Free preventative policing strategies essay example

[Society](#), [Terrorism](#)

Policing is a crucial arm of the judicial system because it champions the maintenance of law and order. In essence, the police have three central roles. They include the detection and prevention of crime, the protection of both life and property, as well as protection and maintenance of peace and order (AIC 2010). The role of detecting and preventing crime is the most challenging.

Preventative policing denotes law enforcement strategies that are geared towards deterring the commission of crime. It is a central feature in the modern police force. Because of their ability to bring perceivable results and their direct approach, three preventative policing strategies are popular. They include hot spot policing, zero tolerance policing, and problem oriented policing (POP). These approaches seem to be transiting from the community policing model. This paper reviews these three preventative policing measures and their effects on the police-community relations.

Zero tolerance was engineered in the US with the sole purpose of addressing the rising crime rates (Doley 2003). This preventative policing approach stems from the broken window theory that was postulated by Wilson and Kelling (Kelling and Coles 1996). The broken window theory opines that when petty crime escalates in a given geographical location, it paints the picture that nobody cares. Consequently, the community becomes more fearful and fragmented, resulting in further escalation of disorderliness. This theory also stipulates that when the police nest petty things or crime, the bigger ones often taken care of themselves (Doley 2003). Stated in another way, continuous prevention of petty crime and nabbing its perpetrators limits the escalation of petty crimes to bigger crimes (Doley 2003).

Additionally, this approach is said to target certain crimes in a given geographical area. In essence, zero tolerance preventative policing champions hard-edge policing and law enforcement with the primary goal of producing results (Doley 2003). Champions of this approach contend that zero tolerance policing not only reduces crime rates, but also acts as a deterrent of future crimes. This objective is attained through cementing the authority of law enforcement at the micro level by eliminating persons who are likely to promote or are engage in crime. The second school of thought of this approach hold the opinion that zero tolerance policing can also target more serious crimes. In other words, people who orchestrate that crime can be targeted and nabbed (Doley 2003). Specificity is of interest in this approach. Eventually, the community becomes free of those orchestrators. In Australia, the former Prime Minister, Mr. Howard approved the use of zero tolerance policing. The chief targets were drug trafficking and drunk driving (Marshall 1999). On top of that, diversionary powers or caution are not exercised under zero tolerance policing, but arrests are championed.

Areas where crime rates are high are termed as hot spots. In this approach, massive policing resources are assigned to the hot spot. Lazzati and Menichini (2013) begin by emphasizing the power of crime mapping. When crime maps are analyzed, it becomes evident that crimes are not evenly distributed geographically. In other words, some areas have high crime rates when compared to others. Another strategy involves boosting police patrols in hot spots (Sherman et al. 2014). However, research on how the application of police patrols in hot spots reduces crime is limited. Hotspot policing requires a high level of planning. However, those plans must be

flexible because, during patrols, new data is often unveiled. Police officers who often implement this approach have to plan for the unplanned. In other words, this involves establishing infrastructures for constant re-assessments of the evidence (Sherman et al. 2014). In addition, it is essential to note that hot spot policing strategies differ because crimes and geographical locations vary (Sherman et al. 2014).

Lazzati and Menichini (2013) have attempted to highlight the theory upon which hot spot policing is anchored. They argue that focusing police resources on hot spots would eventually displace criminal activity from the targeted area. Lazzati and Menichini (2013) attempt to capture crime attractiveness by two attributes: potential productivity and risk of apprehension. In this case, police officers can take advantage of the structural features in the hot spot that necessitate the nabbing of offenders. Such infrastructures include illumination cameras or videos. Police security is beefed up in areas that are likely to attract offenders. Such areas include shopping centers, banks and areas with excellent social amenities. Hot spot policing champions the displacement effect; in essence, heavy police machinery in those areas endeavors to displace offenders from crime hot spots (Braga and Weisburd 2010). Hotspot policing is in line with the principles of community policing. Again, this approach has been applauded in both political and public domains. From a political perspective, political leaders would want their effect to be felt on the ground. In this case, they invest in heavy police machinery. Consequently, offenders in those areas are displaced, and the effects of this approach are realized when crime rates drop in the targeted hotspots. Public praises welcome a drop in crime rates

in a given hotspot. In Australia, infrastructures for hot spot policing such as CCTV cameras and police patrols have been intensified.

Furthermore, problem-oriented policing (POP) centers on the identification, as well as analysis of certain crime and disorder problems (Felson 2006; Weisburd et al. 2010). The leading goal is to engineer decent response strategies that are in line with the ongoing assessment. For many decades, crime scholars argue that the police have not dwelt on the ends of policing but the means of policing (Weisburd et al. 2010; Cameron 1989). This approach has not been successful and that is why POP comes in handy. POP champions police pro-activeness instead of reactiveness to crime (Felson 2006). In this approach, the police are challenged to act proactively by identifying the fundamental causes of crime that would necessitate uprooting of crime completely from the community in question (Felson 2006). In essence, POP prioritizes research, as well as crime prevention modalities. In Australia for instance, the Australian Institute of Criminology champions criminology research and provides evidence-based strategies that law enforcement agencies in the country can employ (AIC 2010). It works with various stakeholders in the championship of this goal.

