the administrative head of Wa Municipal, which together with 10 districts make up the Upper West Region. The choice of Wa stemmed from the fact that it is an emerging urban community that in present times has been experiencing various criminal activities (Wa Regional Police Crime Report, 2016).

Wa Municipal shares administrative borders with Nadowli District to the North, Wa East District to the East and South, and the Wa West District to the West and South (Wa Municipal Assembly Report, 2016). Ghana Statistical Service (2012) puts the population of Wa Municipal at 107,124. The influx of people and the vibrant economic activities make the Wa Municipal a prospective target of criminals (Marfo, 2016). This in effect calls for a strong security apparatus and collaboration with the public in ensuring safety, and catering for the gap created by the absence of the police due to a shortfall of manpower.

#### 3.1 Sampling techniques

The study made use of 46 participants comprising 43 community crime control actors drawn from different backgrounds and three key informants from the police service knowledgeable in crime and safety. Schuttlesworth and Ambrosino's (2001) Systems Theory suggests that the promotion of urban safety demands the contributions from different actors. All the respondents were purposely selected in view of the divergent roles they play in ensuring security in the Wa community. The chiefs and local council officials were selected from Mangu, Fongu, Kpaguri, Dankpalihe and Gamuni communities. According to Wa Regional Police Crime Report (2016), crime incidences are high in recent times in these areas. The roles played by the selected respondents from the stated communities in crime control were therefore considered critical. Table 1 depicts the summary of the selected respondents.

**Table 1: Summary of selected respondents**

Identity	Males	Females	Total
Chiefs	6	0	6

Christian Council of Churches	2	0	2
Moslems/Office of the Chief Imam	2	0	2
Local Council Officials	5	1	6
Suntaa Nuntaa Women's Association	0	8	8
PROTOA Officials	2	0	2
GPRTU Officials	2	0	2
Neighbourhood Watchdog Committee	7	0	7
Market Women Executives	0	2	2
Store Operators' Executives	2	1	3
Health Officials	1	0	1
Ghana Police Service	2	1	3
Police Informants	2	0	2
Total	33	13	46

**Source: Field study, 2019**

### 3.2 Techniques of data collection and analysis

Primary information was gathered through interviews as well as focus group discussions. Thirty-one (31) separate face to face in-depth interviewing sessions were held at different times for the selected respondents excluding the Suntaa Nuntaa Women Association (a self-help women association), and the Neighbourhood Watchdog Committee. This approach enabled the researchers to create a better understanding of the issues under investigation. Each interview session lasted on average 25 minutes. On the other hand, a focus group discussion was held among the Suntaa Nuntaa Women Association (eight discussants) and the Neighbourhood Watchdog Committee (seven discussants) aided by a check list. Each focus group discussion lasted about 30 minutes. On ethical grounds, the researchers explained to all the respondents the goal of the study and the rationale for using the audio recording device. In line with the principle of anonymity and confidentiality, the actual names of the respondents were divorced from the data. All names used during the analysis of the data were invented. The field work took place between December 2018 and February 2019.

A thematic qualitative data analyses approach based on the objectives of the study was employed. According to Gibbs (2009), thematic qualitative analysis involves recording and identifying passages of texts or images that are linked by a common theme or idea that allows the researcher to index the

text in categories. The raw data such as field notes were typed. Similarly, information recorded with audio device was transcribed and carefully edited. The field data were then arranged into themes and integrated into the results. Where appropriate, tables were used in presenting the findings.

## 4. Findings and discussions

### 4.1 Ways in which communities participate in crime control

The researchers first and foremost asked the respondents about their understanding of the concept 'community participation in crime control'. All the respondents virtually gave a similar response indicating that community participation in crime control involves all the assistance given by the ordinary citizens to the police to help improve safety of communities and the sanctioning of criminals. As the Systems Theory emphasizes collaboration in pursuance of the collective good of communities, the respondents were asked how they assist in controlling crime and promoting safety. The responses as outlined by the respondents have been captured by Table 2.

