

Fighting Terrorism through Community Policing

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Abstract

This study examines the role of community policing in counterterrorism based on data collected from interviews with police officers working in the southeast region of Turkey. This case shows that community policing programs provide effective ways of establishing trust between the police/state and citizens while overcoming bilateral prejudgments, increasing citizens' willingness to seek assistance from the police, and preventing young people from engaging in crime, violence, and terrorist activities. The results of the analysis indicate the positive role of community policing in decreasing insurgency among citizens and offers community policing as an alternative approach in the fight against terrorism.

Keywords: Terrorism, Counterterrorism, Community Policing, Turkey, PKK

1. Introduction

Terrorism is one of the most important issues for governments and their security organizations due to its political and dangerous nature for societies. To protect their countries and citizens, governments engage in tireless efforts to shape effective counterterrorism policies. Terrorism remains an eminent threat for societies, thereby keeping counterterrorism policies significant at the top of governments' agendas. Although counterterrorism policies have brought about new burdens for governments' budgets, policymakers continue to try to minimize terrorist attacks against their countries with support from their citizens. As key players of counterterrorism policies, law enforcement agencies adjust their policies and practices according to society's urgent needs. Terrorism, as an imminent threat for democratic societies and modern governments, has become the most important issue for law enforcement agencies since 9/11 and other terrorist incidents in Western countries in the beginning of the 21st century. All these tragic events have forced governments and their law enforcement organizations to shift their attention from local crime problems to national and even international crime problems.

Because of terrorism's immanency and urgency, counterterrorism policies have gained more importance and required more government resources in the last decade. Police departments have to adjust their policies and strategies according to the new era, which is commonly called "the war on terror era." Thus, police departments have started to prioritize counterterrorism policies rather than community policing programs (Friedmann & Cannon, 2007). Community policing as a novel approach to traditional policing has brought several benefits to police departments in crime fighting. Police departments have started to implement preventive crime fighting strategies in order to develop reciprocal relationships with communities, use problem-solving tactics, and cooperate with all stakeholders in the community. Being proactive against crime has created fewer problems and fewer complaints from community members, thereby resulting in better satisfaction and improved relationships with the police (U.S. Department of Justice, 1994).

Therefore, police departments have had to make trades between community policing and counterterrorism when deciding where to allocate their resources.

An ongoing debate in the literature focuses on the opportunity of using community policing strategies in the fight against terrorism. Although some researchers (Docobo, 2005; Kelling & Bratton, 2006; Morreale & Lambert, 2012) argue that community policing strategies and tactics can assist law enforcement organizations in supporting homeland security policies, others (De Guzman, 2002; Murray, 2005) state that these two policies have different agendas and cannot be converged to benefit each other. Proponents of using community policing in counterterrorism state that police departments can benefit from community policing to prevent possible terrorist attacks by gathering intelligence and informing citizens to increase their awareness against suspicious activities in their community. On the other hand, critics believe that community policing has a different philosophy, which was created to solve local crime issues in the community; thus, it does not fit the goals of national counterterrorism policies. These critics believe that community policing can even create more problems in communities when used to respond to terrorism. Related to the dynamic discussion in the literature, we will present a case from Turkey where community policing is used to alleviate the terrorism problem in the southeastern region of the country. In this chapter, we will first briefly review the literature on community policing and counterterrorism and their joint applications in the field, then the research methodology, findings, and analysis of the case will be presented, along with a discussion of using community policing in the fight against terrorism.

2. Literature Review

Community Policing

As one of the contemporary policing approaches, community policing first emerged in the 1970s as “community policing” or “community-oriented policing.” The community policing concept reached its popularity and became a widespread term used in the criminal justice field in the late 1990s. Community policing demonstrates an inevitable shift in American policing history. Political, economic, and social structures forced this change (Kappeler & Gaines, 2009). In the 1970s, the Civil Rights movement was in full swing in the United States. People protested against the government, demanding equal rights for all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender, and an end to discrimination. In addition, intensive demonstrations related to the Vietnam War were taking place. When news of the Watergate scandal broke, people lost their trust and confidence in the government. As a result, the confrontation between the police and people in negative conditions ruined the police and public relations and created an abyss (U.S. Department of Justice, 1973). In addition, the technological developments in police institutions and crime fighting applications weakened the face-to-face contact between police and the public. In order to find solutions to these problems, police departments started to adopt a community policing philosophy in their policies and practices.

Several studies were conducted to define the effectiveness of these new policing practices. Foot patrols were tested in Newark, New Jersey, and Flint, Michigan, while problem-solving projects were carried out in Newport News, Virginia, and Houston, Texas. The results showed that community policing practices decreased the public’s fear of crime and increased the public’s satisfaction with police efforts (Kappeler & Gaines, 2009). In addition, positive developments

took place in terms of police behavior toward the community, and police officers' morale and job satisfaction increased.

