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Research Article

## Communities Awareness Towards Community Oriented Policing (COP) Development and Implementation in Malaysia.

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**ABSTRACT** The concept of community oriented policing has emerged in Malaysia since 2007 as an increasingly important strategy for controlling and preventing crime, as well as for enhancing community safety. The concept has been endorsed in three phases. The first phase only involves Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Penang, and Johor Police Contingents, while the second phase involves every police contingent at the state level in Malaysia, and lastly, followed by the third phase that involves every police contingent in every regional in every state in Malaysia. The Community Oriented Policing Strategy (COPS) is a partnership between the local residents and the police in charge of the district. COP is a belief that by working together the police and the community can accomplish what neither can accomplish alone. Thus, the spirit of community empowerment, smart ship, and interdependency between all stakeholders, including community, police, NGOs, and other interested parties are very much needed in this country through active and inactive. The purposes of this paper are; (a) to determine the importance of COP, (b) to evaluate the community awareness towards COP implementation in Malaysia.

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**Keyword:** community oriented, policing, community, fear of crime, awareness.

### INTRODUCTION

According to the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP), the ratio of police officers to the population in Malaysia was three officers to 1, 000 citizens (3:1000, which was equivalent to 1:334) in December 2009. In year 2011, based on the REFSA finding, the police officers in service in 2010 had been equivalent to one officer to 270 citizens (1:270), which was very close to the 1:250 benchmark set by the International Police Organization (INTERPOL), which was better than Thailand (1:321) and Singapore (1:396). However, despite this, the serious crime rate in Malaysia has been higher than in those countries. Malaysia has outstripped Thailand in murder cases and has more reported rape incidents than Thailand, Singapore and Hong Kong. These facts indicate that the police have failed to address the present crime issues. The police force was vulnerable in containing the burgeoning crime, drugs, and problems concerning gangs for the best of our society, as well as draining our federal, state and local resources single-handedly.

Essentially, community oriented policing is a new concept of policing. It is a movement of a new policing strategy, which is from the independent (traditional) policing into community-based or oriented policing. Many terms have been used more or less synonymously with community oriented policing, such as police-community relations, problem oriented policing, community-based policing, community-based crime prevention, citizen's coproduction of community safety, the back-to-the-community movement, team policing, neighborhood policing, neighborhood watch, community

wellness, and crime control policing. According to Das (1986), many of these terms mean cooperatives or symbiotic relationship between law enforcement and the community.

Usually, Police is known as a government agency principally responsible for law enforcement, and it focuses on several cases of crime, especially those with high values, such as bank robbery and those involving violence. However, the new concept of community oriented policing is a concept whereby the police are the public and the public is the police, and besides, police officers are those who are paid to provide full attention to the duties of every resident.

The concept of community oriented policing has emerged in Malaysia since year 2007 as an important strategy to control and prevent crime, as well as enhancing community safety. The concept has been endorsed in three phases. The first phase only involves Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Penang, and Johor police contingents, while the second phase involves every police contingent at the state level in Malaysia, and lastly, followed by the third phase which involves every police contingent in every region in every state in Malaysia.

The government has tried to allocate more resources towards fighting crime and establishing more agencies to review police rulebooks and conduct, as well as investigate public complaints. The need to achieve greater efficacy in the delivery of police service has led them to seek support and legitimacy within and from the public.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed quantitative methodology through survey design and using questionnaire as an instrument. The research instrument was adopted with minor modification to meet the context of this study. The population samples were drawn from the selected neighborhood areas in Pulau Pinang that implementing community oriented policing in the neighborhood. Based on data from Ibu Pejabat Polis Daerah (IPD), Daerah Timur Laut, there are six (6) housing scheme that implementing community oriented policing in their housing scheme which are: i) Bandar Sri Pinang; ii) Pulau Tikus; iii) Bayan Baru; iv) Pantai Jerjak; v) Relau; and vi) Green Lane. As for this research study, the calculations of sample (N) were adopted from scholar and researcher Yamanae, T. (1973). As a result 2,032 respondents from 23, 517 populations were selected as a sample for the research study.

Total of 28 questions were developed for the survey directed to Community residents. The questionnaire survey included both quantitative and qualitative questions, which means it had been a semi-structured questionnaire. In addition, a semi-structured interview was preferred as this method still allowed for a general framework to be present in the interview, but also allowed the interviewer to flexibly change the way the questions were asked or the order they were asked in. This allowed probing from the researcher and the interviewees responded in their own terms or ways that had been significant and relevant (Jupp et al., 2007). The advantage of the semi-structured interview is that the researcher is able to explore in depth some aspects of the respondent's feelings, motives, meanings, and attitudes (ibid). This had been particularly important for the aim of this dissertation. In contrary, an unstructured interview was not considered, as Bryman (2004) describe it as 'very similar in character to a conversation'. Moreover, one way to address some of these issues would have been to use a different research method, such as self-completion questionnaires. This would have eradicated any interviewer bias and would have ensured anonymity. This method, however, may have been too structured for the research aim. Questionnaires are not the best way to gather meanings and feelings, as they are impersonal and do not allow the researcher any flexibility. This is why for this research, despite the limitations with interviews, it was decided that they were the most appropriate method of gathering the data to answer the research questions.