**Table 2: How communities assist in crime control (multiple responses)**

Mechanism	Responses
Mobile patrols	7
Sharing of information on crime and offenders	33
Financial and logistics upkeep	8
Physical arrest	15
Constant education	18
Watchman engagement	5

**Source: Field study, 2019**

#### A. Mobile patrols

Seven participants expressed that they help in controlling crime by making their presence felt within the communities through mobile patrols often known as 'neighbourhood watch'. These participants indicated that they periodically embark on night patrols without the company or the help of the police. Lucky, a member of the Neighbourhood Watch noted that the formation of the Community Watchdog Committee has helped to deter criminals and instilled a public sense of safety. This was what Lucky said in a focus group discussion held in January 2019:

*"We have sacrificed to help the police in controlling crime through foot patrols in the night. Our presence in a given spot is enough to deter anyone intended to commit any criminal act. Even though we are not armed with offensive implements such as guns as is done by some local groups in southern part of*

*Ghana, our activities have helped in promoting safety in the communities in which we operate”.*

This study has revealed that members of the neighbourhood watch operate as semi-autonomous agents and patrol communities in the night with simple instruments including batons without the immediate presence of the police. Lucky’s narratives indicated that crime control requires periodic presence of ‘guardians’ or ‘security operatives’ in frustrating the operation of criminals. Lucky’s expression indicates that there is no clear-cut policy in Ghana on the use of weapons by civilians who volunteer to complement the efforts of the police through night patrols. A key informant corroborated the information but explained that the people are not professionals nor are they well-trained in handling weapons, and it would be unwise from a security perspective to allow them to carry guns.

The finding from this study is at variance with the work of Manaliyo (2016). His study revealed that the neighbourhood watch members only patrol streets when they are with the police because they are untrained and unarmed and could be attacked by armed criminals. The finding suggests that in more crime prone areas with hard core criminals, the lives of these local actors could be endangered when they operate without any effective protective weapon. As these local crime control actors operate predominantly at night without the presence of the police, they could engage in the crime trade as well. This calls for a deliberate policy in Ghana to make the activities of these community volunteers much safer and well regulated.

#### **B. Sharing of information on crime and offenders**

Thirty-three (33) respondents indicated that they participate in crime control by supplying relevant information to the police leading to the detection of crime, arrest and prosecution of offenders. The key informants admitted that some local community members have been helpful in controlling crime through the sharing of sensitive information. Reiterating on this point, one of them stated:

*“This study is quite interesting. We know how members of the community have been assisting us in controlling crime and improving security in Wa by sharing with us sensitive information. In 2017, with the information from one of these local actors, an armed robber who seriously wounded a student from University for Development Studies, Wa Campus was arrested, trialled and jailed for 25 years”.*

The emerging idea is that relevant information about crime and criminals is critical in the criminal justice system. Thus, effective crime control demands active teamwork between the police and the public. The manifestation is that without the active involvement of citizens in crime control, the efforts of the police to maintain safety and social order in communities will be unsuccessful (OSCE, 2008). As the Systems Theory espouses, the promotion of urban security requires a concerted effort from different actors. The finding suggests that citizens play a critical role in controlling crime and without their efforts, the police will be incapacitated in terms of their work. In this regard, by providing information to the

police, communities help expose the activities of criminals and equally make them amenable to justice. This finding supports May’s (2016) assertion that where government, law enforcement, businesses and the public work together on prevention, it promotes delivery and reduces the commission of certain crimes. Thus, the provision of relevant information in the form of evidence by the public to the police, promotes the criminal justice system through successful detection of crime, arrests and prosecution of offenders in the law court.

