Stakeholders' Involvement and Implementation of Community Policing in Taita Taveta County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Many challenges must be conquered for community-based projects to succeed while adapting to new contexts. The proactive method of crime control known as "community policing" is gaining traction in countries all over the world. After the plan's official debut, it was put into action in numerous areas around the country with different degrees of success. Since crime has risen steadily over time however much the administration tries, there has been little success in community policing as a deterrent technique has been questioned. This study sought to determine stakeholders' involvement and implementation of community policing in Taita Taveta County, Kenya. A descriptive survey research strategy was also employed and targeted the national police service (200), national government administrative officers (60), Nyumba Kumi forums (300), non-governmental organizations (20), and religious leaders (50). A total of 245 respondents were sampled. Data was collected using questionnaires. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The research result showed that stakeholders' involvement had a positive and significant relationship with implementation of community policing. However, majority of the residents have not taken part in community policing projects in the County. It is thus recommended that; the government should encourage the involvement of citizens in community policing projects in the County.

Keywords: *Stakeholders' involvement, implementation, community policing*

1. INTRODUCTION

Many challenges must be conquered for community-based projects to succeed while adapting to new contexts. The initiatives must be accepted and owned by the community if they're going to be put into action (Wambugha, 2010). Forcing an initiative on an unwilling community is a surefire way to see an initiative fail. Police and residents of an area work together to prevent and deal with crime in what is known as "community policing" and address the causes of criminal activity and lawlessness in the area. The premise on which this is based is that community members have a right to weigh in on the policies that govern law enforcement in their neighborhoods (Munyasia, et al., 2016). This can only occur with participation inside the confines of the law's penal apparatus. In addition, the neighborhood is full of crooks, and some residents may have information that could be useful in apprehending and prosecuting them (Palmiotto, 2011).

It has been in widespread use in North America and Europe for over 30 years. It has been argued that community policing can be an effective solution to rebuilding confidence and

increasing security between the police and the general populace, which has historically been antagonistic in most developing nations (Wekesa and Muturi, 2016). Many developing nations have embraced it as they recover from conflict or make the shift from authoritarian rule, which often leads to the politicization of law enforcement, major Police brutality, and the absence of accountability for human rights breaches (Gaines & Kappeler, 2011).

South Africa was the first country in Sub-Saharan Africa to use a community policing strategy (Ruteere & Pommerolle, 2003). The reliance on private protection originates in part as a result of township residents' long-held distrust and hostility toward police during apartheid. After apartheid's fall, in the same year, South Africa's government acknowledged the democratic importance of community policing and as they developed their constitution, they included its principles. This method of policing emerged in the 1960s in Uganda and Tanzania and is based on three tenets: first, police and community members collaborate to establish security requirements; second, they devise and implement tactics to address those needs; and third, they evaluate the success of those efforts. Typically, this idea may be traced back to an essay written by James Wilson and George Kelling, two American professors. They believed that dilapidated regions are incubators for crime and disorder and that this disturbance needed to be controlled to reduce crime (Ruteere & Pommerolle, 2003).

Tensions have existed between the Kenya Police Force, which later became the Kenya Police Service, and the general Kenyan population ever since the formation of the Kenya Police Force. Kenyans, like their fellow Africans, generally see the police as a tool for maintaining peace and reflecting the values of those in authority. In 1990, The Vera Institute of Justice in New York pushed for financing the human rights programs at the Nairobi Central Business District Association Kenya's Human Rights since community policing in Kenya received a widespread reputation there (Ruteere & Pommerolle, 2003). Community policing was originally used by Kenyan police officers in 1996 as a strategy to reduce the rising rate of violence and crime among both the people and their property that existed in the country at the time.

Kibera, Ziwani, and Isiolo were the first locations in Kenya to implement community policing in May 2001. Vera, the Nairobi Central Business District Association, the Kenyan Police, and UN-Habitat all collaborated on this project. "Saferworld" was also involved. What they discovered was invaluable information for organizing and facilitating community policing forums (CPFs). The development of a nationwide guide used to educate citizens about police jurisdictions and services has also assisted the units (GoK, 2003). Since 2003, community policing has been actively promoted by the government as an effective strategy for reducing crime. This requires coordinating the efforts of law enforcement with those of the local community. Through community policing, people are encouraged to work together to ask for support from the police. It was in 2005 that a community policing strategy was implemented in the Nairobi suburb of Ruai. The community policing strategy is not yet ready for implementation, but it is being reviewed by the Community policing national taskforce.

