

Assessment of Implementation of Community Policing Programme in Nakuru Police Division, Nakuru County, Kenya

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Abstract: *This study assessed the implementation of community policing programme in Nakuru Police Division. The objective of the study was to assess the effectiveness of institutional arrangement of community policing programme in Nakuru Police Division. The study was based on a descriptive survey design and targeted 330 police officers and community members involved in community policing programme. Stratified simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 127 respondents. Data was collected using questionnaires and analyzed using frequency and percentages. The study has concluded that community policing programme in Nakuru Police Division was structured and mainly funded by the government. It is also evident that most of the police officers were also informed about community policing operations. However, the community policing programme lacked adequate resources as there were no specific police officers assigned to community policing programme. It is therefore recommended that sensitization programmes should be enhanced through organized community policing meetings with the public in order to educate the members of the public on how community policing works and how to improve good relationship with the police. In addition, the government should allocate more funds and resources to support the operations of community policing programmes.*

Keywords: assessment, implementation, community policing programme, Nakuru police division, Nakuru County

1. Introduction

All over the world there is a move away from traditional policing to community policing (Morash & Ford, 2002). This is based on the key tenet of community policing that the police should not be separate from, but rather joined in partnership with the community. A major impetus for this move is the recognition that the police cannot control crime and disorder alone. With community policing, the police and community are expected to co-produce safe and healthy communities (Diamond & Weiss, 2009). Community policing focuses on crime and social disorder through the delivery of police services that include aspects of traditional law enforcement, as well as prevention, problem solving, community engagement and partnerships. Studies on community policing have shown that the closer ties between the police and the community could revitalize existing police forces, increase the levels of social support, and encourage far-reaching changes in the structures and operation of the police force. However, Reid (2006) argues that lower crime rates have not been the principal benefit of community policing programs in many successful cases, including those of Chicago and New York City in the United States. Instead, many advocates of these programs, both in Latin America and in other regions, claim that the most important benefit of these initiatives is to reduce abuses by the police. Reid (2006) points out that higher level of approval toward the police could exist in places where community policing has been introduced. In Kenya some forms of organized crimes have created fear in the public. In the backdrop of intermittent waves of crime in the country, the Kenya Police have been dynamic in its response to crime. In spite of these security measures crime has continued to be waged on the innocent citizenry. Hence the police have been compelled to adopt proactive strategies to manage crime and to be responsive to the needs of the public. This has led to the introduction of community

policing. Community policing is conceived on the premise that crime perpetrators and their accomplices live within the communities in which they unleash crime.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the advent of increased crime rates, the police force is expected to embrace the principle of community policing through cooperation with the community. This principle has effectively worked elsewhere such as in the USA (Reid, 2006). This is basically due to the many advantages it has over the conventional police patrol or crime responses as crime can be identified early. This is because crime takes place in the community and thus members of the community should be involved in identifying, arresting and reforming criminals. In Kenya, the programme has been implemented. However, a legacy of distrust emanating from past police malpractices still exists between the police and the public. Previous studies on community policing have focused on other aspects such as relationship between the police and members of the public and factors influencing community policing and not those in the study. Therefore, the overall problem was that the implementation of community policing programme was not well conceptualized in Nakuru Police Division, Nakuru County, Kenya. Thus, there was need to assess the nature and institutional structure of community policing and its influence on the implementation of community policing programme. Thus this study sought to establish the effectiveness of implementation of the community policing programmes in Nakuru Police Division, Nakuru County.

1.3 Objective of the Study

To assess the institutional structure of the community policing programme and its effectiveness in crime

prevention in Nakuru Police Division, Nakuru County Kenya

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by two theories, namely the broken windows theory and routine activities theory.

2.1.1 The Broken Window Theory

The broken windows theory is a criminological theory that explains the signalling effect of urban disorder and vandalism as contributors to crime and anti-social behaviour. The theory states that maintaining and monitoring urban environments in a well-ordered condition may stop further vandalism and escalation into more serious crime. The broken window theory was first articulated by Wilson & Kelling (1982) and developed further by Kelling & Coles (1998). The broken windows theory assumes that minor disorder, if not taken seriously and attacked, will decrease fear of crime, informal social control, and increase crime. Social incivilities (public urination and drunkenness, drug use, prostitution, loitering teens, and panhandling) and physical incivilities (vacant buildings, empty lots, junk and trash, graffiti, and abandoned cars) contribute to the deterioration of communities. Police departments have adopted this theory based on its proposition that by controlling minor disorders, serious crimes can be reduced. The broken windows theory has received support from several empirical studies. Available evidence shows that although there are variants of the disorder or incivilities, broken windows theory has influenced policies in community policing (Taylor, 1999b). This theory has been selected to guide this study due to its explanatory quality of the evolution of crime within the community which community policing programme seeks to address.