#### **C. Financial and logistics upkeep**

The study revealed that some members of the community participate in crime control through the provision of finance and logistics such as motorbikes and bicycles to support the operation of the police. This attracted eight responses. Iddi indicated that they support the police in controlling crime by providing them with the necessary logistics. This is what Iddi said during an interview in December 2018:

*“We all know that the government is responsible for the safety of communities through the work of the police. However, the police from time to time call for the support of the public. I have personally been to the police station apparently to report an issue which needed an immediate attention. I was told there was no police vehicle. Ironically, a police vehicle was parked just a few distance from the station. When I drew their attention to the parked vehicle, I was told there was no fuel in the vehicle. From that time, I have been supportive in providing the police with motorbikes when necessary”.*

The picture gained from Iddi’s narrative is that the police lack certain fundamental tools to make their operations more functional as is expected by the public. The difficulty in managing crime, as identified in this study, validates Vanderschueren’s (2013) assertion that the promotion of security requires the contribution of the state and civil society. The study has revealed that public support is essential and has actually helped the police in promoting security especially in urban communities. The key informants admitted this assertion and explained that a section of the public has been quite supportive of them in terms of provision of motorbikes.

This finding shows that community participation in crime control activities could either be direct or indirect. In this paper, as identified, some members indirectly support the police, which enable them to execute their functions effectively. The finding is in line with UNHSP (2007) Report, which noted that both formal and informal institutions play critical roles in minimizing the effects of crime. The finding also calls for a critical look at the financing of the police by the government so as to make it more effective, attractive and productive.

#### **D. Physical arrest**

The study revealed that 15 of the respondents promote safety and crime control through direct arrest of some offenders and suspected criminals. According to these respondents, they have been informed by the police that, where appropriate, they can arrest any person of suspicious character and hand

him or her immediately to the police. A respondent had this to say:

*“In company with some volunteers, we arrested three people in 2018 when we suspected their action. We brought them to the police station together with the goods we retrieved from them. Together with the police we came to where we arrested the men and they confessed in our presence having stolen the goods. We often personally arrest criminals especially, in a situation where we think that the intervention of the police may be too late”.*

A key informant confirmed that indeed the three young men were apprehended and handed over to the police by the local crime control actors, and upon investigation they found that the goods were actually stolen. Justifying the action of the community members who arrest suspects and hand them over to the police, this is what another key informant stated:

*“As you are aware, Section 12 of the Ghana Criminal Procedure Code Act 1960 (Act 30), as amended by NRCD grants individuals the power to arrest any person without any authority from the court if such a person commits any offence involving the use of force or violence in his presence among others. The law is clear about the power of a private person to effect arrest. This helps the police in controlling crime and maintaining safety in communities. What is important is that once any suspect is arrested, he should not be beaten but rather should be immediately taken to the police station for further investigation”.*

The information gathered revealed that the law empowers ordinary citizens to arrest people of suspicious character, and that the power to arrest (suspected) criminals in Ghana is not solely invested in the police and other statutory security agents. The information indicates that civil society contributes to crime control in diverse ways. This explains why Tobi Dress (2005) (cited in Murithi, 2009:7) asserted that the burden of creating sustainable peace in any given community is quite enormous to be carried by a single institution or group. The emerging impression is that by arresting people of questionable character, citizens help in building all-encompassing and secured environment and also help the police to promote justice delivery in Ghana. It is in this regard that Choi et al. (2014) have expressed that the police in present times cannot improve community safety effectively without the support from community residents. This calls for a sense of professionalism. The police in this regard are expected to educate the public periodically on matters relating to the powers of citizens in making an arrest; and furthermore, not to take the law into their hands by undertaking instance justice.

The power granted to the ordinary person to arrest suspected offenders could be seen as one way of promoting communities' sense of security and participation in crime control. This finding is in line with the provision of Section 12 of the Ghana Criminal Procedure Code, Act 1960 (Act 30). As the Systems Theory espouses, the contribution of different

actors in the form of the direct arrest of offenders is central in promoting urban security. The finding buttresses the work of Aref and Ma'rof (2009), which revealed that the safety of society will be at risk without the effective participation and complementary role of the community in crime control.

