

**Journal of Social Sciences Research & Policy (JSSRP)****Assessing the Effectiveness of Community Policing in Enhancing Public Trust and Safety: A Case Study of Sargodha Region**

**Sana Safdar<sup>1</sup>, Abdul Aziz<sup>2</sup>, Malik Kaleem Ullah<sup>3</sup>, Aiman Nawaz<sup>4</sup>**

1. BS Criminology, Department of Sociology and Criminology, University of Sargodha, Pakistan.

2. Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Sargodha, Pakistan.

3. Lecturer, Department of Sociology and Criminology, University of Sargodha, Pakistan.

4. BS-Honors Accounting and Finance, Kinnaird College for Women, Pakistan.

**How to Cite This Article:** Safdar, S., Aziz, A., Ullah, M. K. & Nawaz, A. (2025). Assessing the Effectiveness of Community Policing in Enhancing Public Trust and Safety: A Case Study of Sargodha Region. *Journal of Social Sciences Research & Policy*. 3 (04), 622-626.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.71327/jssrp.34.622.626>

**ISSN:** 3006-6557 (Online)

**ISSN:** 3006-6549 (Print)

**Vol. 3, No. 4 (2025)**

**Pages:** 622-626

**Key Words:**

Community policing, Public trust, Public safety, Police legitimacy, Police and community relationship

**Corresponding Author:**

**Sana Safdar**

Email: [sanagongal56@gmail.com](mailto:sanagongal56@gmail.com)

**License:**



**Abstract:** *Community policing has played an important role in contemporary policing approach that established cooperation between law enforcement agencies and local communities. The main purpose of this research is to identify the effectiveness of community policing practices in enhancing public trust and improving the safety measures in the Sargodha region. Community policing is a collaborative strategy that plays an important role in promoting citizen participation, problem solving, and shared responsibility for the community welfare. A quantitative research design was used to explore public opinions regarding community policing, police behavior, responsiveness, fairness, and safety. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire filled by the peoples based on a Likert-scale format. A total of 110 valid responses were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistical techniques were applied to identify trends in public trust and safety. The research shows that community policing has a positive yet moderate impact on public trust and safety in the Sargodha region. While the participants acknowledged police efforts to engage with the community and in preventing crime, a small number of people response on neutral or negative views, focusing on issues such as limited participation in the community and dissatisfaction with complaint handling process. The study results that strengthening community involvement, improving the transparency and enhancing police responsibilities are important in enhancing the effectiveness of community policing initiatives.*

**Introduction**

Community policing plays an important role in enhancing public trust and safety. Traditional policing models that focus firstly on reactive law enforcement and crime control. Community policing takes proactive measures, partnership, and collaboration between police and community members to address crime and social problems together.

Public trust plays a very important role in the effectiveness of the policing. When citizens trust the

police, they are able to cooperate, share information's. Moreover, when the citizens had low level of trust in police, the police will be unable to share information's and reduce the effectiveness of crime prevention efforts. In developing countries like Pakistan, police and community relations are often not well due to the following reasons corruption, unfair treatment, lack of accountability, and inadequate services.

To address these challenges, community policing initiatives have been introduced in various regions of Pakistan, including Sargodha. These programs are introduced to improve police performance, enhance public confidence, and create safer communities for the public. However, there is limited empirical evidence examining whether community policing has successfully enhanced public trust and safety perceptions at the local level. This study seeks to fill this gap by assessing the effectiveness of community policing in the Sargodha region from the perspective of citizens.

### **Literature Review**

Community policing has been already discussed in criminological literature as a strategy that improve police practices and strengthens social cohesion. Goldstein (1990) says that traditional policing often fails to address the main causes of crime, whereas community policing encourages problem oriented and community based solutions.

Trust in the police is strongly shaped by citizens in community for the perceptions of fairness, respect, and justice. Tyler (2004) said that when police exercise authority in a fair and unbiased manner, public trust and voluntary compliance with the law increase. Community policing facilitates regular interaction between police officers and the community members, which helps build mutual understanding and positive relationships between police and community.