Trojanowicz (1983) described community policing as a new philosophy and institutional strategy aiming to form a new partnership between police and their community. According to this new approach, police and the community should work together to solve problems such as crime, drug addiction, fear of crime, social and physical disorderliness, and disturbances threatening individuals' quality of life. In this approach, people not only wait for police intervention, but also handle social security problems with police by taking the initiative personally and collectively. According to the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office, 2011), community policing comprises four key elements: (1) community partnership, (2) organizational transformation, (3) problem solving, and (4) crime prevention.

Community policing has become one of the most prevalent crime-fighting strategies not only in the United States, but also in countries throughout the world (Dammer & Albanese, 2013). Police departments in different countries started to use the novel policing approach in order to improve police–community relations to prevent and solve security problems cooperatively and collaboratively with the public.

The Problem of Terrorism

Terrorism has had devastating effects on people's lives psychologically, sociologically, and economically for several decades. It has continued to steal the lives and hopes of people. Today, terrorism threats go beyond the borders and do not discriminate against targets according to their religion, language, color, sex, or race. Ethnic terrorism is defined as systematic violence acts committed by any ethnic group(s) who aims to divide the society or separate part of the area and eventually create an independent structure (White, 2013). Ethnic groups allege that they differ from the majority in terms of race, religion, or culture (Alkan, 2002). Regional ethnic groups in different parts of the world have mostly been fighting against state authorities to achieve national authority or possess an independent territory. After studying regions suffering violence and terrorist attacks, Yilmaz (2007) classified the reasons for ethnic conflicts according to seven factors: (1) the desire for the expression of ethnic identity, (2) discrimination (real or perceived), (3) the nature of the regime and social culture, (4) unfair distribution of the revenues and unfavorable economic conditions, (5) the collapse of the central authority, (6) historical traumas, and (7) international interferences.

Research conducted on Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), a separatist terrorist organization in Turkey, shows that victimization psychology is one of the most prominent factors among the Kurdish people. Deprivations, poverty, grievances, and negative propaganda related to existing conditions have fostered a sense of discrimination and increased the sense of belonging to the ethnic identity. The greater the degree of victimization or historical traumas experienced, the stronger the influence of propaganda on ethnic groups. Similarly, a feeling of injustice, a feeling of exclusion, and inequalities have produced a sense of alienation among society (Ozdemir, 2012). A study conducted on the Kurdish people in the city of Van revealed that a high unemployment rate raises sympathy for the PKK and incites ethnic-based separatist ideas among the Kurdish people (Okyar & Gunes, 2012). In addition, some studies have stressed that the

humiliation and mistreatment at the hands of security forces while in custody or in prison have strengthened the attachment of persons to PKK (Teymur, 2007).

For terrorist organizations, permanent recruitment and acquisition of new members to the organization is vital for survival. They use all kinds of arguments and methods as long as they are in favor of them (Bal, 2006; Koseli, 2012). Terrorist organizations do not avoid speculation on controversial subjects or creating disadvantages in society. Alkan (2009) stated that PKK, like many other terrorist organizations, first connects with young people through friendships and domestic relationships. They then extend their interactions to include social and cultural activities. Finally, face-to-face interactions, qualified associations, and shares are applied. The PKK intensively uses the media, including social media, the Internet, and social club and unions in Turkey (Koseli, 2012). Eventually, terrorist organizations try to entice the trapped cadets ideologically. This step is defined as “reconstructing identity” and “gaining a new belonging” (Alkan, 2009).

Counterterrorism Policies

The literature defines two main policies in combatting terrorism. Two strategies are described under different dichotomies—namely, “war on terror–criminal justice model” (Crelinsten, 2014), “hard power–soft power” (Nye, 2011), “realism–idealism” (Sandole, 2010), and “fighting against terrorist–fighting against terrorism” (Bal, 2002). The frontline combat methods represent harsh and repressive strategies intensively applied by the military, police, and intelligence services. Maltreatment, human rights violations, unlawful practices, and unsolved murders are very common in hard power policies. In fact, governments consciously close their eyes so as not to see antidemocratic applications. Struggles against terrorists or terrorist organizations are the focal point, and fighting the ideology of terrorism and the factors fostering and deteriorating the problem are neglected. Social, economic, political, cultural, and historical causes/arguments that are likely to trigger the terrorism are not considered. Both the terrorists and the sympathizers are categorized as “enemies.” Each terrorist attack breeds new harsher security precautions or operations. Such hard power strategies usually lead to negative outcomes—that is, increasing terrorist activities—as the terrorist organizations use the illegalities as a tool for anti-propaganda against the community (Ekici, 2010; Sandole, 2010; Teymur, 2007).

