

Original Research Paper

The Role of Tshwane Metro Police and the South African Police Service During Service Delivery Protests Crimes in the Tshwane Area (South Africa)

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Abstract: This article explores the role of Tshwane Metro Police (TMP) and the South African Police Service (SAPS) during service delivery protests crimes in the Tshwane area of South Africa. To date, both the Metropolitan Police Departments (MPDs) and SAPS work under immense pressure to curb the rebellion of service delivery protests and related crimes across the eight metropolitan municipalities in South Africa. At present, the MPDs and SAPS are cautious when responding to spontaneous service delivery protests and related crimes to avoid loss of lives, human rights violations, and criticisms by civil society organisations, politicians, and media. Lack of citizen conscientisation by government, civil society organisations, and community organisations regarding the role of the police during the protests make it further difficult for the police to manage these protests. A qualitative research method was followed by the researcher to collect data. An open-ended interview was conducted with twenty-one (21) selected participants from TMP and SAPS Public Order Policing (POP). The researcher followed purposive sampling. The study highlights key factors which drive service delivery protests and related crimes in the Tshwane area, such as poverty, unemployment, rampant corruption by public servants, nepotism, lack of governance, mismanagement of state funds, political infighting and interference, public distrust of politician and office bearers and the deterioration of local government in South Africa as amongst the contributing factors to service delivery protests and related crimes in South Africa. The study found that there is an urgent need for the government, security cluster, and stakeholders to conscientise the community on the role of the MPD and SAPS during the service delivery protests and related crimes. The study recommends the importance of public conscientisation concerning the role of TMP and SAPS during service delivery protests and related crimes in the Tshwane area.

Keywords: Tshwane Metropolitan Police, South African Police Service, Service Delivery Protests

Introduction

This article seeks to explore the role of the TMP and SAPS during the service delivery protests and related crimes in the Tshwane area, Gauteng Province of South Africa. This is because most recorded service delivery protests in the Tshwane area and across South Africa are reported to be spontaneous contrary to those of other countries in the world (Municipal IQ, 2019). Section 205(3) of the Constitution of

South Africa requires the police to prevent, combat and investigate crime, maintain public order, protect and secure the inhabitants of the Republic and their property, and uphold and enforce the law. Though citizens have the right to demonstrate in terms of Section 17 of the Constitution of South Africa (1996), such rights appear to have been disregarded as most service delivery protests in South Africa are reported to be violent and disruptive in nature (Buthelezi, 2019). However, such a right to protest must not infringe the

right of the citizens according to the 1996 Constitution of South Africa. Municipal IQ (2019) shares the same sentiment with Buthelezi (2019) that most service delivery protests are likely to result in anarchy, and violent and malicious damage to the property of the state or that of bystanders. The Regulation of Gathering Act, 205 of 1993 (RGA) requires the conveners of protests to serve a seven (7) day notice to any member of the Golden Triangle (Magistrate, designated member of the SAPS and Municipality within the demarcated area where the protests intend to take place). In Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, a notice should be given to the TMP and permission should be awarded thereof for the protests to be considered lawful.

The worrying factor is the acts of criminality associated with these service delivery protests whereby protesters vandalise the infrastructure such as road signs, traffic robots, or municipal buildings, looting of shops which has nothing to do with their grievances (Lancaster, 2016). Protesters always believe that the government attends to their discontent only when their protests are disruptive and violent. Van Rooyen and Poe (2016) cite the leaving socio-economic conditions of many South Africans as a driving factor in service delivery protests and related crimes. (Lancaster, 2018) cites inequality, poor service delivery to marginalised communities in informal settlements and townships, corruption, unemployment, poverty, poor governance, and leadership as well as the leaving reality/conditions of South Africa as the drivers of service delivery protests and related crimes.

Madero-Hernandez *et al.* (2022) emphasise that South Africa is commonly known for violent protests which derived from the apartheid struggle. However, the stressing part is that it becomes a norm that most service delivery protests are accompanied by acts of criminality and confrontations between the protesters and police. The South African Police Union (SAPU) expresses that the current service delivery protests and related crimes expose ineffective policing in South Africa (Skommere, 2014). The police and State Security Agency's crime intelligence is ineffective and dysfunctional to track down those who hijack genuine protests to pursue their criminal activities such as the burning of infrastructure and looting of shops. The crime intelligence extremely fails to execute its Constitutional mandate while caught in factional political battles of the ruling party African National Congress (ANC) (Skommere, 2014).