Problem Statement

Several regions of the country have implemented the rollout program since the formal launch of the plan, with varying degrees of success. The establishment of a National Association Supervision Policy in addition to the standardization of community policing principles has been developed to better coordinate and harmonize the collaboration in community policing, despite several obstacles.

Historically, there has been little to lack of confidence between the general public and the justice system, which consequently increased the rates of crime. In such a setting, members of

the community withhold information from the police that could help them solve crimes more quickly. According to Diamond and Weiss (2009), a lack of resources and a lack of professionalism among police officers is a major issue in some communities. Crime statistics in these areas are likely to be inaccurate because residents don't report them to the authorities. Information is crucial for law enforcement and crime prevention. Police personnel are rendered helpless and unable to solve even the most minor crimes if they lack the necessary information. With more and better data, they can easily fulfill their legal obligations. Most knowledge about criminal activity is held by the community members. It is therefore necessary to establish mutually beneficial partnerships between the citizens and the law enforcement officers to be able to reduce crimes. Communities and police need to work together to reduce the risk of criminal activity.

Sometimes, victims of crime are killed, and their families are left without means of support. According to Kimilu (2003), society would benefit greatly if the funds diverted from criminal activity were invested in areas such as public health, scientific study, resource preservation, and environmental safeguarding. If implemented correctly, community policing can boost wealth in the long run by encouraging more investment. Prevention of crime is better than reacting after criminal activities, the key focus rather than combatting crime. Community policing promotes proactive policing, whereas traditional policing has fostered a reactive approach. The key concerns that directly and indirectly affect security must be adequately addressed before effective policing can be realized, according to Adambo (2005). According to this line of thinking, crime stems from societal problems including poverty, joblessness, social disintegration, and political and economic instability.

Community policing has been called into doubt as an anti-crime strategy because crime has increased over the years despite the government's best efforts. There is a lack of trust, fear, resources, and stakeholder influence, as well as clear and open communication between the government and the citizens of the community (John and Kenneth, 2012). Taita Taveta County is a good fit for the research because of the rising crime rates, radicalization, and Violent Extremism (VE) recorded by law enforcement in recent years. Taita Taveta is a county found within the larger coastal region, but crime rates have been on the rise across the country. This study recognized the need to restore safety in Taita Taveta County. The study thus, investigated the effect of stakeholder involvement on the implementation of community policing projects in Taita Taveta County.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Initially coined by Lawrence and Lorsch in their 1967 book "Organization and Environment," the phrase "contingency theory" has now gained widespread usage. The authors demonstrated empirically that "various contexts impose various demands on organizations." In particular, they focused on contexts characterized by market volatility and the fast pace of technological development, which create different requirements (both good and negative) than more stable settings.

The general orienting hypothesis of contingency theory states that the variables of the environment have a direct influence on design decisions. This implies that for organizations to achieve the optimal level of adaptation, their internal characteristics need to be matched to the requirements of their respective environments. To repeat this, the external and the task environment of an organization is the driving force behind organizational transformation" (Scott, 2002). Scott, (2002) explains the three assumptions that underpin the contingency

theory, which is a tool that may be applied to the task of overcoming obstacles that arise throughout the process of putting community policing programs into effect. One of the most productive ways methods of organization will vary depending on the specifics of the group's context.

The first presumption casts doubt on the widespread belief that a set of timeless organizational truths holds across time and space. There is a common belief that community policing must adhere to certain pre-determined rules for the project/initiative to be effective. This may hold for the fundamental concepts of community policing, including encouraging public participation in law enforcement and fostering greater police-community cooperation.

The second premise is that reforms in police department organizational structure, including phrases like "decentralized decision making" and "flattened hierarchies" are typically necessary for a successful program (Scott, 2002). Two major shifts are needed, according to Adams, Rohe, and Arcury (2002), for police to become more community-oriented: The first involves shifting the focus of a police department away from preventing crime. There will be more time and resources devoted to patrolling the streets and resolving issues, and police officers will have more discretion in their work. The second is that shifts occur in the norms and practices of law enforcement.

Most of the causes of failures in the delivery of the third premise are particularly important since many of the problems that have been observed in community policing initiatives may be linked back to a lack of adherence to it. Scott stressed that the success of a company is proportionate to how effectively it adjusts to its environment. The viability of a community policing initiative is jeopardized when officers and administrators fail to take into account local context and demographics.