Sandole (2010) asserted that there are three ways to fight terrorism, focusing on the level of (1) symptoms, (2) relations, and (3) deep-rooted causes. According to Sandole, combatting terrorism today is performed based on the level of symptoms and considered within the frame of real politic. However, methods for the third category focus on the root causes of the problem. In other words, these strategies are an effort to dry out the swamp instead of fight the mosquitos (Bal, 2006). The struggle against terrorism aims to reach a consistent and long-term solution. Instead of the military using repressive and harsh methods, the goal is to implement democratic reforms, legal arrangements, social and cultural initiatives, and economic investments (Cinoglu, 2010). International initiatives also propose that governments remain a frame of universal standards, including transparency, accountability, human rights, and rule of law, when combatting terrorism and seek a national and international consensus by appealing to civil initiatives.

The best way to combat terrorism is by fighting against both terrorist organizations and the ideology of terrorism. By staying in a frame of democracy and following the rule of law,

governments can establish Special Forces and equip them with modern equipment and high technology weapons under the title of counterterrorism. For example, governments can strengthen their intelligence services, use drones, take measures to cut the financial support of illegal organizations, and enact essential legislation for counterterrorism. Focusing exclusively on fighting terrorists is wrong while focusing only on fighting terrorism is inadequate and deficient given that the terrorist organizations will try to show soft power applications as weaknesses of the governments. Terrorist organizations try to introduce idealistic and excessively accommodating approaches as their success achieved through their fight (Bal, 2006). Hence, there is a risk of losing community support for the government. Hard power strategies, as long as they remain in the frame of democracy, are a sort of insurance and a protective shield for long-term soft power practices. Nevertheless, combatting the ideology of terrorism (i.e., soft power policies) should be the priority of the governments. As defined by Nye (2011), smart power seems the best strategy in counterterrorism which requires the ability to combine hard power and soft power strategies effectively.

Community Policing in Counterterrorism

Under the soft power policies at the macro level, community policing is an extremely effective option at the local level. During the last few decades, as scholars have claimed that this philosophy gives more chances for police to counter terrorism, police practitioners have sought to conduct projects to confirm this idea. For example, Pickering et al. (2008) interviewed and surveyed police officers, community representatives, and ordinary citizens to explore the role of community policing in combatting terrorism in the state of Victoria in Australia. According to their results, most informants perceived community policing to be an important tool in counterterrorism. Citizens are satisfied with the works of multicultural liaison officers (MLOs) and believe that community policing programs improve the trust between the police and community as well as strengthen the legitimacy of police. People have also suggested that police should boost their cultural literacy.

According to Sandole (2010), a comprehensive approach that concentrates on the root causes of problem and involved multiple actors and functions is required to combat terrorism and violent acts. In this respect, the philosophy of community policing is a useful and effective tool that functions at the local level. In other words, community policing practices help police prevent security problems before coming off the hinges by controlling the heartbeat of the local community. Intelligence gathering via community policing does not involve the same risk as traditional and known methods as it is based on trust and community participation (Pickering et al., 2008).

Based on his study conducted with neighborhood officers working in large-, medium-, and small-scale police departments in the United Kingdom, Innes (2006) emphasized the role of community policing in being aware of local problems. Positive and warm relations between police and the community will impair the influence of slander and invalidate black propaganda put forth by terrorist organizations (Scheider & Chapman, 2003). Community policing programs bring people—all relevant public and private sectors—around a platform. Hence, it helps police determine the risk factors, discuss the pertinent details, and find solutions collectively. Collective work also makes remarkable contributions to the stages of crisis prevention and crisis

intervention into probable terror threats (Scheider & Chapman, 2003). It is an effective aspect in combatting terrorism as it is an output that prevents alienation and strengthens partnership (Cinoglu, 2010). In addition, the community policing approach accelerates democratic principles such as public participation, transparency, and accountability in daily life (Gozubenli, 2008). Police under the civil control mechanism will be more careful about respecting people's fundamental rights and freedoms.

Hindering the recruitment process of terrorist organizations and eliminating the excuses that are likely to push people—particularly young generations—into the arms of the terrorist organization are at the heart of combatting terrorism. As the community policing approach prioritizes preventive measures, it concentrates on children and teenagers for programs (Alkan, 2009). In addition, promoting community participation by creating social cohesion and decreasing the fear of crime will facilitate efforts to abolish the main causes of terrorism (Scheider & Chapman, 2003).