2.1.2 Routine Activities Theory

Routine activities theory was developed by Lawrence Cohen and Marcus Felson. Cohen & Felson (2002) argue that certain changes in the modern world have provided motivated offenders with a far greater number of opportunities to commit crime. The theory contends that there has been a marked increase in the availability of crime targets (coupled with the absence of capable guardians) in the modern world as a result of an overall change in how normal people live in terms of work, home life, child rearing, education, and leisure. The routine activities of modern life have led to the dispersion of activities away from the family and household and homes are increasingly left unattended during the day. This means that many households no longer have capable guardians for extended and fairly predictable periods of time: as a result, they have become "candidates" for burglary. In addition, there has been a large increase in portable goods, goods which are therefore attractive targets to thieves (e.g. electronic goods). By following our daily routine activities, we create opportunities for motivated offenders to enter our private dwellings and take valuables from us. The opportunity for robbery and assault thus has increased (Lilly et al, 2007). The focus on opportunity to reduce robbery and assault suggests a pragmatic approach to preventing crime.

Community policing may be seen as one of the efforts to decrease opportunities for offending, thus reducing crime.

2.2 Empirical Review

Analysis of the institutional structure of community policing reveals an interesting picture of the implementation of community policing programme in Kenya. It is evident that community policing in Kenya is yet to achieve its objectives (Adambo, 2005). For example, the police booths put up through community policing have been vandalized and some communities have become suspicious of the police thus preferring to keep vigil alone (Adambo, 2005). Moreover, there is no uniform model of community policing, and adopting the western model can pose problems due to such factors as low levels of professionalism, disrespect for law enforcement, lack of community organization and other contextual factors. This demonstrates that the practice of transplanting community policing initiatives without accounting for different cultural contexts can prove to be a major hurdle in successful community policing implementation. In this regard the composition of the structure of community policing has taken into consideration the various stakeholders in security matters.

It is essential that there be organizational and operational changes in the structure of community policing if community-based policing is to work. There must be some decentralization and individual empowerment so that line officers are given more authority to work with communities. The most frequent implementation problem cited for community policing is the failure to involve all sectors of the community. Although the logic of community policing assumes the availability of inherent community resources - social capital which may be tapped and enhanced to produce social order - very often such groups have, in practice, limited resources to offer.

The major challenge, however, for a partnership between the police and the public is the lack of specific legal framework that spells out the role of communities or other partners in the provision of security. According to Neild (2007) the introduction of community policing does not necessarily address police malpractices. Neild argues that community policing should only be implemented once endemic problems in policing have been addressed. Hence, clear national standards, institutional restructuring and accountability mechanisms should be in place before implementation of community policing to avoid the risk of reinforcing undemocratic power structures. Police reform strategies that emphasize accountability, transparency and professional practices should produce overall gains in efficiency and responsiveness to communities they serve. Increased accountability to the citizens is one common component of community policing around the world (Murray, 2002).

In the United States of America, South Africa and Rwanda Community policing is entrenched within a legal and policy framework. In South Africa and Rwanda, it was initiated through both the constitution and police Act. In Kenya community policing has been entrenched in the legal system with the Ransley Report on police reforms proposing that

community policing be made a central strategy of policing as part of police institutional structural reforms (Ruteere, 2011). According to Adambo (2005) part of these institutional reforms should address funding of community policing and training of the police officers in community policing framework. Community policing is an expensive crime control strategy that requires to be properly funded. In some countries, it is well funded as a program while in others it is poorly funded. The level of funding influences its implementation and determines whether it will be a success or a failure. Studies in Chicago and Minneapolis established that community policing was more successful among middle income people, homeowners and whites than among the really poor, renters and racial minorities (Skogan, 1995). According to Adambo (2005) and Kiprono (2007) community policing works best in stable, affluent areas. In a study conducted at Kangemi, (80%) of the landowners refused to allow representation of tenants into community policing programme arguing that they could not be trusted on issues of security (Ruteere and Pommeroll, 2003).