In order to strengthen the questionnaire, the researcher also conducted a desk research to obtain secondary data. Desk research was done through newspaper archives, internet, and books to retrieve the view of the research design. As secondary data have a tendency to provide bias data (Forgaty and Dirsmith, 2005) and cannot provide meaningful answer to the research questions (Premaratne, 2002), based on the study and the nature of the research problem, primary data were collected from the field to obtain empirical findings.

The data collected were analyzed by using IBM Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 22 software. Most of the data were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis, correlation analysis and mean in SPSS.

## FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE COMMUNITY AWARENESS TOWARDS COMMUNITY oriented POLICING IMPLEMENTATION

Three (3) null hypotheses have been developed for this research study which is:-

- Ho1 : There is no significant correlation between respondents profile and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.
- Ho2 : There is no significant correlation between fears of crime awareness on community oriented policing implementation.
- Ho3 : There is no significant correlation between communication and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

### Hypothesis 1

Based on previous research study related to community safety and security, Sim et. al. (2002), Rosebaum et. al. (2008) agreed that socio-demographic factor also influence neighborhood participation and might increase the effectiveness as well. Researcher internationally believe that factor such as socioeconomic status (Foskett, 1955), level of education (Perkins, 1996), home ownership (Lelieveldt, 2004), age (Putnam, 2000), racial identity (Eisen, 1994; Ong and Jakes, 2004; Suffian, 2012), work status (Loopmans, 2010) and marital status (Bahaman, 2009) has strongly correlates to participate in neighborhood project especially in community oriented program. While studies in Malaysia such as Bahaman et. al. (2000) and Suffian et. al. (2012) also found the same findings that most of demographic factor discussed before were potentially contribute towards the successfulness of the neighborhood program.

In this hypothesis, respondents profile is referring to respondent's gender, group of ages, ethnic, marital profile, tenancy profile, educational profile and employment profile. Therefore, there will be seven (7) sub-hypothesis to be tested which are:-

- Ho1.1 : There is no significant correlation between gender profile and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.
- Ho1.2 : There is no significant correlation between age profile and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.
- Ho1.3 : There is no significant correlation between ethnic profile and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.
- Ho1.4 : There is no significant correlation between marital profile and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.
- Ho1.5 : There is no significant correlation between tenancy profile and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.
- Ho1.6 : There is no significant correlation between educational profile and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.
- Ho1.7 : There is no significant correlation between employment profile and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**RESULT**

**Table 1:** Respondents profile.

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender Profile</b>		
Male	1387	68.3
Female	645	31.7
<b>Age Profile</b>		
15-24 Years	205	10.1
24-34 Years	722	35.5
35-44 Years	861	42.2
45-54 Years	214	10.5
55-64 Years	0	0
≥65 Years	30	1.5
<b>Ethnic Profile</b>		
Malay	885	43.6
Chinese	926	45.6
Indian	181	8.9
Others	40	2.0
<b>Education Profile</b>		
MCE and below		
Primary School-UPSR	90	4.4
Secondary School-PMR, SPM	457	22.5
HMCE and above		
Certificate, STPM, Diploma	732	36.0
Undergraduate-Degree	702	34.5
Postgraduate-Master/PhD	51	2.5
others	0	0
<b>Marital Profile</b>		
Single	418	20.6
Married	1544	76.0
Widow	70	3.4
Divorced	0	0
<b>Employment Profile</b>		
Government Sector	450	22.1
Private Sector	1164	57.3
Own Business	255	12.5
unemployed	20	1.0
Retired	30	1.5
Students	113	5.6
Others	0	0
<b>Tenancy Profile</b>		
Own	1562	76.9
Rental	470	23.1

Background of respondents: Table 1 portrays the general background of the respondents who participated in this study. The findings showed that the majority respondents (42.2%, N=861) aged between 35-44 years old while (35.5%, N=722) were aged between 25-34 years old. In terms of gender, N=1337 respondents (68.3%) were male and the remaining N=645 respondents (31.7%) were female. Meanwhile, in the distribution of ethnic profile, the majority of the respondents (45.6%, N=926) were Chinese, follow by Malay (43.6%, N=885). Overall, a total of N=1,485 respondents (73.0%) successfully completed Higher Malaysian Certificate of Examination and above and remaining N=547 respondents (27.0%) were in lower level.

