Community-Based Policing

Author’s Name

[Institutional Affiliation(s)]

Community-Based Policing

Cultural competence can be described as an ability to understand, interact, and communicate effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds. Law enforcement officials, especially during policing, are required to be culturally competent to effectively perform their duties (Sereni-Massinger & Wood, 2016). The culturally competent officials can better understand the needs of citizens and can, therefore, better exhibit actions that are culturally appropriate while interacting with citizens.

Policing is the fundamental requirement of a community as it ensures that the community is safe. One major problem that law enforcement officials face is the lack of cordial relationships with communities. The hostility or suspicions that accompany policing typically rely on motorized patrols by shifting arrays of law enforcement officials resulting in violence. Specifically, officers who are not culturally competent, often encounter hostility and suspicion from citizens. Community policing involves the deployment of the same officers in specified communities regularly. There are several benefits of community-based policing, however, the most important benefit is that community policing can serve as a good crime deterrent. The regular policing and visibility of the police along with the vigilance of people living in a community can aid in deterring crime (Sereni-Massinger & Wood, 2016). This is because it is highly unlikely that criminals will try to break-in or perform any kind of criminal activity as they are familiar that they are being watched continuously. Additionally, as mentioned earlier that community-based policing can facilitate in developing a cordial relationship with the members of the community, so in case of any issue, the community directly sends alerts to the police and they can, in turn, take an action immediately rather than waiting for the authentic alert as they are familiar with every community member.

Another advantage of community policing is identification. Officers that are dedicated to a specific community have an opportunity to directly interact with residents, therefore, they have the intimate knowledge of a community. Due to this knowledge, they can identify and analyze crime patterns of any criminal activity in a community. Community policing uses various problem-solving techniques to not only respond but correct potential vulnerabilities within a community rather than responding to a crime after it has been committed. Community policing emphasizes shifts of fighting crime to preventing crime.

It is undeniably true that community policing can facilitate building a cordial relationship with the community, however, one main advantage of community policing is to establish immediate and long-term proactive problem-solving. It has been observed that community-based police officers' role demands sustained and continuous contact with law-abiding residents of the community. Together, they both can explore creative solutions to cater to the local community concerns regarding law and crime (Clarke, 2006). Community residents can act as volunteers to resolve any issue. This will, in turn, create tolerance among people and that will ensure the public’s trust in the criminal justice system. A community-based officer also acts as a direct link between the community and private agencies that can help in any given situation. This will also facilitate building tolerance among community residents and law enforcement officers and they work collaboratively to ensure the community’s safety.

Several pieces of evidence regarding community-based policing suggest that citizens willing to share their issues with law enforcement officers means a safer community (Clarke, 2006). Another main advantage of community based policing is that it is based on the premise that no single organization can resolve all the local security issues prevailing in the community. Typically, the main issue that law enforcement officers face is that most of the local organizations are not willing to work in collaboration with them owing to the cultural differences. So if officers are culturally competent, they will be able to engage in a positive interaction with all the local organizations especially, non-governmental/ community-based service providers who serve as core partners in most of the referral systems while also providing support to the survivors of various crimes.

Thus, community-based policing can facilitate in not only deterring crime but also in creating a strong bond with the community and several organizations to safeguard the community from multiple crimes.

**References**

Clarke, C. (2006). Proactive policing: Standing on the shoulders of community‐based policing. *Police practice and research*, *7*(1), 3-17.

Sereni-Massinger, C., & Wood, N. (2016). Improving Law Enforcement Cross Cultural Competencies through Continued Education. *Journal of Education and Learning*, *5*(2), 258-264.