Empirical Review

The importance of stakeholder input was studied by Noland and Phillips (2013). The study monitored a variety of factors, including participants' attitudes toward discourse ethics and strategic management. Implementation of the strategy, with regular updates to the confidence and oversight committee and an annual review process. Children and young people, who tend to have less faith in the complaints system than other demographics, can benefit most from increased oversight of police complaint handling, according to the study.

Community engagement was the focus of research by Jerome, Boles, and White (2013), who looked at exploring the participation of stakeholders in the development of the Netherlands' system for the delivery of police services. According to the findings, Holland is where you'll find the most distinctive aspects of the experience so special is the open participation of the community in it. The Committee's growth, togetherness, and dedication to tackling difficult problems and showing support for the community and the Police Department were inspiring to see. The Committee's suggestions, complicated as they may be, are indicative of the level of expertise it has achieved in a relatively brief period. City and Police Department leaders face an ongoing challenge in continuing to foster the community cooperation established by the Study Committee.

Research was conducted on the "politics of policing," specifically on how to ensure the participation of local stakeholders in federal efforts to improve law enforcement by Simmons (2017). According to the research, major players are a drag on efforts to put reforms into action. Similarly, if locals and lower-level officials are barred from claiming responsibility for institutional changes while their domains remain open to federal oversight, the improvements may not last through the agreements' terms. Community members, police unions, and the

federal government all need to figure out how to collaborate effectively to make institutional reforms that are long-lasting inside the nation's law enforcement institutions.

In Kenya, Kiptoo (2017) carried out a study in Kisii County on the determining factors of community policing performance. The study utilized a descriptive design, that targeted police officers, civilian and administrative officers. A sample of 710 participated in the study and it was found that: community policing and its effective performance was positively influenced by the participation of all stakeholders in the project.

Mwaura (2016) in a study carried out in Kajiado North, examined the factors that challenged community policing. The study targeted the police officers, citizens, and members of the community policing committees. It was found that there was mistrust between the civilians and the police, coupled with an environment that did not provide support for the legislative and administrative officers to adequately implement community policing programme.

3. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey research strategy was employed and targeted the national police service (200), national government administrative officers (60), Nyumba Kumi forums (300), non-governmental organizations (20), and religious leaders (50). A total of 245 respondents were sampled. Data was collected using questionnaires. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and percentages) was used to analyze qualitative data and quantitative data was analyzed using inferential statistics. Given the potentially delicate nature of some data, the researcher adopted professional and ethical responsibility when handling the data. The researcher protected the privacy of the study participants.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics

The study sought to establish the extent to which stakeholder involvement determines the implementation of community policing. The result is presented and discussed in the subsequent sub-sections.

Community policing projects source of funds in Taita Taveta County

The study aimed to establish the source of funds that support the implementation of community policing projects in Taita Taveta County. The research results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: community policing projects sources of funds in Taita Taveta County

	Frequency	Percent
Government of Kenya	95	47.5%
Constituency Development Funds	20	10.0%
The Taita-Taveta Local County Government	53	26.5%
Community	22	11.0%
Donor/Sponsor	11	5.5%
Total	200	100.0%

Source: Field Data, 2023

It was thus evident that majority (47.5%) of the respondents knew that the main source of finances for the community policing projects in Taita Taveta County was from the National Government of Kenya, 26.5% from the Taita-Taveta County government, 11.0% from members of the community, 10% CDF while 5.5% from donor/sponsor. This implied that the

main source of funding community policing projects in Taita Taveta County is the national Government of Kenya.

Participation in community Policing Project in Taita Taveta County

The research sought to investigate the respondents' level of participation in the implementation of any community Policing Project. Their responses are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Participation in Community Policing Project in Taita Taveta County**

	Frequency(f)	Percentage
Yes	63	31.5%
No	137	68.5%
Total	**200**	**100.0%**

Source: Field Data, 2023

The majority 68.5% of the respondents had not taken part in the community policing project while only 31.5% indicated that they had participated, thus, denoting that the majority of the respondents within Taveta sub-county have not taken part in the community Policing Project. This outcome was in tandem with a study carried out in the Nakuru police division by Njiri, Ngari, and Maina (2014), who found that only 58% of the respondents sampled from the police officers and the members of the public knew about the community policing programme operations.