The first responders of spontaneous service delivery protests are police officers stationed at local Police Stations and Metropolitan Police Regional Office. The POP units from SAPS and MPD are both not stationed at SAPS local police stations and MPD regional offices which negatively impacts their response time to spontaneous service delivery protests and related crimes. As a result, the SAPS was discovered to be reactive instead of proactive to criminality (Umanah and Wotela, 2020). Various media groups, politicians, and the public will continue to blame the door of

police concerning violent service delivery protests and related crimes. They will further use the police as culprits forgetting that the challenges are deeper than those encountered by MPDs and SAPS. Socio-economic challenges in South Africa lie at the door of government including politicians to address structural reforms in the local government (Mshayisa, 2019).

This study seeks to explore the role of TMP and SAPS during service delivery protests and related crimes in the Tshwane area, Gauteng Province of South Africa. More importantly, one has made a comparison of several protests reported by the media with the data from various institutions in South Africa (see Table 1).

Table 1 reflects five organisations, including Municipal IQ, in terms of several protests recorded from 2012 to 2017. As revealed in Table 1, the number of protests against the local government totalled 972, of which the highest recorded protests of 191 was in 2014.

According to Municipal IQ (2019), a web-based data and intelligence organisation specialising in local government and providing data on service delivery protests directed to municipalities in South Africa indicate that service delivery protests gain momentum in-between election years. Moreover, the organisation indicates the trends of major service delivery protests that occurred in various municipalities across South Africa from 2004 to 2019:

Figure 1 reveals that during the local government election years, the trends of service delivery protests go downwards. This means that the delivery of basic services during the years 2006, 2011, and 2016 might have slightly improved as politicians were trying to regain public confidence and votes from electorates. The figure also reveals that years between the local government elections, politicians fail to deliver the promised services to the citizens as the trend of protest increased.

Section 205 (3) of the 1996 Constitution of South Africa requires the Police Service (SAPS) to combat and prevent crime as well as enforce the law. White Paper on Safety and Security (1998) makes provision that local government was given substantial authority to carry out both by-law enforcement and social crime prevention through the MPDs in collaborations with the SAPS, Community Policing Forums, and other law enforcement agencies partners such as Traffic Police.

Historical Development of the SAPS and Metropolitan Police in South Africa

The interim Constitution of South Africa (1993) gives provision for the establishment of the MPD with limited powers. The interim Constitution further requires the MPD to perform crime prevention functions as well as enforce the municipal by-laws. The South African Police Service Amendment Act, 83 of 1998 (hereafter refers to as the South African Police Service Amendment Act) was introduced to regularise the formation, functions, and powers of the Metropolitan Police in South Africa (Rauch and Louw, 2001).