Kimilu (2003) concurs that community policing programmes do not get the required financial support from governments, NGOs and the public in developing countries. He recommends that officers should have offices and residential houses in the areas where they are implementing the programme. With no much resource, community policing in Kenya has over relied on well wishers as government financial support is inadequate.

Adambo (2005) observes that an average of 70% of allocation for public safety, law and order budget in Kenya is on salaries hence starving capital development especially in police reforms. Police are inadequately funded for operations and maintenance. According to Kimilu (2003), historically police in Kenya have been poorly remunerated, ill armed, badly equipped, poorly clothed, and live in pathetic conditions. Police in Kenya have inadequate transport facilities, inadequate tools and equipment including communication, IT, housing, forensic laboratories and super servers. A study done in Nairobi in 2003 revealed that community police officers do not stay in the locations where community policing is being implemented. New approaches are therefore required to address insecurity more effectively and within the limited resources available (Adambo, 2005).

It is not until recently that community policing was factored in the national budget of Kenya. Between the financial years 2009/2010 and 2013/2014, the Administration Police planned to spend Kshs.18.73B. The budget for community policing for the five years was only Ksh.340 Million (GOK, 2010). According to the Government of Kenya, communities should use existing resources and volunteers to participate without expecting any reward (OOP, 2009). Donor funds and other non state actors have in some instances supplemented Government funding not only in Kenya but also in other countries. DFID, Ford Foundation and Safer World have all supported community policing in Africa. According to OOP (2009), NGOs have a role of giving technical advice as well as financial support to community policing programs. Civil society groups such as

the NCBDA and KHRC through donor support have helped in establishment of police pilot projects in Kenya.

Several studies have found out that the police are unable to tackle crime due to lack of efficient facility (Adambo, 2005; Kimilu, 2003). A study conducted in Kibera established that 40.5% of the total respondents felt that community policing was not meeting the expectations of the area residents because police were not fully equipped to combat crime. 31% of the respondents felt that police patrols coverage was very low. Another study done in Nairobi in 2003 revealed that police fail to respond promptly to crime incidences due to inadequate motor vehicles. According to the study, most police stations have only one vehicle which is rarely provided with fuel. Out of the 50 community members interviewed, 40 had called the police to a crime scene. Only 2% said that the police responded very fast, while 10% said that they responded fast. 30% were of the view that they were slow, 40% very slow and 18% said that they did not respond at all (Adambo, 2005).

3. Methodology

The study was based on a descriptive survey design. The study was carried out in Nakuru Police Division, Nakuru County, Kenya. The target population was all the police officers involved in community policing attached to Nakuru Police Division and members of the community living within Nakuru Police Division. The study also targeted all members of community policing committee in Nakuru Police division. In total there were 30 community policing committee members in two police stations within Nakuru Police Division. Stratified random and purposive sampling methods were used to identify the study sample. Data was collected through questionnaire. The development of the research instruments was done by examining the objective of the study to make sure that the framing of the questionnaire items reflected the variables of the study. Descriptive statistics which included frequency and percentages were used in the analysis of quantitative data. Quantitative data were presented in tables.

4. Results

Several elements of the institutional arrangement of the community policing were investigated. These were hierarchical structure of community policing, resources availability for community policing, allocation of police officers and the number of police officers in community policing programmes and the extent to which police officers are informed about how community policing works. Table 1 displays the results on the hierarchical structure of community policing.

Table 1: Hierarchical Structure of Community Policing Programme

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Have Structures	60	47
Lack Structures	48	38
Do Not Know	19	15
Total	127	100

As shown in table 1, 47% of the respondents indicated that community policing programme was structured while 38% noted that it was not structured. 15% of the respondents did not know. This suggests that community policing programme in Nakuru Police Division was structured. The results on the level of adequacy of resources for community policing are presented in figure 1.