**Hypothesis 1.1**

There is no significant correlation between gender and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**Table 2:** Correlation-Gender profile and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

		Occupation	Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood
Occupation	Pearson Correlation	1	-.310**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	2032	2032
Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Pearson Correlation	-.310**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	2032	2032

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on Pearson Correlation generated by SPSS, there was statistically significant  $r=-0.310$ ,  $p=0.000$  at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Therefore with 99% confidences level, the null hypothesis was rejected because there are weak negative significant correlation between gender and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**Hypothesis 1.2**

There is no significant correlation between age and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**Table 3:** Correlation-Age profile and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

		Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Age
Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Pearson Correlation	1	-.050*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.024
	N	2032	2032
Age	Pearson Correlation	-.050*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.024	
	N	2032	2032

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Based on Pearson Correlation generated by SPSS, there was statistically significant  $r=-0.050$ ,  $p=0.024$  at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). Therefore with 95% confidences level, the null hypothesis was rejected because there are very weak negative significant correlation between age and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**Hypothesis 1.3**

There is no significant correlation between ethnic profile and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**Table 4:** Correlation-Ethnic profile and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

		Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Race
Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood?	Pearson Correlation	1	.016
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.458
	N	2032	2032
Race	Pearson Correlation	.016	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.458	
	N	2032	2032

Based on Pearson Correlation generated by SPSS, the value  $r=0.016$  ( $p=0.485 > 0.05$ ) is not significant. The null hypothesis cannot be rejected due to value of 'p' is more than 0.05 with 95% confidences level. Therefore, there is no significant correlation between race and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation. Finding indicates there is no significant difference between ethnic to the community awareness.

**Hypothesis 1.4**

There is no significant correlation between marital profile and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**Table 5:** Correlation-Marital profile and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

		Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Marital profile
Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Pearson Correlation	1	-.221**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	2032	2032
Marital profile	Pearson Correlation	-.221**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	2032	2032

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on Pearson Correlation generated by SPSS, there was statistically significant  $r=-0.221$ ,  $p=0.000$  at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Therefore with 99% confidences level, the null hypothesis was rejected because there are weak positive significant correlation between marital profile and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**Hypothesis 1.5**

There is no significant correlation between tenancy profile and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**Table 6:** Correlation-Tenancy profile and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

		Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Tenancy profile
Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Pearson Correlation	1	.271**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	2032	2032
Tenancy profile	Pearson Correlation	.271**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	2032	2032

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on Pearson Correlation generated by SPSS, there was statistically significant  $r=-0.271$ ,  $p=0.000$  at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Therefore with 99% confidences level, the null hypothesis was rejected because there are weak positive significant correlation between tenancy profile and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation

**Hypothesis 1.6**

There is no significant correlation between educational profile and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**Table 7:** Correlation-Educational profile and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

		Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Educational profile
Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Pearson Correlation	1	.010
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.639
	N	2032	2032
Educational profile	Pearson Correlation	.010	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.639	
	N	2032	2032

Based on Pearson Correlation generated by SPSS, the value  $r=-0.010$  ( $p=0.639 > 0.05$ ) is not significant. The null hypothesis cannot be rejected due to value of 'p' is more than 0.05 with 95% confidences level. Therefore, there is no significant correlation between educational profile and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation. The finding indicates there are no significant different among educational profile level towards awareness.

**Hypothesis 1.7**

There is no significant correlation between employment profile and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**Table 8:** Correlation-Employment profile and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

		Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Employment profile
Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Pearson Correlation	1	-.310**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	2032	2032
Employment profile	Pearson Correlation	-.310**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	2032	2032

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on Pearson Correlation generated by SPSS, there was statistically significant  $r=-0.310$ ,  $p=0.000$  at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Therefore with 99% confidences level, the null hypothesis was rejected because there is weak negative significant correlation between employment profile and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant correlation between fears of crime awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**Table 9:** Correlation-Fear of crime and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

		Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Fear of crime
Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Pearson Correlation	1	.431**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	2032	2032
Fear of crime	Pearson Correlation	.431**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	2032	2032

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on Pearson Correlation generated by SPSS, there was statistically significant  $r=0.422$ ,  $p=0.000$  at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).Therefore with 99% confidences level, the null hypothesis was rejected because there are moderate significant correlation between fear of crime and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**Hypothesis 3**

There is no significant correlation between communication and awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**Table 10:** Correlation-Communication and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

		Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Communication with COP committee
Awareness on COP implementation in the neighborhood	Pearson Correlation	1	.943**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	2032	2032
Communication with COP committee	Pearson Correlation	.943**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	2032	2032

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on Pearson Correlation generated by SPSS, there was statistically significant  $r=0.943$ ,  $p=0.000$  at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).Therefore with 99% confidences level, the null hypothesis was rejected because there are very strong significant correlation between fear of crime and community awareness on community oriented policing implementation.

