

## **Community-Police Relationships in Crime Reduction in the Tzaneen Area of the Limpopo Province (South Africa)**

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### **Abstract**

This article explores the consequences of police-community relationships for crime reduction in the Tzaneen area of the Limpopo province of South Africa. This is relevant because even though the South African Police Service (SAPS) typically works under pressure and under difficult conditions of lack of resources and internal conflicts, the Tzaneen community still believes that it is the responsibility of the police to ensure a lower crime rate and a safer community. Presently, there are ineffective crime reduction programmes in the Tzaneen area, despite efforts such as 'community policing forums', 'sector crime forums', 'take a Girl Child to Work', and 'Adopt a Cop', which are practised in certain community areas in Tzaneen. Notwithstanding all these measures, the crime rate is high in the Tzaneen area. A qualitative interview method was used to collect data. Eighteen participants were interviewed from a selected panel of experts from the SAPS, community leaders, non-governmental organisations, and business communities by making use of open-ended questions. The study adopted purposive sampling. The study revealed several reasons for the high crime rate in the Tzaneen policing area, such as police corruption, lack of adequate communication between the police and the Tzaneen community, lack of community knowledge of the functions of the criminal justice system, and low morale on the part of policing organisations as some of the major reasons for the poor police-community relationship in the Tzaneen area of Limpopo. The study recommends ways that can strengthen the police-community relationship and reduce the crime rate in the Tzaneen area of Limpopo.

Keywords: crime reduction, Tzaneen area, South African Police Service, community policing.

### **Abstrak**

Artikel ini mengeksplorasi konsekuensi hubungan polisi-masyarakat untuk pengurangan kejahatan di wilayah Tzaneen di provinsi Limpopo, Afrika Selatan. Hal ini relevan karena meskipun South African Police Service (SAPS) biasanya bekerja di bawah tekanan dan dalam kondisi sulit karena kurangnya sumber daya dan konflik internal, komunitas Tzaneen masih percaya bahwa polisi bertanggung jawab untuk memastikan tingkat kejahatan yang lebih rendah dan masyarakat yang lebih aman. Saat ini, ada program pengurangan kejahatan yang tidak efektif di wilayah Tzaneen, meskipun ada upaya seperti 'forum pemolisian masyarakat', 'forum kejahatan sektor', 'bawa anak perempuan ke tempat kerja', dan 'Adopsi Polisi', yang dipraktikkan di daerah tertentu. area komunitas di Tzaneen. Terlepas dari semua tindakan ini, tingkat kejahatan tinggi di wilayah Tzaneen. Metode wawancara kualitatif digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data. Delapan belas peserta diwawancarai dari panel ahli terpilih dari SAPS, tokoh masyarakat, lembaga swadaya masyarakat, dan komunitas bisnis dengan menggunakan pertanyaan terbuka. Penelitian ini mengadopsi purposive sampling. Studi ini mengungkapkan beberapa alasan tingginya tingkat kejahatan di wilayah kepolisian Tzaneen, seperti korupsi polisi, kurangnya komunikasi yang memadai antara polisi dan komunitas Tzaneen, kurangnya pengetahuan masyarakat tentang fungsi sistem peradilan pidana, dan rendahnya semangat kerja. bagian dari organisasi kepolisian sebagai beberapa alasan utama buruknya hubungan polisi-masyarakat di daerah Tzaneen Limpopo. Studi ini merekomendasikan cara-cara yang

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dapat memperkuat hubungan polisi-masyarakat dan mengurangi tingkat kejahatan di wilayah Tzaneen Limpopo.

Kata kunci: pengurangan kejahatan, wilayah Tzaneen, Kepolisian Afrika Selatan, pemolisian masyarakat.