Several examples illustrate the positive results of the Turkish version of community policing programs implemented to fight terrorism. Dikici (2008) studied community policing projects conducted between 2002 and 2006 in Sanliurfa, one of the cities in southeastern Turkey. He found that 12 out of 50 parents with whom police experts intensively made contact persuaded their sons/daughters who were among the active armed militants to surrender. Fifty-five guttersnipes were saved from street and illegalities and guided to school or a profession by means of an educational project. Among 80 drug-addicted juveniles, 71 were recovered via another project. In general, crime rates committed by youths decreased by 57 percent, and victimized youth rates diminished by 43 percent from 2002 to 2006. Alkan (2009) mentioned one program involving intensive negotiations with parents of armed PKK militants; 64 militants capitulated as a result of the program carried out through 2006 and 2007.

The city of Diyarbakır in Turkey is at the center of the terrorism. Street demonstrations and violent acts have been intense in this city. In 2005, the community policing program aimed to ameliorate the relations between police and tradesmen in Diyarbakır. Police reached out to tradesmen via visits and serial meetings, listened to their security problems, and informed them about all kinds of threats. According to the results, in 2007, beyond the positive feedback from approximately 90 percent of the participants, two large extortions were solved, and demonstrations provoked by PKK were prevented. In addition, thanks to connections with the community policing programs, the number of emergency calls for police increased significantly (Gozubenli, 2008).

Akbulut and Beren (2012) revealed that community policing projects raise the sensitivity of people who have attended any kind of activity. People start to take precautions not to fall victim to terror. They also stressed that community policing projects are a distinctive sign of the shift in Turkey's counterterror strategies, showing a transition from a splintered to holistic campaign as well as a shift from punitive-oriented strategies to exhilarative-centered strategies when combatting terrorism.

Community policing programs in counterterrorism have largely satisfied the police and security bureaucracy. However, it is not free from problems and criticisms. Not all police officers and

divisions believe in the usefulness of the programs or support them. The lack of information and police officers' prejudices sometimes upset the applecart by mistake (Gozubenli & Akbas, 2009). In addition, officers from other public sectors and the local community may not be fully ready to participate in the community policing programs due to previous negative experiences and fear of the PKK. Durna (2008) pointed out the lack of a comprehensive and systematic approach in community policing projects conducted to combat terrorism in general.

3. Research Methodology

This chapter uses a case study research methodology to explain the use of community policing strategies against terrorism in the southeast region of Turkey. According to Yin (2003), case study is an appropriate research methodology for conducting explanatory studies to get answers to the questions of "why" and "how." The data for this case come from two different sources: interviews and official documents and reports. Interviews were conducted to understand what police officers think about the role of community policing in counterterrorism; official documents and reports gave us an idea about the organizational perspective of the research subject.

In the current study, we sought to explore the effectiveness of community policing in counterterrorism from the perspective of police officers working in the southeast region of Turkey. We conducted semi-structured interviews with police officers from community policing divisions and counterterrorism divisions of police departments in the southeast region of Turkey. To define our sample, we used a snowball sampling strategy until we reached 37 police officers in the summer of 2012. Our interviews were mostly face-to-face, but 7 interviews were done by phone. All the interviews were recorded after getting permission from respondents and then transcribed verbatim. During interviews, we generally asked open-ended questions to give respondents the opportunity to speak about the case. Most interviews took 30 minutes to two hours.

In order to get a sense of the organizational perspective of using community policing in counterterrorism, we reviewed written records, official correspondences between divisions and departments, related fact sheets given by the respondents, and reports. More importantly, we analyzed community policing projects initiated by the city police departments in the last decades to understand how community policing activities were correlated with counterterrorism efforts in the region.

To analyze our qualitative data, we used coding methods explained by Strauss and Corbin (1998): open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. In the open coding, the researcher codes the emerging categories according to their properties and dimensions in order to conceptualize the data. In this first phase, we defined emerging codes in the data to group similar items according to their properties and dimensions. Meanwhile, axial coding is a process of developing and relating categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 142). In the axial coding phase, we defined subcategories under the major categories by reading the notes again and again and reviewing the codebook several times in order to categorize the codes systematically. Finally, according to Strauss and Corbin (1998, p. 143), selective coding is the process of integrating and refining the theory. In this last phase, we analyzed the codes again in order to find the core category in the

last step of the coding process. This iterative process of data analysis provided us with a better sense when explaining the relationship between community policing and terrorism in the data we collected.

We encountered some limitations in this study. First, this study used data collected from interviews with police officers working in different cities in southeastern Turkey. This approach raises the issue of the objectivity of the data. Therefore, readers should approach the findings as subjective understandings of police officers. Second, although this study included 37 interviews from different cities in southeastern Turkey, we cannot generalize the findings of this study to other police departments. Because of the nature of qualitative research, it is up to readers to assess the extent to which findings from this study can be generalized to other settings according to their knowledge and experience. Finally, being police members and having good connections in the TNP facilitated our access to police departments; it also bears the risk of going too native in our research. Therefore, the results of our research should be approached by considering these limitations.