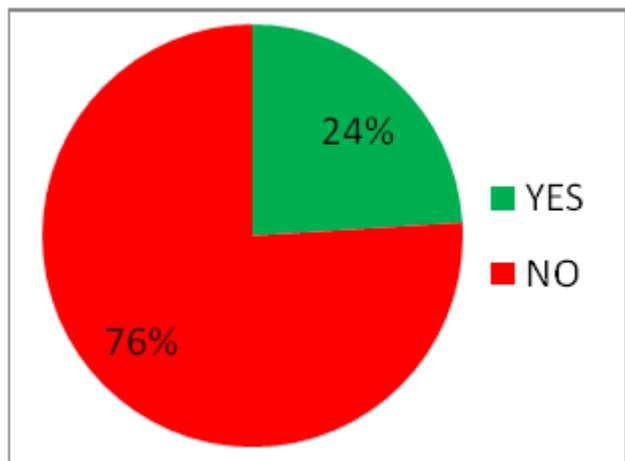


Figure 1: Level of Adequacy of Resources for Community Policing

As shown in Figure 1, 76% of the respondents cited that community policing programme lacked adequate resources compared to 24% of the respondents who pointed out that the resources were adequate. This implies that the resources were inadequate to effectively carry out community policing programmes in Nakuru police division. For instance, in regard to funding of community policing, it was evident that the government funded community policing programme while other sources of funding included NGO and the public. However, it was worth noting that some respondents did not know the source of funds for community policing. The study also sought to establish whether there were specific police officers allocated to community policing programmes and they were adequate to carry out community policing programme. The findings are displayed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Allocation and adequacy of Police Officers in Community Policing Programmes

Allocation of Specific Police Officers		Whether Police Officers Are Enough			
	F	%	F	%	
There are	37	29	Enough	27	21
No Specific	90	71	Not Enough	10	79
Do Not Know	0	0	Do Not	0	0
Total	12	10	Total	12	100

In terms of allocation of police officers to manage community policing majority of the respondents (71%) indicated that there were no specific police officers assigned to community policing programme compared to 29% of the respondents who reported that there were specific police officers manning community policing programmes. Moreover, 79% of the respondents observed that the police officers handling community policing were inadequate. This is in comparison to 21% of the respondents who said that the police officers were adequate. Figure 1 below displays

results on the extent to which police officers were informed about the operation of community policing.

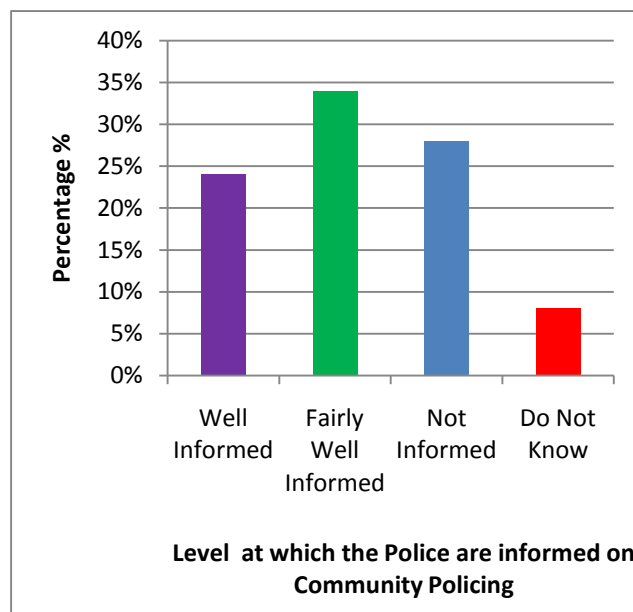


Figure 2: Level of Information on the Working of Community Policing Programme

It is evident from the results displayed in Figure 2 that majority of the respondents (58%) were informed about community policing operations. It is also evident that 27% of the respondents reported that the police officers were not informed while 7% were indifferent as to whether police officers were informed about community policing.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Considering the results of the study several conclusions can be made. First, community policing programme in Nakuru Police Division was structured and mainly funded by the government. It is also evident that most of the police officers were also informed about community policing operations. The community policing programme also lacked adequate human resources as there were no specific police officers assigned to community policing programme. It is also evident that the police officers carrying out community policing activities have not received adequate education and special training in community policing. Based on the conclusions drawn from the study, it is recommended that sensitization programmes should be enhanced through organized community policing meetings with the public in order to educate the members of the public on how community policing works and how to improve good relationship with the police. In addition, workshops and seminars should be organized for the members of the community policing committee to enhance their participation in the community policing programme. The government should allocate more funds and resources to support the operations of community policing programmes. Moreover, more motor vehicles and other security gadgets should be procured to enhance police patrol.

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