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## INTRODUCTION

This article explores the consequences of police-community relationships for crime reduction and aims to determine the reasons for the failure of the police to maintain a cordial relationship with the community of Tzaneen (Limpopo province, South Africa) in terms of crime reduction and ensuring adequate community participation in crime reduction. (Madero-Hernandez, Lee, Wilcox, Fisher, 2020) Violent protests are common in South Africa. Several acts of criminality have occurred in the Tzaneen area during service delivery protests whereby community members took the law into their own hands. (Matzopoulos, Bloch, Lloyd, Berens, Bowman, Myers & Thompson, 2020) The motive behind this was a lack of trust by the Tzaneen community in the South African Police Service (SAPS). The survey conducted by "Pondering Panda", which was published on News24, highlighted the fact that South African society has lost trust in the police (Bello & John-Langba, 2020) The South African Police Union highlights those ongoing protests by community members in the country have proved that there is seemingly no effective policing in South Africa. This is because "crime intelligence is caught up in the political battle and fails to perform its constitutional mandate" (Skommere, 2020) As a result, the SAPS was discovered to be reactive instead of proactive to criminality. Skommere (2020) further argues that the centralisation of the police units was a poor decision. He highlights that "there are no public order policing units in police stations, and those that are in cluster units have no capacity of running the policing organization" (Umanah, & Wotela, 2020). The community and government will continue to blame the police and use them as scapegoats while the challenges lie with the command structure of the SAPS.

Maila (2014) notes that the Tzaneen area has recorded the highest number of sexual offences in the Limpopo province for the past three consecutive years. The South Africa crime statistics also show that there has been an increase in the crimes of robbery, burglary, theft from motor vehicles, unlawful possession of firearms and ammunition, truck and car hijacking, robbery at residential and business premises, public violence, culpable homicide, kidnapping, and neglect and ill-treatment of children (Snyders & Landman, 2018). Maila (2014) mentions that crimes such as murder, attempted murder, assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm, common assault, arson, malicious damage to property, robbery with aggravating circumstances, stock theft, drug-related crimes, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, commercial crimes, shoplifting, and *crimen injuria* have decreased dramatically (Caneppele & Aebi, 2019) The SAPS in the Tzaneen area does not have much capacity and resources to respond to the alarming increase of crime. It was found that there is also in general a lack of support from the Tzaneen community (Chakraborti, 2018).

This study seeks to explore the consequences of police-community relationships for the high crime rate reported in the Tzaneen area of the Limpopo province. This is important when one compares the crime statistics in South Africa with other countries around the world (see Table 1).

Table 1 compares 20 African countries, including South Africa, in terms of crime and safety. As shown in Table 1, among the 20 African countries and specifically in the Southern African Development Community region, South Africa has the highest crime index at 77.29 and the lowest safety index at 22.71.

Rwanda has the lowest crime index in Africa and the highest safety index among the 20 African countries, with 22.4 and 77.96 respectively.

**Table 1: Africa: Crime index by country: 2020 mid-year**

Rank	Country	Crime index	Safety index
1	South Africa	77.29	22.71
2	Namibia	66.12	33.88
3	Angola	65.74	34.26
4	Nigeria	63.27	36.73
5	Libya	62.27	37.73
6	Kenya	61.73	38.27
7	Zimbabwe	58.86	41.14
8	Tanzania	57.80	42.20
9	Uganda	56.14	43.86
10	Somalia	56.04	43.96
11	Botswana	53.47	46.53
12	Algeria	50.41	49.59
13	Ethiopia	49.23	50.77
14	Morocco	48.97	51.03
15	Ghana	48.64	51.36
16	Egypt	46.65	53.35
17	Mauritius	46.41	53.59
18	Zambia	43.22	56.78
19	Tunisia	41.68	58.32
20	Rwanda	22.04	77.96

Source: Numbeo (2020).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### History of Policing in South Africa

During the height of apartheid rule in South Africa, the police were divided into several distinct, locally controlled units (Malmgren, 2021). The country was essentially broken down into 11 “homelands”, where the ethnic majorities in that region were promised self-determination. The homeland divisions further divided the country among Black, Coloured, Indian, and White people. Policing became decentralised and homeland police forces rose to prominence in the execution of police powers (William & Pruitt, 2010).