Recorded number of protests

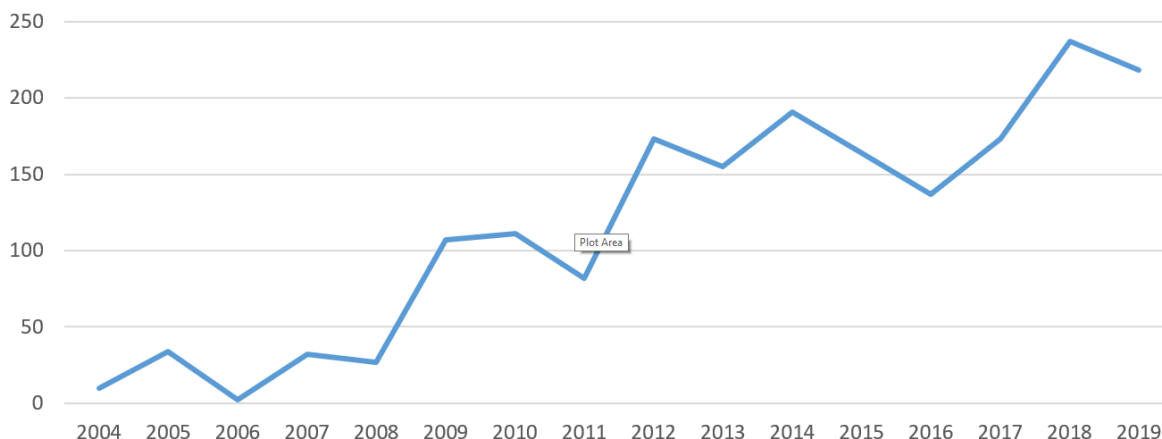


Fig. 1: Recorded the trend of major service delivery protests from 2004 to 2019

Table 1: Reported number of protests by media from different organisations, 2012 to 2017

Organisation	Focus Area	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Centre for Social Change, University of Johannesburg (CSC)	All 'community protests'	471	322	375	343	337	375
Municipal IQ	Protest against local government	173	155	191	164	137	152
Civic Protests Barometer (CPB), University of the Western Cape	Civil' protests against local government	150	140	176	126	Data, not available	Data not available
Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLEED)	Political violence and protest', including political mass events such as campaign rallies	1060	1045	1084	1487	1418	1026
Social Conflict Analysis Database (SCAD)	Social and political disorder'	825	617	757	938	979	Data not available

The introduction of the South African Police Service post-1994 was to transform the South African Police force from a colonial military style of policing to a civilian police service (Watson, 1999). The SAPS was designed to provide policing services at the national, provincial, and sometimes when applicable, at the local level through local police stations (White Paper on Policing, 2016). At the time of the formation of MPDs in South Africa, their primary roles and responsibility were to police anti-government activities in townships as well as to deal with violent behaviour coming out of political unrest (Rauch *et al.*, 2001).

Muntingh and Dereymaeker (2013) argued that despite the South African Police Service Amendment Act making provisions for the establishment of MPD, there are continuous different views about the formations of MPDs as well as absent discussions in terms of the roles and responsibilities of the Metropolitan Police in South Africa.

Those who hold opposing views for the establishment of MPD argue that the introduction will cause conflicts as well as weaken other roles of the SAPS. The opposition also

believes that policing resources should be directed to a single police service at the national level (Muntingh and Dereymaeker, 2013).

Causes of Service Delivery Protests

Saul (2021) cites amongst other things political interference and infightings at the expense of the public and lack of accountability and mismanagement of public funds, rampant corruption, and nepotism at the local government level as reasons behind service delivery protests.

Managa (2012) cites overpromises made by politicians during electioneering while not delivered thereafter due to the limited resources, corruption, and mismanagement of resources by municipalities at the local level. South African News (2018) mentioned corruption by public officials, poor governance within the public sector institutions and municipalities, lack of public consultation about municipal and government services as well as detachment of public representatives from their constituency as contributing factors to service delivery protests directed to the government.

Saul (2021) further cites that socio-economic conditions facing the country such as a high rate of unemployment and poverty place the ANC-led municipalities in a difficult position which heightens poor service delivery. Montsho (2022) cites the lack of access to clean water, electricity, and roads by some communities as the cause of violent service delivery protests in South Africa.

Aphiri (2016) points out that low economic growth led to less tax collection which resulted in budget cuts across the spheres of government. Budget cuts hold back economic growth and harm the government to deliver the services to the communities. Poor economic growth means less employment and income gains for the poor, which leads to service delivery protests and related crimes.

Challenges Facing the SAPS and MPD During the Service Delivery Protest

Challenges Facing the SAPS

Lack of capacity and allocation of resources to POP personnel is a major challenge. Members of POP function with limited resources to address the rising number of service delivery protests and related crimes (Phiyega, 2014a).

Burger (2014) states that policing community protests or any demonstrations and public gatherings burden police resources that aim to address serious crimes. The rising number of violent service delivery protests requires urgent interventions of the police, government, politicians, and civil society organisations. This is because it is difficult for police to manage service delivery protests while political leaders suggest that society will be increasing reliance on the police to deal with a phenomenon that is primarily social and political in nature.