Previous studies have also found that community policing had contribute a lot to improved perceptions of safety. The increased of police visibility, neighborhood meetings, and collaborative initiatives had reduced the fear of crime and enhanced residents sense of security. Active community participation promotes informal social control and collective responsibility for crime prevention.

Community policing faces many challenges, particularly in developing countries. Bayley (2008) identified issues such as limited resources, no proper training and low public awareness as major difficulties to effective implementation. As a result, community policing may produce mixed outcomes, with some citizens experiencing positive engagement while the others experiencing negative engagement.

In Pakistan, research on community policing remains scarce. Most studies main focus was on institutional reforms and crime statistics, while citizens were experiencing less attention. This study contributes to the existing literature by examining community policing within the specific context of the Sargodha region.

### **Research Gap**

However community policing is overall promoted as an effective policing strategy, there is a lack of empirical research examining its impact on public trust and safety in Pakistan. Existing literature largely overlooks citizens' perceptions, particularly regarding police responsiveness, fairness, and consistency in community engagement.

Moreover, limited attention has been given to the complaint-handling process and the unity of community policing initiatives at the local level. The absence of residents, quantitative evidence restricts the formulation of effective, community-oriented policing policies. This study addresses these gaps by unity assessing public trust and safety measures related to community policing in the Sargodha region.

## Methodology

This study is based on quantitative research approach to assess the effectiveness of community policing in enhancing public trust and safety. Data were collected from residents of urban areas in the Sargodha region through a structured questionnaire filling by the urban areas residents. In this we measured the perceptions of community engagement, police responsiveness, fairness, collaboration, and safety.

A total of 114 questionnaires were distributed, of which 110 valid responses were included in the analysis. The data were analyzed using SPSS, and descriptive statistics were applied to summarize respondents' views and experiences. The random sampling technique were used

## Findings

### Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Community Policy</b>	110	1.50	4.22	2.582	0.757
<b>Public Trust</b>	110	1.29	3.86	2.600	0.877
<b>Public Safety (P_S)</b>	110	-37.38	9.50	2.178	5.574

### Interpretation:

Community Policy and Public Trust are moderately high on average. Public Safety shows a wide range due to the scale computation (negative values from reverse-coded items).

### Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Level
<b>Community Policy</b>	17	0.920	Excellent
<b>Public Trust</b>	9	0.796	Good
<b>Public Safety (P_S)</b>	8	0.925	Excellent

### Interpretation:

All scales are internally consistent. Public Trust is slightly lower but still acceptable for research purposes.

### Correlation Matrix

Variable	Community Policy	Public Trust	Public Safety (P_S)
<b>Community Policy</b>	1	0.924**	0.149*
<b>Public Trust</b>	0.924**	1	0.175*
<b>Public Safety (P_S)</b>	0.149*	0.175*	1

### Significance:

\*\* p < 0.01, \* p < 0.05

### Interpretation:

Community Policy is strongly positively correlated with Public Trust. Public Safety has weak positive correlations with both Community Policy and Public Trust.

### Regression Analysis: Predicting Public Trust

#### Model 1: Community Policy → Public Trust

Model Statistics	Value
R	0.924
R <sup>2</sup>	0.854

<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.852				
<b>F (1,108)</b>	630.835				
<b>p-value</b>	0.000				
<b>Coefficients:</b>					
Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	-0.164	0.115	-	-1.429	0.016
Community	1.070	0.043	0.924	25.116	0.000
Policy					

#### Interpretation:

Community Policy is a strong, significant predictor of Public Trust. A 1-unit increase in Community Policy predicts a 1.070 unit increase in Public Trust.