**FINDING & DISCUSSION**

1. **Community Awareness towards Community oriented Policing based on Socio-Demographic Factor:** As a result only gender profile, age profile, marital profile, tenancy profile and employment profile are significant towards community awareness in community oriented policing implementation. Therefore not all variables in respondents profile which also known as socio-demographic profile are significant to community awareness.
  - i. **Gender profile:** Community oriented policing is one of the program and strategies that provides safety to the community. This might drag men interest into it. Generally whenever it's dealing with safety or security it is concerned men more than women. It has become a responsibility for men to make sure his family is safe and secure. Therefore, men are tend to explore alternative to which can providing his family a safety environment such as by buying a housing property with strata scheme with gated and guarded scheme. Nevertheless, there are some men try to provides his family with extra safety like installed a CCTV and alarm system surrounding the housing area in order to make sure that his family are safe from uncertainty.

- ii. **Age profile:** The finding shows that 59.8%, N=680 over 1136 of the respondents that are aware of community oriented policing implementation within the neighborhood are from group of ages 35-44 years old and followed by group of ages 25-34 years old with score of 32.8%, N=372. In addition this group can be considered as active with high commitment of life such as workload, financial, personal responsibility and etc. Normally, these groups of ages are most updated with any changes of their surrounding environment which meant that they are aware of their surroundings. Most of the community in this group of ages is married with a family. These groups are concerned of their family and surrounding safety and security.
- iii. **Marital profile:** Based on the data collected, married or single individual has the same awareness score which both are equivalent aware of their surrounding area changes. This single group is most probably aware of community oriented policing implementation with the neighborhood throughout their night activities near or within the neighborhood such as loitering, hanging out with friends and etc.
- iv. **Tenancy profile:** Based on the data collected, majority of respondents that are aware of community oriented policing implementation within the neighborhood are respondents that owned the unit within the housing scheme. Generally, people who tend to show their concern to the neighborhood changes and safe is the original owner or if only he/she owned the unit in that neighborhood. Normally, tenants who are rental are less aware of their surroundings. They are usually used to rent the unit only for shelter and rest after work and weekend. In addition, the rental tenant usually is not a local resident and they rent the house because the house is near to the work place or the monthly rental is cheap. The main purpose is only for shelter and they are not really taking part of any changes or safety awareness within the neighborhood.
- v. **Employment profile:** The finding shows that community working with government sector is more aware of community oriented policing implementation in Malaysia. Community oriented policing was implemented by government through Malaysia five (5) year's annual plan which all government servants generally will be informed.

2. **Community Awareness towards Community Oriented Policing based on Fear of Crime Factor:** Basically fear of crime does reflect back to gender and age factor. Previous research study found that gender and age are the strongest key factor that influences fear of crime, with women consistently reporting greater levels of fear, despite the fact that men are (statistically) at greater risk of victimization (Grabosky 1995; Harris and Jensen 1998; Tulloch et al 1998; Pantazis 2000). Research recognizes that women are predominantly the victims of unreported crimes such as sexual assault and violence from partners

and family in the home, and are also subject to sexual harassment, factors that are likely to influence their perceptions of safety (Grabosky 1995; Tulloch et al. 1998; Pantazis 2000; Dichter and Gelles 2012). The significant under-reporting of these offences against women suggests that many women have experienced prior victimization, another factor that is detrimental to perceptions of safety. Age influences perceptions of safety, with Australian research finding that older people are much more fearful of being victimized in their homes. Other studies emphasize that fear at home has 'the greatest impact on life satisfaction' (Harris and Jensen 1998). Young people however are more fearful of violence in the public domain, but research suggests this may be warranted as 'their lifestyle places them at greater risk' (Kelley 1992 in Grabosky 1995).

3. **Community Awareness towards Community Oriented Policing based on Communication Factor:** Lack of communication skill is a sign of leadership failure as communication is a greater factor to start interaction and build trust within two different parties. A team that fails to communicate affectively will end up wasting time and energy doing busy work and other work that is not required because of a lack of understanding of what needs to be done. Communication is not just posturing or announcing your view and then ignoring everyone else. Communication has to be noticeable. Even after the message is placed in the right channels, it has to have some characteristics that will help it to break through the barrage of messages that bombard everyone every day. People not only have to be exposed to it, but they have to pay attention to it for it to have any effect. Therefore PDRM should start to communicate with the community accordingly because good communication will engage everyone involved. Communication has to be accessible. No matter how creative and potentially effective your message is, it can't do much good if the community isn't exposed to it. PDRM have to put it where that community can't miss it, which means using the channels that they're most likely to pay attention to.

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