Shaw (2002) reports that little effort was made by the police to reduce crime in Black areas during apartheid, and most resources were utilised in White towns and suburbs. Black people were policed for control and not for crime prevention; the police aimed to prevent crime in white areas, but not in black areas. Although crime affects all South Africans, the “threat of victimization was determined by where individuals lived and worked” and apartheid’s socio-spatial legacy ensures that crime remains concentrated in poor Black social groups and spaces (2018).

William and Pruitt (2010) indicate that “part of the South African police during apartheid was composed of what was known locally as kitskonstabels in Afrikaans, which is translated literally to as ‘instant constable’. The ‘instant constable’ was Black officers trained in six weeks and then allowed to police the townships. Unfortunately, these ‘instant constables’ were not allowed to wear the same uniform as White officers, as they could not give any order to a White officer, and they could not deal with cases that involved White suspects. This quick training and lack of oversight led to terrible abuse at the hands of the ‘instant constables’ for most South Africans” (Dlamini, 2017).

Surprisingly little interracial violent crime occurred in South Africa during apartheid (Maringa & Masiya, 2018). In the small proportion of cases where Black people were the perpetrators and White the victims, justice was swift and harsh (Duke & Gaither, 2017). In the period 1947 to 1966, 288 White people were convicted of raping Black women, while 844 Black people were convicted of raping White women. None of the white perpetrators was sentenced to death, but 121 Black perpetrators were sentenced to death (Shaw, 2002).

The first elections for a democratic government were held in 1994. Pigou (2002) acknowledges that the new political dispensation developed policies towards ensuring that policing in South Africa is conducted in a manner consistent with human rights and democratic values. This process has been multi-faceted in nature and has been underpinned by the adoption of the Bill of Rights, the establishment of the SAPS in 1995, and the implementation of a human rights training curriculum in basic police training (McLean, Wolfe, Rojek, Alpert & Smit, 2020).

Pirtle (2020) notes that during apartheid in South Africa, the police were militant towards Black society; however, by the end of apartheid in 1994, a civilian-controlled monitoring and investigative body known as the Independent Complaints Directorate (ICD) was established in 1997 in terms of section 53 of the SAPS Act (1995). The ICD is now known as the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) (in terms of the IPID Act, 2011), which is tasked with investigating allegations of police abuse of power and police misconduct. In addition, and largely in response to ongoing allegations of police power abuse, the SAPS introduced a "Prevention of Torture" policy in 1998/1999 (Pigou, 2002).

### **Characteristics of Traditional Policing**

Traditionally, the police were described as a government agency primarily responsible for law enforcement (Faull, 2017). The relationship between the police and the public will often help to prioritise societal conflict and improve the quality of life of every citizen. In traditional policing, the police focused on solving crime, while community policing (in democratic policing) was used as a broad approach to problem solving (Peak & Glensor, 2002).

**Table 2: Different characteristics of traditional (undemocratic) and democratic policing**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Traditional policing</b>	<b>Democratic policing</b>
Who are the police?	A government agency; an arm of the state to enforce law.	Police are the public and the public are the police.
What is the role of the police?	Focus on solving crime-related issues; reactive policing.	The approach is broader to include problem solving
What do the police deal with?	Incidents.	Problems solving and community concerns.
What is the role of the media?	"To keep the 'heat' off the operational officers to get on with the job."	To coordinate an essential channel of communication with a public that "has a right to know".
What is professionalism in policing?	A swift response to crime.	To have a partnership relationship with the community.
How is police efficiency measured?	Crime statistics.	Absence of crime and disorder.

Source: Olutola (2015); Lowatcharin and Stallmann (2019).

Davies and MacPherson (2020) argue that there is much to be learned from the history of policing in South Africa prior to and after apartheid. Traditionally, police efficiency was measured by the rates of detection and arrest, whereas, for community policing, efficiency was measured by the absence of crime and disorder (Robinson, 2009). For the success of community policing, Palmiotto (2011) states that police officers must be open to new ideas and experiences and be willing to take risks. Unlike the traditional model of policing in which the police were not proactive to crime or social problems, the community

policing model requires the police to be proactive by searching for crime disorders and problems to solve (see also Table 2).