#### **E. Constant education**

Community participation in crime control takes various forms. Eighteen (18) respondents, including eight women, said their role in controlling crime takes the form of education that seeks to impress upon their relatives the danger of engaging in any criminal act and the need to be law abiding. The information gathered suggests that crime control requires a holistic approach of which education on responsive citizenship is crucial. It is in this regard that Mair and Mair (2003) asserted that different roles are required from various bodies or agents for the collective safety of communities.

All the key informants admitted that controlling crime through education is considered very important, as it helps prevent people from engaging in criminal acts and their effects on communities. A key informant said:

*“Occasionally we give what can be termed as crime tip bits through radio talk shows to people. Honestly speaking, if the general public will listen to our educational calls to make communities safe, our work would be reduced drastically. This will save precious time and scarce resources in conducting criminal investigation and also to ensure that justice is done. Nonetheless, given the different orientations of people, no matter the education that we give, some people still take the law into their own hands. This is why, in controlling crime, we do not limit our efforts solely to education. Crime control is a complex phenomenon and requires a holistic approach”.*

The study found that education that creates public awareness and understanding of crime and criminals' modus of operation is a major pillar of crime prevention under the broader crime control approaches. This process of awareness creation helps in building the capacity of individuals and the community; and enables them to track crime trends and participate in projects intended to make individuals and the community safe. The finding is in line with the maxim of the Ghana Police Squad Lesson Notes, which indicates that the security of public property as well as private, the safety of a person, the public peace, and every other object of the police will be better effected through crime prevention other than by punishing offenders after the commission of a crime.

#### **F. Watchman engagement (security engagement)**

In this study it emerged that other community members (5 out of 43) participate in crime control through the engagement of the services of private security operatives popularly known as 'watchmen' who take care of their wares. A key informant corroborated and expressed that the complementary role played by these paid watchmen through the initiative of the section of the community is laudable in controlling crime. This is what one of the respondents said during an interview in December 2018:

“The police are there to protect us, but you don’t expect them to be everywhere in the market. As sellers we have come together to form an association. What we do is that we hire watchmen to protect our wares in the night and paid them from our contributions. These watchmen are helpful as their presence scares any person with criminal intent. I remember in 2017 through the operation of these watchmen, a young man who made an attempt to break into a shop containing used clothes known as ‘second-hand clothes’ was arrested and handed over to the police. This is how we help ourselves and the police in maintaining safety and controlling crime”.

A key informant confirmed what the respondent said and indicated that, indeed, the young man was arrested by the watchmen and handed over to the police. The information received showed that some citizens help in promoting safety by employing the services of other informal security providers. The information gathered is indicative that the presence of the police is not felt at all times at all places. Thus, the complementary role played by these paid watchmen through the initiative of the section of the community is one practical way of filling the gap created by the absence of the police, and moreover helping in controlling crime in communities. The finding is in line with the work of Bagson et al. (2016), which revealed that some individuals and households in Ghana have employed various means and unconventional methods in dealing with peace, security, and justice.

### 5 Conclusion and recommendations

This study found that some community members indeed contribute immensely to crime control and promoting urban security by engaging in various activities including the sharing of sensitive information on criminals with the police, which results in the arrest and effective prosecution of criminals in the law court, direct arrest of suspected criminals and the provision of motorbikes and bicycles to the police, which allows them to be more active in their mobile patrols. As the Systems Theory places emphasis on interdependence and collaboration, this study has revealed that the participation from various local crime control actors has helped in complementing the efforts of the police in controlling crime and improving the security situation in Wa. Miranda (2007) has hinted that the deficiency of community involvement in crime control programmes could result in the miscarriage of social security. The incidences of crime in the study locality amidst the contributions of citizens, suggests that without active community involvement in crime control, the safety of the study locality would be at risk. Promoting community participation in crime control should therefore be given the needed urgency.

It is recommended that the police should periodically organise workshops to educate community members on modern crime trends and strategies so as to improve their skills of crime control and detection.

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