4. Case Study

The Problem of Terrorism in Turkey

Turkey has been struggling with the problem of terrorism since the 1980s. The PKK was established by Abdullah Ocalan and his close friends in Diyarbakir in 1978. Adopting Marxist and Leninist ideologies, the PKK's main objective is to establish "Great Kurdistan" as an independent state stretching over the territories of Turkey, Iraq, Syria, and Iran, where the Kurdish people live (Roth & Sever, 2007). During the first years of its establishment, the PKK trained many Kurdish youths in order to increase the manpower of its militant army in the training camps located in southeastern Turkey and northern Iraq. In order to start a separatist campaign against the Turkish government, the PKK waged guerilla warfare tactics in the mid-1980s and tried to establish some authority over the Kurdish population living in southeastern Turkey. Initially, Turkish authorities were surprised and shocked by the PKK's insurgency movement, and Turkish security forces were not ready for this kind of guerrilla warfare.

This initial shock and unpreparedness of Turkish authorities provided a tactical advantage for the PKK, whose members started to frighten and suppress people living in the region in order to dictate the organization's objectives and goals. Through its pursuit of offensive guerilla warfare and its blind terrorism tactics (White, 2013), the PKK experienced relative success in its campaign, attracted more than 10,000 armed militants and sufficient financial resources for its activities in the first years of the 1990s (Alkan, 2009).

However, Turkish security forces gained some experience in fighting terrorism and started to develop different strategies and tactics against the PKK in the mid-1990s. Special forces in Turkish security organizations were established to fight terrorism, and modern equipment and weapons were provided by the government to ensure success in counterterrorism efforts. In order to reassert the government's authority in the southeast region, these special units carried out critical operations against the PKK targets, which forced the PKK to find different ways to

continue their campaign, and they started using urban fighting tactics in terrorism, such as suicide bombings in Turkey's metropolitan cities (Bal, 2006).

In addition to using the military in counterterrorism, the Turkish government adopted some diplomatic efforts to fight terrorism. Specifically, the Turkish government persistently urged the Syrian government to deport Abdullah Ocalan, the PKK's founder, who lived in Syria for more than 20 years between 1978 and 1998. Eventually, the Syrian government forced him to leave the country. With the imperative assistance of American intelligence, Turkish officials captured Abdullah Ocalan in Kenya and brought him to Turkey for trial in February 1999 (Rubin & Kirisci, 2001). Although some terrorist attacks happened when Abdullah Ocalan was captured, the PKK started to change its strategy in 2000. Since the imprisonment of their leader and the new counterterrorism atmosphere in the world after 9/11, the PKK has adopted political strategies using less violent tactics to continue its campaign in the beginning of millennium.

However, the conflict started to heat up in 2004 because the PKK saw the American invasion of Iraq as an unprecedented opportunity to reignite the insurgency in the region (Marcus, 2007). The PKK ended the ceasefire and regrouped its militants to start attacks. Returning to warfare increased the death tolls on both sides, and the problem became worse. In order to alleviate the chronic problem and find solutions, the Turkish government started to use soft power strategies to fight terrorism. After observing the ineffectiveness of using only hard power against terrorism, the Turkish government initiated several political reforms in major policy areas such as education, ethnicity, language, and human rights (Guler & Kula, 2014). The Turkish government adopted nine democratization packages to improve the human rights of its citizens.

Most of the changes aimed to alleviate the problem in southeastern Turkey by giving more rights to the people demanding them living in this region. Major examples of reforms included ratifying the Kurdish language in public places, allowing the broadcast of Kurdish TV and radio, opening Kurdish language courses, and releasing Kurdish political figures from the prison (Ciftci & Kula, 2015). In addition, the Turkish government made economic investments, initiated social projects, and enacted legal regulations.

Although police and military forces started to pay attention to their behavior in legal and democratic practices, the government created commissions and opened an investigation to disclose the unsolved murders that happened during the 1990s. All these efforts created a positive atmosphere in the region, and the PKK started to lose its ground among the Kurdish population. To benefit from this optimistic environment, the Turkish government announced its new policy: "Democratic Opening." Several peace talks were realized between government delegates and Kurdish politicians to agree on a road map to solve the problems. Although these efforts were applauded by the European Union, the United States, and other international organizations, the pace of the process is still volatile and fragile. Based on progress made to date, success seems very difficult to achieve for both parties in the peace process and has even been halted by delegates.

In summary, we can divide the Turkish government's counterterrorism strategies against the PKK into three different phases (Durna, 2008): reactive precautions, preventive precautions, and democratization projects. As previously explained, reactive precautions were developed during the early stages of the PKK, especially from its establishment of 1978 to the mid-1990s.