Phiyega (2014b) also cites that training remains a challenge even though SAPS training "has always been benchmarked with best international practices". She acknowledged that although police training must be an ongoing process, the POP must "only use force which is proportionally necessary to maintain peace" during service delivery protests and related crimes.

Mkhwanazi (2017) cited the "multidisciplinary and multi-sectorial approaches" towards addressing community challenges associated with service delivery as the risk that cannot be mitigated by members of POP alone.

Mthethwa (2014) argues that many of the service delivery protests "have been accompanied by serious provocations, intimidations, violence and even elements of criminality". Mthethwa emphasises that citizens failed to understand that policing roles are called on to maintain law and order during protests and are "not there to deliver the services" as those responsibilities belong to the municipalities.

Roberts *et al.* (2017) emphasise that despite the formation of the police service (SAPS) in 1994, it remains a challenge

for citizens to disassociate the SAPS with the apartheid police force. Members of the public keep on questioning the legitimacy of police every moment police have some confrontations with protesters in South Africa.

Challenges Facing the MPD

Newham (2004) emphasise that the MPD was established to assist the police to prevent crime, performing traffic controls, and enforcing municipal by-laws. Despite performing their duties within the border of the municipality, they are appointed under the South African Police Service Amended Act, Newham (2004) states that the challenge facing the new MPD and the city councils that oversee and manage MPD resources is to ensure that the policing powers and resources are not abused or used inadequately. Citizens expect that the police work effectively and that they treat people with respect. They need to be held primarily accountable for their performance and conduct.

Ngobeni (2016) went further to cite legislative frameworks such as limitations in terms of investigative powers for traffic and by-laws-related crimes, and excessive requirements placed on training and accreditation of Metropolitan Police as a challenge for MPD.

Omar (2007) agrees that MPD encounters training challenges concerning protests and crowd management. This is because of the fieldwork policing demands; therefore, time for training is limited, despite being compulsory on the training operational document.

Ngobeni (2016) cites the funding of expensive law enforcement infrastructure such as vehicles, communication, weapons, information systems, etc., remains insufficient. Secondly, lack of specialised training programs and equipment, especially concerning crowd management. Lastly, lack of capacity in terms of Metropolitan Police officers versus the high growth of population, specifically in these metropolitan municipalities.

Materials and Methods

Data for this article were gathered using face-to-face and telephonic interviews due to the Covid-19 pandemic and precautionary measures were followed. An open-ended interview was formulated as a research guide to the research objectives and research questions of the study (Adhabi and Anozie, 2017). The open-ended interview demonstrated to be suitable for producing crucial data concerning the role of TMP and SAPS during the service delivery protests and related crimes in the Tshwane area. The researcher recorded the interview using an audio recorder as well as taking notes with the permission of the participants. Ethical clearance to conduct the study was obtained from the Faculty Committee for Research Ethics of Tshwane University of Technology (Ngozwana, 2018).

Permission was obtained from TMP and SAPS to interview participants from POP units.

The researcher considered the importance of ethical issues by placing participants' needs first when interviewing participants. All sets of ethics requirements as well as anonymity and confidentiality as prescribed by the TUT Research Ethics Committee were preserved in this study during the data collection, presentation, and analysis processes. Data collected from participants were kept strictly confidential and their identities remain anonymous as the researcher used the letter "P" to articulate their responses (Austin and Sutton, 2014). Having the TUT: FCRE-HUM granting approval and ethical clearance for the researcher to proceed with the study, however, the researcher desists from deceiving to validate the information transcribed in the study (Akaranga and Makau, 2016).

Qualitative research depends on a smaller number of research participants, often gathering data through individual interviews while concerned about participants' experience with the role of TMP and SAPS during service delivery protests and related crimes (Slavin, 2018). The researcher interviewed 21 participants for this study. Karania (2017) indicates that the sample size of a research participant in qualitative research needs to be a small number. Practically, the sample size of people to interview using the qualitative research method should range between 10 to 30 participants and should not exceed 30.

To provide comprehensive and valuable data to the study, purposive sampling using a semi-structured interview guide was adopted by the researcher and deemed to be suitable to address the objectives of the study based on the ability and experience of selected participants (Kegler *et al.*, 2019). The purposive sampling method intends to address questions raised by various media, civil society including the public on whether the TMP and SAPS are equipped enough to handle service delivery protests and related crimes in the Tshwane area (Ames *et al.*, 2019).