This approach has elicited debates in the political circles drawing from the successes this approach has attained in different parts such as the US. Political debates come in when there are discussions to fund police research. POP calls for collective decision-making in areas such as restructuring, funding and administration. Again, the public is actively involved in such debates. POP has received both political and public backup because of its well-documented successes. Besides, it is an evidence-based approach.

Preventative policing strategies discussed here have both positive and negative effects to the community and crime prevention as a whole. The employment of POP puts a strain on the police-community relations. In Australia for instance, this approach is commonly applied as a counter-terrorism measure. In this case, this approach results into the deployment of more policemen in public places with high pedestrian activity. At times, the Muslim community, which is a minority group often feels aggrieved because it believes the police often targets it (Chaudhary and Fenwick 2011). Chaudhary and Fenwick (2011) contend that preventative policing measures that are geared towards countering terror, especially after the 9/11 attack, are overwhelmingly experienced by Muslims. In some cases, these preventative measures have been found by the courts to have gone overboard. Chaudhary and Fenwick (2011) contend that preventative policing measures that target to curb terrorism at times discriminates, fail to protect human rights, stigmatize, increase repression and alienates certain groups. These measures are making Muslims feel that they are a suspect community, targeted by the police on grounds of their religion (Chaudhary and Fenwick 2011). In fact, non-Muslims that have been interviewed agree with their Muslim counterparts. Non-Muslims denote that Muslims are seen as a target group and this perception has made them have some form of fear and hostility toward the Muslim community (Chaudhary and Fenwick 2011). Residents in some areas are said to live in fear because of CCTV surveillance and many police raids or checks (Chaudhary and Fenwick 2011). This aspect has also been evidenced by the London counter-terror arrests that led to the nabbing of three young men. London counter-terrorism police raided a home

in which three youths were planning a terror attack in the city (Dodd and Halliday 2014). In this case, the police employed zero tolerance preventative policing technique. The activity created tensions in the nearby estates. In addition, because of intense media coverage on enhanced police deployment and counter-terrorism raids, the public panics.

Dodd and Halliday (2014) report that the three young men are believed to have undergone Islamic radicalization. The arrest of one of the boys who is of Islamic origin, Tarik Hassane, has triggered widespread condemnation from friends. They believe that the police are only targeting this young man on the basis of his religion. These arrests have triggered tensions between the community and the police (Dodd and Halliday 2014). In fact, people living in the neighborhood of the boys' house thought that they were being burgled when the British Special Forces struck the boys' house (Greenwood 2014). This conditioned has been escalated by intense media coverage.

Hot spot and zero tolerance on the hand could cause soar relationships between the community and the police. The robustness and activeness of zero tolerance have attracted wide-spread criticism. Aboriginals in the Redfern, New South Wales often feel targeted by the police. This community has the highest number of offenders in the country, and because of this, zero tolerance policing targets members of this community. Most of them have a negative view of the police force (CBC 2013). In fact, because of this poor Aboriginal-police relationship, some of the aboriginals have been wrongfully targeted (CBC 2013). Moreover, zero tolerance has been found to dampen public-police relationship. The community becomes more fearful and fragmented, resulting in further escalation of disorderliness when zero

tolerance is used. In the Australian context, zero tolerance policing has been found to be a dangerous step towards a totalitarian society (Grabosky 1999). It is seen to strain the relationship between the police and the public (Grabosky 1999). Citizens are unlikely to comply with the law if the police are less respectful towards the citizens (Grabosky 1999). Preventative policing strategies discussed here at times paint the police as less respectful and this puts a strain on the police-public relationship.

On a positive note, hot spot policing, zero tolerance policing and POP have numerous benefits to the prevention of crime as a whole. In essence, these preventative policing approaches have room for political participation. Zero tolerance policing, for instance, reduces crime by eliminating petty offenders at the micro-level. On the other hand, hot spot policing displaces offenders from the community in question. Moreover, POP is evidence-based and centers on the identification, as well as analysis of certain crime and disorder problems. Its chief goal is to craft effective response strategies that are in line with the ongoing assessment. These approaches are popular because of their direct approach and ability to bring perceivable results. These approaches call for political intervention and this contributes to their popularity in the political circles.

In conclusion, this paper has examined the role of preventative policing in the prevention of crime. Preventative policing is a central feature in the modern police force, and it denotes law enforcement strategies that are geared towards deterring the commission of crime. Preventative policing is an illustration of the ongoing transition from community policing. Three robust police prevention strategies namely zero tolerance policing, hot spot

policing and POP have been assessed. It has been shown that these popular preventative policing protocols are result oriented, and their effects can be easily felt when they are successful. However, these approaches have various negative side effects on the police-community relationship. They cause fear and anxiety in the public or rivalry between the communities that think that they are police targets (Muslims and aboriginals). Zero tolerance policing, POP, and hot spot policing are popular because of their direct approach and ability to bring perceivable results. These approaches call for political intervention and this contributes to their popularity in the political circles. The Australian police force should boost the application of these measures if it wants to enhance its crime prevention results.

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