Preventive precautions were initiated by the government between the mid-1990s and the beginning of millennium. The last phase, the democratization projects, were launched to expand freedoms and improve human rights conditions in the country. As previously discussed, although different strategies were developed to respond to terrorism in southeastern Turkey, the conflict remains and peace talks between parties hang by a thread.

Community Policing in Turkey

Although some community-oriented programs in the Turkish criminal justice system date back to the 1990s, the idea of community policing as an official program first emerged in 2002 (EGM, 2007). In order to gain full-membership, Turkish public organizations engaged in several twinning projects with the EU. In 2003, the TNP initiated a twinning project with Spain in order to improve its accountability, performance, and effectiveness. One of the main pillars of this project was community policing. As a result of this project, the TNP started a new community policing initiative that included essential changes in its structure, policies, and practices in 2006 (Gokkaya & Dogan, 2009). In addition to enacting community policing bylaws and creating a comprehensive action plan to implement community policing throughout the country, the TNP did extensive in-service trainings for police officers to prepare them for a mentality change in policing. In order to achieve success in the field, the TNP took an incremental approach to implement the change in community policing, starting with the establishment of new community policing units in 10 city police departments as pilot projects in 2006. After making the necessary changes based on feedback from city police departments in the pilot project, the TNP completed its structural reform in community policing by disseminating the community policing initiative to its 81 police departments throughout the country in 2009 (Uluturk, Guler, & Karakaya, 2009).

Although community policing started as a top-down initiative as a twinning project of the EU, it resulted in relatively successful outcomes, especially in reestablishing police and community relations, reducing crime, and decreasing fear of crime. City police departments have implemented several projects to find ways to create partnerships in the fight against crime (Gokkaya & Dogan, 2009). These projects include community meetings; informative visits to schools, local businesses, and NGOs, and face-to-face interactions with citizens. During these activities, while community policing officers get a chance to inform citizens about current crime issues in the community and effective self-crime prevention techniques, citizens also have the opportunity to discuss local security problems and share their concerns with police officers. Community policing officers also arrange social and sporting activities in their communities in order to create comradery among community members, develop better relationships between police and citizens, and find alternative ways to reach citizens. Furthermore, most city police departments' community policing units also join wedding ceremonies and funerals, attend business startup events, and participate in other community activities in order to share the happiness and sorrows of their community.

Although the community policing initiative has a nationwide application with the oversight from TNP Headquarters, it has created variations according to local needs of Turkish citizens. Community policing programs in the western part of the country focus on crime prevention, improved police–community relationships, and the reduction of fear of crime; in the eastern part of the country, they are designed to improve relations between police and community to reestablish trust and peace, decrease insurgency, and hinder radicalization among youth as

terrorism is a critical phenomenon for the region (Yildiz & Sahin. 2010). When TNP established community policing as a nationwide strategy in 2009, most city police departments in the eastern and southeastern parts of country interpreted this program as a new approach to handle the issue of terrorism. As briefly summarized previously, terrorism is the most important crime problem in the eastern and southeastern parts of Turkey. City police departments have used community policing program as a window of opportunity in fighting terrorism. They started several community development programs using the funds allocated for regional social development from the government. Specifically, city police departments' community policing units in the region initiated several projects focused on juveniles and youths in order to prevent them from radicalizing terrorism and joining terrorist organizations. They initiated several activities, such as sports tournaments, sightseeing visits, social programs and conferences, seminars, and some courses aiming to improve school success, gain a profession, and enlighten the people while creating a positive relationship between the police and juveniles.

Moreover, some community policing programs were initiated to identify and assist poor people in order to gain the hearts of people living in the area. All these efforts by city police departments in the region built better relationships not only between the police and the community, but also between the government and its citizens. Citizens' perception of the police equates to their perception of the government (Dikici, 2008). Thus, this case provides us with a valuable example for understanding the role of community policing in counterterrorism.

In the remaining part of this study, we will analyze the data collected during our research from the police officers working in city police departments' community policing units or engaging in community policing projects in the region. We will look at the case from the police officers' perspective and try to understand how they see the aims of the projects, the community policing efforts, and their results. The types of issues and problems that come into play when community policing is used as a strategy to fight terrorism will be also discussed to illustrate the role of community policing in counterterrorism.

Findings

This section presents the analysis of interview data collected from police officers working in the southeast region of Turkey. In order to understand the role community policing in counterterrorism, we asked several questions of our informants related to their perception about how the community sees the state and the police, how they see the conflict between the state and the terrorist organization, how police officers perceive the problem of terrorism, the role of community policing in counterterrorism, and what types of issues and problems arise when implementing community policing against terrorism.