Marczyk *et al.* (2010) indicated that the term validity is significant in research as it makes the findings of the study sound conclusive. The term validity in research aims to remove and manage variables to ensure that the results of the study are precise and appreciated by scholars as well as utilised for future reference.

The study was carried out in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, Gauteng Province of South Africa. Empirical data was collected from a panel of experts (specialists on crowd management and policing of protests) in the SAPS, TMP, Institute for Security Studies (ISS), and researchers in the field of policing using interviews comprising open-ended research questions. Purposive sampling using a semi-structured interview guide was adopted by the researcher and deemed to be suitable to address the objectives of the study based on the ability and experience of selected participants. Etikan *et al.* (2016) indicate that for a better understanding of

the role of TMP and SAPS during the service delivery protests and related crimes, participants are selected purposively due to their expertise and experience in crowd management or policing of protests.

The advantage of the open-ended interview is that is not limited to specific research questions as questions can be reviewed as and when the need arises by the researcher. Again, when new information arises, qualitative research allows the scholar to swiftly review the study objectives (Anderson, 2010). De Vos *et al.* (2011) indicate that open-ended question allows the researcher to write any answer in the open space. NHS England (2017) indicates that open-ended interview allows participants to answer research questions using their own words based on their experiences and understanding of the role of the TMP and SAPS during the service delivery protests crimes.

Barrett and Twycross (2018) cite time consumption as one of the disadvantages of interviews. For instance, an hour of interview needs approximately 5 to 6 h to convert such data into the study. Analysing interviews is also time-consuming, as it requires transcripts to be verbatim. For this study, 21 participants were interviewed from TMP, SAPS, ISS, academics in the field of policing as well as former members of SAPS based on their experience and knowledge regarding the role of TMP and SAPS during the service delivery protests and related crimes in Tshwane area.

Results and Discussion

The selected participants in this study provided clarity on the role of TMP and SAPS during the service delivery protests and related crimes in the Tshwane area. The results of the study are presented verbatim in an italic manner and discussed shortly thereafter.

Theme 1: The Actual Role of the TMP and SAPS During the Service Delivery Protests

The research question asked to participants was "what are the primary roles of TMP and SAPS during the service delivery protests in the Tshwane area? Below were some of the responses, using the thematic verbatim quote:

- *The role of TMP is to perform their duties of crime prevention during the service delivery protests by ensuring that there is a maintenance of public order and traffic flow. TMP was forced by the situation as the first responder to react to these service delivery protests when occur. (P3)*
- *The role of the TMP POP unit is to communicate or negotiate with community leaders or convenors of protests during the service delivery protests. The TMP will not disperse the crowd without hearing the concern of protesters during the service delivery protests. The role of TMP is to put measures in place to stabilise the situation. (P8)*

- *The TMP's role is to perform crowd management duties, maintain public order, maintain the safety of protesters, and ensure that protests are peaceful. The TMP's role is to ensure that the freedom of movement of other ordinary citizens is not infringed by those who take part in protests. (P15)*
- *The role of SAPS is the same as the TMP. The SAPS's role is to protect properties, serve the public, and maintain and control the crowd. During the protests, the TMP execute their POP duties under the command and control of SAPS. (P12)*
- *The role of SAPS during the service delivery protests is the same as the role of TMP as they maintain public order and protect the infrastructure of government and ordinary citizens. (P10)*
- *The role of SAPS is less similar to that of TMP as they assess the threats, and negotiate with protesters, community leaders, ward councilors representing the community, and conveners of the protest. However, when the crowd is uncontrollable and becoming violent, then SAPS takes necessary actions in a professional manner or in line with prescribed laws regulating crowd management. (P9)*

The study found that the role of TMP and SAPS are almost similar except that SAPS have more authority in terms of command and control over policing of protests than their counterpart. Although TMP is trained for crowd management; they, however, execute the crowd management duties under the guidance (command and control) of SAPS.