### **Reasons for the Failure of Traditional Policing**

One reason for the failure of South African traditional policing is that policing in South Africa was more focused on a reactive rather than a proactive approach. Shaw (2002) states that because the general skills of collecting, collating, training, and improving skills levels of detectives in the SAP and of presenting evidence were weakly developed, the overall result was the failure of traditional policing (Mabunda, 2019, Sauerman, Ivkovic & Meyer, 2019).

According to Van Vuuren (2000), a police scientist at the University of South Africa, most members of the community (who were prepared to render assistance to the police) do not have adequate knowledge of how policing functions, which led to the failure of traditional policing. The era of the so-called "total onslaught" gave way to a policing philosophy of community policing after 1994 where the expectations and demands of the community regarding their safety and security were for the first time taken into consideration by declaring safety and security a constitutional right. This is in contrast with the traditional policing before 1994 where the police enforced unacceptable laws on citizens (Mabunda, 2019, Sauerman, Ivkovic & Meyer, 2019).

### **Crime Prevention Theories**

Historically, many individuals have engaged in activities that reduced criminal opportunities without any knowledge of the formal theoretical concepts. Target-hardening strategies are in effect when people install alarms to protect their homes and lock their car doors when leaving it unattended. These types of protective strategies have been in use for several centuries and were not necessarily new concepts when the official terms and theoretical frameworks began to emerge. (van Vuuren, 2000)

### **Crime Prevention Strategies**

Courtney (2010) states that opportunity theories, such as rational choice theory and pattern theory, approached criminal events in a different manner. The offender-based theories investigated how crime and the environment were related, and it became possible to identify problems and risks that would increase the likelihood of a crime being committed and to modify the environment to decrease this risk (Berlusconi, 2017) As opportunity theories became more accepted in criminology, the focus turned to how these criminal opportunities could be reduced with methods that would take a proactive rather than a reactive approach (Berlusconi, 2017).

### **Situational Crime Prevention**

Situational crime prevention developed throughout the 1970s as a concept that could encompass a wide range of strategies (Lynch, Stretesky & Long, 2018). It has been described as a "variety of techniques and individual measures that attempt to change the person-situation interaction in a way that makes the crime less likely to occur" (Smith, 2008). Situational crime prevention is a broad concept that can be used to prevent different types of crime, but to be effective, its use must involve application to a specific type of crime. (Lynch, Stretesky & Long, 2018, Larke, 2008).

Wortley (2001) argues that opportunity reduction is only half of the situational crime prevention story. If the inclination to offend, and not just the opportunity to do so, is situationally dependent, then the

efficacy of situational prevention becomes more theoretically plausible (Lynch, Stretesky & Long, 2018). The person-situation interaction and the theoretical premise upon which situational crime prevention ultimately rests are more complex than the rational choice and opportunity-reduction approaches suggest. [39] Opportunity implies only that certain situational factors make it easy for the individual to follow a course of action that will deliver benefits to him or her (Wortley (2001, Welsh, Zimmerman & Zane, 2018).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Data for this paper were collected using one-on-one interviews. An open-ended interview guide was formulated based on the research objectives and research questions (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017). This guide proved to be effective in eliciting the required information regarding the consequences of community-police relationships for crime prevention in the Tzaneen area of the Limpopo province in South Africa. Each interview was voice recorded with the approval of the interviewee and each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes. Ethical clearance to conduct the study was obtained from the Faculty Committee for Research Ethics of Tshwane University of Technology (Ngozwana, 2018). Permission to interview police participants was obtained from the SAPS Provincial Commissioner (reference number 26/3/4).

The researchers took the following important ethical issues into consideration when conducting the interviews: the participants were provided with a consent form to read and sign as an indication that they agreed to participate in the study; the participants were also informed of the aim of the study, their right to quit, and that their participation was voluntary; and to ensure anonymity, the names of the participants are not disclosed (Ngozwana, 2018).