Perceptions about the Problem of Terrorism

Police officers believe that the relationship between citizens and the government is very poor due to the terrorism in the region. Citizens do not trust their government because of mistakes made by public officials in the past. Government counterterrorism policies are perceived to be discriminatory, and the distrust between citizens and government has gradually worsened due to harsh and ill-defined policies in the past. Thus, police officers think that the most critical point in

counterterrorism is to find ways to reignite the positive relationship between the citizens and the state.

According to the police officers, the problem is not specifically between the police and citizens, but rather between the citizens and the state. According to citizens' cultural understanding, the police are the state or the state is the police. Thus, police officers see their roles as representatives of the state and think they serve as the most visible apparatus of the state in the region. To police, their image is not positive. People have mostly negative images of the police; young generations in particular see the police as "rude, ruthless, swearers, beaters, fascists, and even the enemy of the Kurdish people."

Most officers believe that the negative image of the police can be repaired and improved through community policing programs, which serve as a catalyst to develop better relations or even try to understand each other. Emphatic feelings and mutual understanding between communities and the state are developed through community policing programs. Meetings in positive, sincere, and warm conditions will surely bring mutual understanding and then cooperation against terrorism. We will explain police officers' perceptions of the role of community policing in a separate section below.

Positive Perceptions of Community Policing

Police officers mentioned different activities of their departments under the community policing philosophy. When we analyze these programs, we can classify them as informative activities, family visits, tradesman visits, educational activities, social and sportive activities, and helping the poor. In informative activities, police officers try to reach youths—mostly students at schools—in order to provide information on topics such as crime prevention, drug addiction, terrorism, and self-development (e.g., career planning, job preparation, and good citizenship). Police officers visit families in their homes in order to create a positive connection between the police and the community.

During these visits, police officers try to understand the problems the families are facing in the neighborhood in terms of crime or other issues related to governmental services. Police officers also share their contact information with the family in case they need help in the future. In addition, police officers visit families whose children have joined a terrorist organization or run the risk of joining terrorist activities. Thus, police officers have the chance to engage in face-to-face interactions with family members to persuade families to call their children back from the terrorist organization or explain to them the risk of engaging in terrorist activities. Moreover, police officers visit tradesmen in their shops to share concerns related to crime and other issues. They give them brochures, pamphlets, and other informative papers to raise local businessmen's awareness of crime.

The other community policing activity is educational programs for youths. Police officers arrange courses for students in order to prepare them for university exams and other school exams. They also offer self-development courses on topics such as computers and foreign languages. These courses are held after school or on weekends and are free of charge for participants. Police departments contact city education departments in order to offer these courses for youth. Police officers think that most students who join these courses do not have the

opportunity to participate in these kinds of activities due to financial hardship, and they become an easy target for terrorist organizations. These courses create opportunities for youth to stay away from illegal activities while assisting them to continue their education at the university level. Moreover, some of these courses are specifically designed to find a job after graduating from high school. Thus, youth participants have chances to develop skills and prepare themselves for the job.

Social and sporting activities are arranged by police officers to develop comradery and trust between the community and the police. The most often mentioned social activities were sightseeing tours for students; picnics; theater and movie shows; poetry, art, and article contests; reading contests; and planting trees with students. Sporting activities are mostly soccer tournaments among teams from the community, governmental agencies, and the police departments. Such activities have opened the possibility for out-of-town journeys, sister schools, and sister city practices. Thanks to these activities, both Kurdish teenagers and Turkish teenagers from eastern cities have had the chance to meet and understand each other. They are able to realize that all young people are a part of same homeland and can be friends. Hence, they break the prejudices promoted by terrorist organizations and build permanent friendships. They also see that their ancestors saved and established the same homeland together when they visit historical places where battle of independence took place.

The last activity mentioned by police officers is helping the poor people in the community. Police officers believe that one of the reasons that people living in the region join terrorist organizations is that they are poor and unemployed. When individuals are unemployed, they do not have many options socially and, thus, join terrorist organizations to get financial support. As a result, police officers try to help poor people develop better relationships with the community to prevent people from joining terrorist organizations due to financial hardship. Police officers deliver food, clothes, school supplies, and other materials to poor people in their community through collaborations with other government agencies, NGOs, and local businessmen.

Police officers see community policing programs as a new way of reaching citizens who are resentful and disrespectful of the state. They believe that community policing can close the gap between citizens and the government by initiating contacts and connections with them. Community policing can assist in abolishing prejudice against the state in the minds of citizens, and citizens might change their biases if they see positive behaviors from the police. Community policing can even help eliminate propaganda tools used by terrorist organizations to justify their violent activities. If community policing programs reach all segments of society and can bring about changes in the minds of citizens, the problem of terrorism can be alleviated or even resolved.