Community Policing Project Involved

The respondents who had participated in the community policing project were further interrogated and asked to indicate the ones they had been involved in. The result is presented in Figure 1.
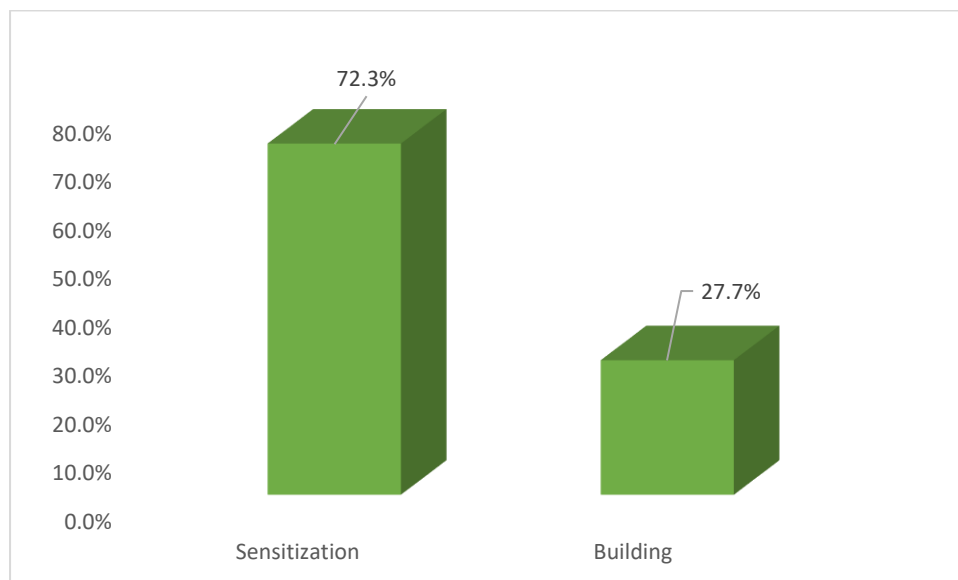
Source: Field Data, 2023

Figure 1, majority 72.3% had taken part in sensitization exercises on community policing while 27.7% in the building initiatives of the project. This implied that residents within Taveta sub-county have taken part in sensitization. Moreover, this finding supports Kiptoo's (2017) study carried out in Kisii County among civilians, police officers, and administrative officers who

reported a strong positive correlation between the involvement of community policing stakeholders and the effective performance of the community policy project.

Adequacy for the Money allocated for community policing projects

The respondents were further asked to indicate the level of financial adequacy allocated to their community policing initiative. The responses are presented in 3.

Table 3: Adequacy for the Budgeting Allocation

	Frequency	Percent
Small extent	34	17
Moderate extent	134	67
Large extent	32	16
Total	**200**	**100**

Source: Field Data, 2021

Table 3, results indicate that the majority 134 (67%) felt that the finances allocated for the community policing projects in Taita Taveta County was adequate to a moderate extent, while 34 (17%) of the respondents felt that the money allocated was adequate to a smaller in Taita Taveta. A few 32 (16%) of the respondents felt that the finances allotted for community policing projects in Taita Taveta County are adequate to a large extent. This implied that the allocated finances for community policing projects in Taita Taveta County were generally not adequate. This was equally reported in Kajiado North by Mwaura (2014) who noted that the decline in police resources, inclusive of finances negatively affected the implementation of community policing projects.

Involvement of Stakeholders in community policing projects

To get a glimpse of the level of involvement in community policing by stakeholders, the respondents were asked for their opinions on participation. The responses are presented in Figure 2.
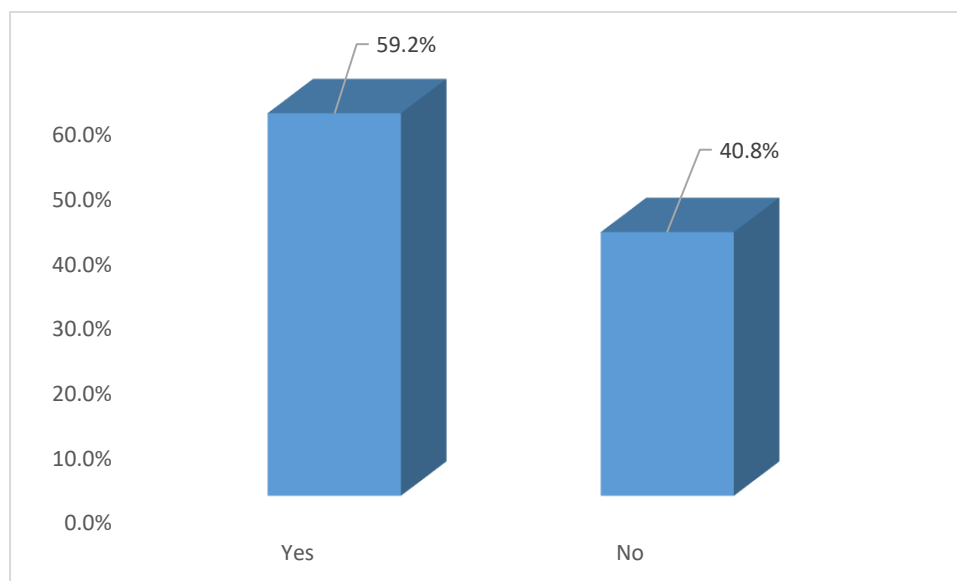