The sample size was restricted to 18 participants owing to data saturation ((Ngozwana, 2018).) It is possible to achieve saturation after 17 interviews in certain studies and 14 for other studies (Hennink & Kaiser, 2019), whereas Boddy (2016) indicates that a sample as low as 12 would be apt for data saturation in a homogeneous population. Purposive sampling was adopted owing to the researchers' judgement of the participants' capability and potential to provide valuable information geared towards the actualisation of the study objectives. The choice of purposive sampling for the research was guided by the study purpose (Kegler, Comeau & Cooper, 2019). Kegler, Comeau and Cooper (2019) note that the majority of qualitative sampling will either be purposeful or purposive, which means that the selection of the participants or cases should be clearly guided by the study purpose. In terms of validity, one major indicator that is often applied in qualitative research is credibility, which is an indicator that the findings adequately represent the positions of the participants (Rajakaruma, Henry & Cutler, 2017, Shenton, 2004).

The study was conducted in the Tzaneen community policing area of the Limpopo province in South Africa. The specific villages in the geographical location of the study are as follows: Tzaneen, Maake, Ritavi, Thlabina, and Sekororo. Empirical data were collected from a selected panel of experts (specialists) in the SAPS, community leaders, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and business communities, using interviews consisting of open-ended questions. This group was purposively targeted, as the researchers attempted to acquire quality and informed responses on the topic. Wengraf (2001) notes that a criminal justice researcher should not haphazardly select research participants, but rather purposively. This approach was used because the researchers believed that the study would gain useful experiences and views from different specialists regarding their capacity in different workplaces, which would enable the researchers to make conclusions and recommendations for the study.

An advantage of the research interviews used in this study was that, rather than asking the respondents to read questionnaires and enter their answers, the researchers asked the participants

interview questions orally and recorded their answers (Babbie & Mouton, 2004) However, a disadvantage of interviews compared to questionnaires is that it is more time consuming (White, 2005) In general, 18 participants were selected from Tzaneen, Maake, Ritavi, Thlabina, and Sekororo based on their experiences regarding the consequences of community-police relationships in crime reduction in the Tzaneen area of Limpopo.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The research participants in this study gave distinct answers to the different research questions. The research findings are presented in italics and discussed briefly thereafter. The first question was "What are the factors affecting cordial relationship between the police and the Tzaneen community?".

### **There is a lack of knowledge regarding the operations of the criminal justice system services among the police and the community of Tzaneen.**

Some of the findings identified in the study are that the Tzaneen community lacked a good understanding of the criminal justice system in South Africa. For example, when an alleged suspect is granted bail, the Tzaneen community believes that the alleged suspect is being released freely without any prosecution; whereas when an alleged suspect is out on bail, further investigation on his/her alleged case is pending. Such perceptions then lead to the Tzaneen community losing confidence in the local police (Thomas, Grossman, Miah & Christmann, 2017).

Criminal justice workshops should be conducted in the villages surrounding the town of Tzaneen to educate the community about what constitutes a bail application and its procedures. Such workshops can help the community to better understand that granting bail does not necessarily mean that an alleged suspect of crime is not found guilty of the offences he/she was alleged to have committed.

The community of Tzaneen largely but wrongfully believes that it is the duty of the SAPS alone to reduce crime level. However, according to Van Vuuren (2000), the criminal justice system refers to those components or governmental departments that are responsible for the execution and enforcement of laws. The laws are promulgated by parliament, and the police must enforce the law. This should be done by means of proactive measures to ensure that citizens obey the law. If citizens fail to obey the law and cause disorder, it is expected of the police to restore that order by investigating the case. Once the case has been investigated, it is the duty of the court to interpret the law. In other words, the court must determine the guilt or innocence of the alleged offender(s). If the court convicts the offender, it is the responsibility of correctional services (prisons) to comply with the decision of the court by ensuring that the prisoner will serve the sentence imposed by the court (RSA, 1998).