When we asked our informants about the public's perceptions of community policing projects, they mentioned positive feedback. The police officers explained that citizens in their communities initially had negative views about the police due to the issues of terrorism in the region. When they started community policing programs, they started to see some resistance from community members in terms of engaging in activities due to mistrust and insecurity. However, as community policing practices were applied persistently over time, community engagement grew, and the programs started to serve as an icebreaker between the community

and police. The police officers believe that most citizens are happy with community policing programs and new police approaches even though they do not join activities and stay away from the police due to fears of retaliation and pressure from terrorist organizations. As one officer explained: *One day, a man came to the office and said “I came to thank to you because of your care for my girl at high school. However, I looked over my shoulder three times before coming into the police department to be sure I was not followed by the members of terrorist organization. I am patriotic, but I fear contact with you.”*

In fact, terrorist organizations do not like the community policing approach because it works against their goals and objectives. Community policing programs create positive feelings and better relationships with citizens living in the region. Terrorist organizations cannot generate negative propaganda about the police because they lose most arguments against the police and the government. According to intelligence reports, community policing creates discomfort among terrorist members because they see the closeness between the community and the police, built through community policing, as a threat to their activities.

When we asked about the results of community policing, the police officers mentioned several positive results. First, community policing creates trust and better relationships with citizens. Thus, they can easily approach police when they have an issue related to any type of crime or problem in their community. According to the officers, community policing also reduces insurgency in the region. With the application of community policing programs, citizens—especially youths—are less likely to join riots against the government and they do less harm. The police officers explained the role of community policing in de-radicalizing people exposed to terrorist propaganda and prone to terrorism. They said that the terrorist organizations generate negative propaganda about the government, mostly about the police. However, when people see positive behavior from the police, they start to question the credibility of the propaganda from the terrorist organizations.

Although police officers mentioned the quick gains, as previously explained, they also commented on the long-term gains. Most believed that they were investing the future through community policing programs. They said that the results of such projects will be harvested in the long run, when young generations have grown up in a positive atmosphere of policing in the region. Police officers stated that their efforts can be seen as building the groundwork and infrastructure that will serve as the basis for better relationships between citizens and the state in the future. Thus, in order to be successful in counterterrorism in the long run, community policing programs should be implemented consistently and systematically, without being affected by daily issues of terrorism in the region. This type of approach requires a broad vision, committed management, and a proactive policing mentality against terrorism.

Negative Perceptions about Community Policing

Despite the numerous positive perceptions about community policing among police officers, some negative perceptions were mentioned by the police officers as their own ideas or criticisms from their environment when doing their jobs. One commonly mentioned negative perception was seeing community policing programs as futile efforts against terrorism. Some officers explained that some of their colleagues had made comments about community policing such as

“You are beating a dead horse.” and “You make lots of efforts but they still throw stones and Molotov cocktails at the police.” These criticisms mainly come from police officers’ unfriendly working environment in the region due to terrorism. The problem of terrorism promotes an “us versus them” mentality among police officers that remains in their police culture.

The second criticism about community policing is the old argument of whether community policing is even a police job. Some police officers think that there are more important issues to deal with, such as terrorism, but police departments assign a number of police forces to community policing units. As some of our informants stated, “We don’t have enough personnel to do our central missions but they put lots of officers in community policing” and “First we need to reestablish the authority in the streets, then we may think about community policing.” In the literature, the research about the acceptance of community policing in police departments shows some resistance among police officers against community policing, especially when first building programs. The level of resistance fades as police department managers put effective change strategies into place and persist in the continuity of community policing as a new strategy. In our case, police officers easily shift their focus from community policing to counterterrorism because of the ongoing struggle between the security forces and terrorists in the region. Everyday conflict negatively affects the effectiveness of community policing and its success in the region.

The third criticism of community policing also parallels the findings in the literature: the establishment of community policing as a specific unit rather than an organization-wide philosophy. Some officers mentioned that, although community policing officers apply some programs in the community, police officers from other units do not know about their activities. As a result, they become isolated efforts carried out by a specific unit rather than an organization-wide strategy. Thus, some officers from other units behave against the community policing philosophy and make mistakes when interacting with citizens in the community. One officer commented that “one negative behavior takes away all positive results—unnecessary or excessive use of force, maltreatment under the custody take away lots of positive things we do.” Most informants stated that all officers working in their police departments should work like a community policing officer in order to become successful in counterterrorism efforts.

5. Conclusion

This case study shows that community policing as a crime prevention strategy can also be used in counterterrorism efforts in order to reduce insurgency against the state and create collaborative ways to work with the community against terrorism. Community policing programs provide opportunities to restore the relationship between the community and the state, which has been tarnished due to terrorism. By using community policing programs to reach fragile communities, police officers can share several success stories in creating trust between the police and community, reducing insurgent and dissident feelings among citizens and deradicalizing youths who have some type of engagement in terrorist organizations. As a result, this case illustrates the importance of community policing as a soft policing strategy in counterterrorism.

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