#### Model 2: Public Safety (P\_S) → Public Trust

Model Statistics	Value				
R	0.175				
R <sup>2</sup>	0.031				
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.022				
F (1,108)	3.432				
p-value	0.067				
<b>Coefficients:</b>					
Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	2.660	0.089	-	29.942	0.000
P_S	-0.028	0.015	-0.175	-1.853	0.067

#### Interpretation:

Public Safety does not significantly predict Public Trust ( $p > 0.05$ ). Its effect on Public Trust is very small ( $R^2 = 0.031$ ).

#### Key Findings

- Community Policy is crucial for building Public Trust. High engagement in community activities strongly predicts higher trust in institutions.
- Public Safety is not a significant predictor of Public Trust in this dataset.
- All scales are reliable, with Cronbach's alpha above 0.79.
- Moderate mean levels of Community Policy and Public Trust indicate room for improvement.

#### Policy Implication

To enhance public trust, focus on promoting participation in community programs rather than solely on perceptions of safety.

The findings of this research reveal that community policing practices in Sargodha have achieved a moderate level of success. Many respondents agreed that police organize community programs and made efforts to address local issues. However, a small number of neutral responses say that limited public awareness or inconsistent community participation.

Public trust in the police was found to be moderate. While generally the respondents perceived police officers as fair. Most of the people show concern regarding impartiality and the effectiveness of complaint handling procedures. In the emergency situations they indicate uneven service delivery.

In terms of safety, most respondents reported feeling safe within their neighborhoods, mostly during daytime hours. Moreover, a small proportion of people showed fear of crime and avoided some public areas. Around half of the respondents believed that community policing had contributed a lot in

reducing crime risks, highlighting its positive influence on perceived safety.

### **Discussion**

The research results show that community policing has the power to enhance public trust and safety. In the Sargodha region its impact remains moderate rather than more effective. The presence of neutral and negative responses shows that community policing practices are not properly implemented or experienced by all community members.

From the perspective of procedural justice theory, fairness and responsiveness are the main factors shaping public trust. While some respondents expressed satisfaction with police behavior and the others reported dissatisfaction, for the gaps in accountability and service quality. Limited community engagement and inconsistent interaction with the community further weaken the effectiveness of community policing.

The persistence of fear of crime, despite generally positive safety perceptions, suggests that community policing initiatives need to be improved, more effective and impactful. Strengthening communication and collaboration between police and citizens is important for building long term trust.

### **Conclusion**

This research shows the effectiveness of community policing in enhancing public trust and safety in the Sargodha region. The findings show that community policing has a positive but moderate impact on community view of trust and safety. While the efforts made by police in community engagement and crime prevention are recognized. They had to face many challenges such as limited participation, inconsistency and ongoing fear of crime remain.

Effective community policing requires consistent implementation, transparency, accountability, and active community participation. Addressing these challenges can help strengthen the police–community bond and enhance public safety outcomes.

### **Implications**

The findings of this research have important implications for law enforcement agencies and policy makers. Enhancing community engagement programs, improving complaint handling systems, and providing good training to the police officers can enhance public trust. Public awareness programs are also important to encourage the citizens to participate in community policing activities.

The research also supports key criminological theories, including procedural justice, social capital, and police legitimacy, by developing the relationship between community policing and public trust and safety.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

This study is limited due to its cross sectional design. The focus only on urban areas limits the accessibility of findings to rural contexts. Future research should be on mixed-method approaches, including qualitative interviews, to gain deeper views on community policing experiences. Longitudinal research may also help assess long-term effects on trust and safety.

### **References**

- Bayley, D. H. (2008). Community policing. *Police Practice and Research*, 9(4), 317–329.
- Goldstein, H. (1990). Problem-oriented policing. McGraw-Hill.
- Skogan, W. G. (2006). Police and community in Chicago. Oxford University Press.
- Tyler, T. R. (2004). Enhancing police legitimacy. *The ANNALS*, 593(1), 84–99.
- Tyler, T. R., & Huo, Y. J. (2002). Trust in the law. Russell Sage Foundation