The researchers recommend that the steps of the criminal justice system should be taught and explained in detail to the entire Tzaneen public to avoid community protests and mob justice pending awaiting trials; this will retain the dignity of the South African justice system.

### **The Tzaneen community is reluctant to share crime-related information with the police.**

The researchers discovered that the Tzaneen community is not willing to collaborate with the local police because they feel that they are not protected from being victimised by alleged criminals. The community of Tzaneen should be informed that they are protected in terms of the Witness Protection Act (RSA, 1998) and can report any crime in good faith without fear of being victimised. The police should educate the Tzaneen public of the important role the community should play in crime prevention.

According to Burger (2007), public perceptions of the role of the police are a problem, and as long as the myth of the police's inability to prevent crime is kept alive by the authorities and the media, the public will continue to hold the police responsible for every failure to prevent crime. Without participation from society, the police alone cannot prevent crime. The challenge is that everyone grew up with the belief that the police prevents crime; blaming the police is therefore almost a natural reaction by the citizens.

The researchers believe that the community or public, through community policing organisations, should be police informers, so that they will be motivated to work closely with the police to improve their relationship to control crime in the Tzaneen area.

**The police apply maximum force when dealing with community conflicts and protests instead of minimum force; for instance, using tear gas, water cannons, and rubber bullets to manage community protests.**

The researchers discovered that there were no water cannon vehicles in Tzaneen to be used during community protests to calm the situation. The police use maximum force instead of minimum force during community protests (Reyes, Houston, 2019) They use live ammunition when the situation becomes tense instead of using rubber bullets and tear gas. The researchers propose that the Tzaneen SAPS should be armed with rubber bullets and tear gas when they attend to community conflicts or protests (Reyes, Houston, 2019). The Tzaneen SAPS should further request either the Provincial or National Commissioner of the SAPS to provide them with water cannon vehicles that will help to disperse crowds involved in community conflicts or protests.

In terms of the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of the South Africa, the use of force by the police is not addressed directly anywhere in the Constitution. However, Chapter 2 of the Constitution provides for the Bill of Rights (RSA, 1996).

According to the South African Criminal Procedure Act (RSA, 1977), as amended, the use of force includes sections 27 and 49. Section 27(1) empowers a police official who is legally entitled to search any person or any premises to use "such force as is reasonably necessary to overcome any resistance against such search and entry of the premises, including the breaking of any door or window of such premises".

Also, the SAPS Act (RSA, 1995) provides in section 13(3)(b) that "where a member who performs an official duty is authorized by law to use force, he/she may use only minimum force which is reasonable in the circumstance".

However, the SAPS and the Tzaneen community have a bad history of not cooperating because citizens perceive the police as arrogant, brutal, and uncaring, and not as potential partners (Cherney & Murphy, 2017).

The former police minister, Nathi Mthethwa, during a newspaper interview in 2009, emphasised that the "police have to defend themselves because there is fire out there. We went to areas to interact with members of the public. Ours is a caring government and there was no need to display something contrary to that as members of the South African Police". The researchers are of the view that this is not understood well by members of the police as they continue to apply maximum force to ordinary citizens during protests rather than against armed criminals (Lamb, 2018).



### **There is a lack of community understanding of the SAPS transforming from the previous police force operations to police services.**

The Tzaneen community still perceives the SAPS as a militant, radical, and unapproachable institution. Such perceptions lead to the Tzaneen community not reporting certain criminal activities that take place in the community.

The Tzaneen community should be made aware through community policing forums (CPFs) and workshops that the SAPS is an organisation that provides services to the community as guided by the Constitution to maintain public order, make the community safer, and prevent crime in all places it occurs. Community members should not fear reporting criminal activities that are occurring or taking place in the Tzaneen community, including criminal activities committed by members of the SAPS (Mabudusha, 2020).