Figure 2: Involvement of Stakeholders in community policing projects

Source: Field Data, 2023

Among all the respondents, a majority (59.2%) noted that the stakeholders were not fully involved in community policing projects in Taita Taveta County while 40.8% thought that all the stakeholders participated fully in community policing projects in Taita Taveta County. Mwaura (2014), reported that in Kjiado North, the members of the police service partnered with the civilians while investigating crimes, gathering intelligence, and acting on them, which positively impacted the implementation of community projects, a scenario that has not been fully attained in Taita Taveta county.

Stakeholder's Involvement and Implementation of Community Policing Projects

To understand whether the involvement of the stakeholders affected the implementation of the community policing project, the respondents were asked about the extent of their participation in the project. Their opinions were captured on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1-1, 5 meaning SA-strongly agree (4) Agree, (3) N-neutral (2)D-disagree, (1) SD-strongly disagree. Their responses are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Stakeholder's Involvement and Implementation of Community Policing Projects

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Open participation by the members of the community in Taita Taveta County has a positive effect on how community policing projects perform	4.025	1.33533
There is a positive encouragement to implement reforms by all community policing project stakeholders in Taita Taveta county	3.829	.66621
Allowing the members of the community to participate in resolving complex issues and matters of insecurity and crime rates has improved the efficiency of community policing in Taita Taveta county	4.367	.59511

Source: Field Data, 2023

From the research responses presented in Table 4, it was clear that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed that there is improved performance of the community policing project when the members of the community are allowed to participate in the project fully (Mean= 4.367) and with (Std. Deviation= .59511). Additionally, the open engagement in the community affected how the community policing project performed in Taita Taveta County. Moreover, it was reported that all the key stakeholders involved in the community policing project encouraged reforms in the implementation of community policing (Mean=3.829) and (Std. Deviation= .66621), implying that the performance of the community policing project highly depends on the participation of stakeholders in the project, which in turn translates to effective resolution of complex security issues. This goes in hand with a study carried out in Kisii county by Kiptoo (2017), who found a strong positive relationship between the trust of the civilians and the police and the effective auctioning of community poling projects which eventually led to a reduction of crimes.

Regression Results

Table 5: Coefficient of Correlation

	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	3.77	0.451		8.359	0.000
Stakeholder's involvement	0.782	0.221	0.146	3.538	0.001

a. Dependent Variable: implementation of community policing

Source: Researcher, 2023

Implementation of community policing = 3.77 +0.782X +ε

The research results as presented in Table 5 denote the predictor variable's statistically significant test. It shows the estimation of the independent variables, standard error, and the t-ratios. From the regression model, the implementation of community policing in Taita Taveta County was 3.77 when all the other independent variables at zero value were held constant. A unit increase in the stakeholder's involvement in the firm government regulations will result in an increase in the implementation of community policing in Taita Taveta County by 0. 782.

5. CONCLUSION

The study concluded stakeholders' involvement had a positive relationship with implementation of community policing and it was significant in determining implementation of community policing. However, the majority of the residents have not taken part in the community policing Project, despite being mainly funded by the government.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that, there are avenues that encourage adequate coordination between the police, the national government Administration, and the community. This leads to the streamlining of the community policing projects/forums which will consequently lead to merit-based appointment of members, strengthening the project through training of the committee members as well as the village elders. The coordination and inclusivity will resolve the marginalization of minority issues and will allow for the inclusion of all groups in the community policing project including women, the youth, and people living with disabilities. Co-ordination and inclusion in the community policing project will increase the operation base hence reducing levels of insecurity and crime rates.

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