# Introduction

Community-Oriented Policing and Problem Solving (C.O.P.P.S) is a criminal justice strategy where it is utilized in an organization to prevent crime and promote public safety among the people effectively (Tilley, 2003). This strategy involves the law enforcement agencies cooperating and working together with the individuals in a community; hence, the constant interaction between both parties. This interaction enables people in the community to reduce their fear or threat of crime since the strategy is associated with problem-solving tactics that promote safety (Oliver, 2001). In the United States, COPPS is managed by the Justice Department to ensure the effectiveness of the strategy where it ensures that the state and local authorities create partnerships with individuals at the community level to promote security. Most individuals consider COPPS as a philosophy having three major elements; that is, prevention, partnerships, and problem-solving. This community policing strategy was developed due to the rise in violence and crime in the United States where it has been in operation for the last 23 years. The US government has invested in about $14 billion since 1994 where these funds have enabled the policing to be effective; hence, the reduction in crime rates and violence in the country (Walker & Katz, 2012). Therefore, the purpose of this research is to analyze how COPPS operates in crime prevention and how it is managed by the Justice Department in the United States. The paper will also focus on some of the strengths of this strategy that enables it to be a preferable method of problem-solving among the communities, and the challenges affecting its operations.

## Organization and Administration

COPPS is managed and regulated by the Justice Department; that is, the department organizes the officers where they are deployed to different states or regions in the US to enable them to be closer to the people. This deployment ensures that the officers cooperate with other local authorities in the regions to enable them to gain a geographical understanding of the area. The federal government regulates the department where it distributes the officers evenly, but the states experiencing higher crime rates tend to receive more officers. The law enforcement agencies are provided with resources by the government for community policing purposes where they are expected to recruit and train individuals on how to solve problems being faced by the community. In this case, the problems are associated with crimes and violence such as drug abuse, theft, prostitution, public drinking among the children and youths, and gun violence. These crimes are classified under criminal justice, where it is the responsibility of the Justice Department to ensure the crimes are minimized and solved; hence, the utilization of COPPS (Tilley, 2003). The main idea behind the formation of this strategy is that the officers cannot prevent crime on their own; hence, they have to rely on other entities and create interactive partnerships. Therefore, the public influences COPPS; that is, individuals in the community are involved in the policy-formation process where the policies generated are utilized in creating problem-solving solutions. The Justice Department has implemented some crucial tactics used in community policing to facilitate its effectiveness in crime detection and prevention in the community. The tactics include the reliance on community-based crime avoidance through training individuals and offering them a civilian education where they can acquire security and public safety techniques such as neighborhood watch (Ponsaers, 2001). This strategy is crucial since it indicates that the community members will not have to rely on police patrols as the only security measure. The other tactic implemented in this strategy is the restructuring of the operations conducted by the officers where they have been changed from an emergency response based system to a more active system. This technique emphasizes on the presence of the officers in the community where they can be accessed at any given time rather than only during emergencies. For this to be effective, the officers have begun some operations such as foot patrols where they can interact with community members, and create partnerships. The other implementations done in this strategy include the increased accountability of the officers to the civilians they are expected to serve and decentralization of the law enforcement agencies, which allows the officers to reach out to the people.

## Fundamental Partners in COPPS

The formation of interactive partnerships is a key element in the COPPS strategy where the officers are expected to form alliances with other entities to ensure effective crime detection and prevention. Some of the key partners that can be involved in the strategy include private businesses, community members, other government agencies, and the media. The officers may partner with private business owners where the aim is to promote security in the urban areas where the businesses are located. The media, in this case, is also a crucial player in COPPS since it promotes the connectivity between the officers and the community members. Through the media, the officers can communicate with the society where they inform the people on the state of security in the area, the challenges being experienced, and the solutions to the problems. Therefore, the media promotes the interaction between the law enforcement agencies and the community. Lastly, the officers can form partnerships with other government agencies such as the courts and correctional centers (Peak, 2012). The alliance with the courts enables the officers to provide evidence regarding the crimes committed by the offenders where the evidence determines whether the offense is a major or minor one. After this determination, the courts decide on the ruling of the case where the offenders are prosecuted. Therefore, the officers ensure that the individuals engaging in crime face the law; hence, enabling the victims to get justice from the government. The correctional centers, in this case, are the institutions involved in rehabilitating the offenders where the officers can monitor them to ensure they face the implications of engaging in crime. This partnership is also crucial in crime prevention since it enables the offenders to abandon their previous criminal lives to avoid facing the implications again.

## Advantages of COPPS

This strategy is associated with decentralization of the police authorities where it enables them to reach out to the individuals in a community. This leads to the increased presence of officers in the neighborhood; hence, promoting the reduction of fear among the residents. The individuals will feel secure due to the availability of the officers where they are likely to interact and create partnerships. Through the partnerships, the people acquire skills and techniques of handling security issues, which is another advantage of the strategy. Therefore, this strategy promotes crime reduction in the community; hence, improving the quality of life of the people.

## Weaknesses of COPPS

This strategy relies on the commitment of the community members where if they are unwilling to form the partnership, the strategy may fail. Some of the people have negative attitudes towards the officers due to reasons such as police brutality and harassment; hence, may have a difficult time interacting with them. The other weakness is that this strategy may require more time for it to be effective since it requires a long-term commitment between the parties involved; hence, the desired results may be delayed. This may lead to the community members abandoning the strategy for other alternatives that are likely to produce quick results regarding security matters.

## Conclusion

Therefore, from this research, one can obtain information regarding the COPPS strategy of crime prevention in the US. This approach involves the formation of interactive partnerships between the officers and other entities where the partnership enables the officers to prevent crime in the community and generate solutions for the challenges being experienced. Some of the key entities that can be involved in the alliances include government agencies, private businesses, community members, and the media. COPPS is regulated by the Justice Department in the US where it deploys the officers to regions that are closer to the people. This strategy is crucial since it promotes security; hence, reducing the fear of crime among the community members.

## References

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