The role of TMP during the service delivery protests is to enforce traffic control, maintain peace and order, protect properties and livelihood of citizens, assess threats posed by the protesters, and negotiate with community leaders or conveners of protests and office bearers or public representatives such as Councillors and MMCs in Tshwane area. The other role of TMP is to enforce the municipal by-laws on traffic regulations which among others seek to ensure that roads barricaded by protesters are cleared off for the smooth flow of traffic. Furthermore, TMP is responsible to police and contain the protests from spreading. As a measure of last resort as well as to protect the properties and livelihoods threatened during protests, the TMP only disperses the protesters after negotiations have collapsed or reached a deadlock. The TMP also plays a pivotal supporting role to the SAPS towards crowd management.

The SAPS is required in terms of Section 205(3) of the 1996 South African Constitution to prevent, combat, and investigate crime, maintain public order, protect and secure the inhabitants of the Republic and their property, and uphold and enforce the law. The maintenance of public order and prevention of crime during protests in the Tshwane area can be realised through a collaborative effort between SAPS and TMP. The joint effort is critical in pooling resources and

sharing expertise on crowd management by the two police organisations. The spin-offs, therefore, are the protection of the inhabitants and property.

The role of TMP in policing service delivery protests crimes is enshrined in Section 64 of the South African Police Services Act as amended and RGA. The researcher has however established that these policing agencies have the common interest of ensuring the safety of the inhabitants and infrastructure.

The White Paper requires the SAPS and MPD to play a central role by monitoring the situation, maintaining public order, and dispersing the crowd as and when the need arises during the service delivery protests and related crimes. To promote and build safer communities, the White Paper further makes provision for inter-sectoral collaboration and integrated service delivery among the SAPS and municipal police (White Paper on Policing, 2016:13).

Theme 2: Lack of Resources to Manage both Peaceful and Spontaneous Protests by the TMP and SAPS

Selected study participants were asked if TMP and SAPS are supplied with POP equipment to complement one another during service delivery protests. Participants stated that both the TMP and SAPS are supplied with POP equipment to support each other during the service delivery protests. Below were some of the participant's responses, using the thematic verbatim quote:

- *Yes, they are supplied with vehicles and protective gear to manage service delivery protests crimes. As the first respondents to service delivery protests, they are supplied with this equipment to protect themselves and their properties. (P3)*
- *Yes, the TMP is equipped with POP equipment such as nyalas, soft touch vehicles, shields, shotguns with specification ammunition, armor suit, hand gloves, helmet, bulletproof vests, and rubber bullets to supplement SAPS during the service delivery protests. At the time the researcher was collecting data, TMP did not have Water cannons equipment. (P8)*
- *Yes, TMP is supplied with POP such as shields, batons, shotguns, rubber bullets, and armadillo tactical gear including helmets, body vests, etc., to support SAPS during the service delivery protests. (P11)*
- *Yes, SAPS have resources, however, they are not enough to cater to the whole City of Tshwane. The SAPS uses resources such as water cannons, Protective shields when protesters throw stones at the police, batons, tear gas, and rubber bullets to manage serviced delivery protests in the Tshwane area. (P2)*
- *Yes, SAPS is supplied with POP such as Shields, Batons, shotguns, rubber bullets, and armadillo gears include of the helmet, body vest, etc., to support TMP during the service delivery protests. (P10)*

- *Yes, the SAPS is supplied with shields, tonfas, shotguns, helmets, stun grenades, water cannons, barb wires, CS teargas, nyalas (armored vehicles), and hailer sirens to assist the TMP during the service delivery protests. (P17)*

Section 64A (2)(e) of the South African Police Services Amended Act states that the purpose of the establishment of municipal police service was to improve effective policing in the respective provinces. The researcher found that the TMP is supplied with POP equipment such as *shields, armadillo tactical gears (tonfa batons, body vest, and helmet), shotguns, rubber rounds, tear gas (sometimes referred to as CS teargas), pepper spray, and nyalas* to support or complement the SAPS during the service delivery protests crimes.