The researchers argue that the community needs to understand that policing has been transformed from the previous police force of the apartheid era to a democratic police service. Smit, Minnaar and Schnetler (2004) express that over the years, the police in South Africa have concerned themselves with internal control and projecting a good image. It is difficult to compare the previous attitude of policing in South Africa with the new style of policing that emphasises that the police must engage in community-based processes related to the production and maintenance of local, human, and social capital.

After the end of apartheid, the SAPS went through several institutional changes to be aligned with the prescriptions of the new Constitution (Newham, 2004). Bayley and Shearing (1996) argue that a number of significant shifts occurred since the transformation of the South African Police (SAP) to the South African Police Service (SAPS), including moving away from a military approach to public order policing. Profound changes were made, including the growing importance of “transitional” policing organisations such as CPFs, sector crime forums, and street community patrols and their practices since 1994.

The researchers believe that much of the SAPS operations need to be explained, highlighted, and emphasised to the South African public to create a proper understanding of its operations, missions, and visions compared to the former South African Police.

### **There are no consultations, respect, and honesty between the police and the community of Tzaneen.**

The researchers discovered that the police and the Tzaneen community are not working together or consulting each other. The police only intervene when there are serious tensions. For example, most of the community policing strategies such as CPFs were only launched when incidents such as mob justice or criminal activities took place. There is also a lack of communication and respect from both parties (the police and Tzaneen community), which encourages the continuous negative relationship towards crime prevention in the area.

The researchers suggest that there should be regular consultations between the police and the Tzaneen community. Such consultations will assist the community with the launch of community policing organisations such as CPFs and neighbourhood watch rather than to wait for incidents such as “mob justice” to take place. The Tzaneen community should respect and support operations within the SAPS such as search and seizure in local taverns and shebeens and investigations processes.

The Batho Pele principles (as entrenched in the 1996 South African Constitution) explain the importance of consultation by the institutions of government, organisations, and structures to the citizens of the country. According to Booysen (), the SAPS should ensure public participation and invite comment

(especially from community and traditional leaders, CPF leaders, NGOs, and business communities) on the level and quality of SAPS services and allow the public to tell the SAPS what they need from the SAPS.

Various documents regulate public services outcomes specifically for the SAPS, such as the White Paper on Safety and Security (1998) and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996), which dictate that a service delivery improvement programme be implemented by the SAPS. The implementation of a service delivery improvement programme at police station, provincial, and national levels will enable management forums on the respective levels to ensure alignment with the needs of the communities or public, as well as integrating national strategic initiatives at all levels (Booyesen, 2005),

The community maintains that the police are brutal towards the members of the community, that they do not respond to the demands of the community promptly, and that they protect the criminals against the community (Budhram & Geldenhuys, 2018).

## **CONCLUSION**

From the data analysed and the findings presented, the study highlighted that there are several factors that affect the relationship between the police and the Tzaneen community in terms of crime reduction in the Tzaneen area. The findings confirmed that more interventions and implementation of community policing strategies need to be undertaken to address factors that affect police-community relationships, to ensure that the police and the Tzaneen community work closely together to reduce the high rate of crime. The results confirm that street community patrols, CPFs, sector crime forums, and all other crime prevention role players in Tzaneen utilised so far have not been successful in reducing crime (Budhram & Geldenhuys, 2018). Community policing strategies need to be revised and should allow all role players, including traditional leaders in the Tzaneen area, to give inputs on how to improve the police-community relationship. The SAPS in Tzaneen should further set up a crime prevention committee that accommodates community representatives, NGOs, businesspeople, and police management to be part of all important decision-making regarding police operations in the Tzaneen community.

The researchers believe that it will be important and useful for the SAPS crime prevention units in Tzaneen to hold workshops and community awareness sessions to educate all crime prevention role players to equip them with theoretical and practical understanding of the policing and criminal justice system operations from the onset of crime, the arrest of suspects, to the final closure of the case (Charman, 2017). Importantly, there should be full support from the Greater Tzaneen Municipality, NGOs, and private sector organisations with resources to enable the Tzaneen police and community policing organisations to fight crime and maintain a constructive relationship.

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