However, the said resources including human resources are insufficient as compared to the number of service delivery protests that occur daily in the Tshwane area. The TMP utilises the said equipment to manage the protests. Subsequently, members of the TMP POP do not account for every item used to disperse the crowd during the protests (e.g., rubber bullets) as compared to the SAPS. *The TMP seldom shoots randomly at protesters during crime protests without being held accountable.* This is a direct contrast with SAPS members who by law, are required to account for their management of protests.

The researcher found that the SAPS members are supplied with POP equipment such as *shields, armadillo tactical gears (tonfa batons, body vest, and helmet), shotguns, rubber rounds, stun grenades, water cannons, barb wires, tear gas, and nyalas* to support TMP during the service delivery protests crimes. In contrast to TMP, members of the SAPS POP account for every item used to disperse the crowd during the protests (e.g., rubber bullets). When an operational member of SAPS POP fires the protesters with rubber bullets, each rubber round must be recorded with reasons for the utilisation.

Omar (2007) agreed with most of the participants' responses that members of MPD and SAPS POP are equipped with shin guards, tonfas, shields, stun grenades, pepper spray, helmets, bulletproof vests, shotguns, rubber bullets, water cannons, nyalas and other armed lights vehicles to supplement each other during the service delivery protests and related crimes. However, operational members of the SAPS POP are short of shin guards as additional protective gear used during crowd management.

The National Instruction 4 of 2014 states that the operational commander must ensure that members of POP are inspected to ensure that their name badges are visible and that every member is at least equipped with body armor (armadillo tactical gears), shield, tonfa, pepper spray, handcuffs, CS teargas grenades (to designated members), stun grenades, shotgun and approved rounds, 40 mm launcher with rounds (to designated members) and

9 mm sidearm (official issue) firearm and rounds of ammunition.

Koerth and Lartey (2020) argue that police dispersing the protesters using these gears does not make assurance that there will be peaceful protests or that order will be restored. The protesters might make a random turn which can be thought-provoking for police to control and manage. The best way to manage protests is for the police to have open and transparent communication with protesters as this will help to improve trust and minimise clashes among the demonstrators and police.

Conclusion

Based on analysed data and presented study results, the role of TMP and SAPS POP is to monitor the protests, negotiate with the conveners of the protests, and call out the relevant authorities, departments, and public representatives to respond to the grievances of the protesters and when the protesters become unruly, disperse them using minimal force. The study also highlighted several challenges facing the two police agencies. These challenges ranged from among others, poor communication and coordination, lack of training and resources, and failure of SAPS and TMP POP members to participate in management, pre-planning, and golden triangle meetings.

The study results also confirmed that more interventions from the government, politicians, Justice Crime Prevention and Security Cluster (JCPS), civil society organisations, crime prevention stakeholders, community leaders, and established movements such as Moral Regeneration Movement and South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) is urgently required to conscientise the community about the role of the police during the service delivery protests and related crimes to avoid future public-police confrontations and police brutality. The study found that the role of the police during the service delivery protests crimes is to protect the livelihood and property, monitor the protests, negotiate with protesters through conveners and protest leaders as well as facilitate the negotiations between the protesters and authorities involved.

Recommendations

The researchers believe that it will be important and useful for the government, politicians, JCPS, stakeholders such as Community Policing Forums (CPFs), Institute for Security Studies (ISS), civil society organisations, community leaders, Moral Regeneration Movement, and SAHRC to hold community workshops or imbizos and community awareness sessions to conscientise the communities about the role of MPD and SAPS during the service delivery protests (Charman, 2017). Furthermore, more education must be done in section 17 of the 1996 Constitution of South Africa. Citizens must be warned that violent protests are in contravention of Section 17 of

the 1996 South African Constitution which encourages peaceful protests. More importantly, the protesters must be encouraged to support the police to ensure safe protests and eliminate those who hijack these protests for their criminal motives. At the present of low economic growth, to avoid further service delivery protests means that the government must borrow more money to address service delivery and socio-economic factors such as poverty and unemployment and save the distressed municipalities from these protests.

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Author's Contributions

All authors equally contributed in this work.

Ethics

The researcher adhered to the standards of research ethics as set out by the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT): Faculty Committee for Research Ethics – Humanities (FCRE-HUM) and approval and ethical clearance for the researcher to proceed with the study was granted by TUT: FCRE-HUM.

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