

Effect of Security Meetings on Crime Control in Machakos County, Kenya

^{1*}Rita Makena Mutegei, & ²Wilson Muna

^{1,2}Department of Public Policy and Administration, Kenyatta University

*Corresponding author's e-mail: ritamutegi@gmail.com

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of security meetings on crime control in Machakos. This research adopted a descriptive case study research designs. Target population was 230 individuals who comprised of individuals participating directly or indirectly in crime control. These were the Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs, the Police, Community Policing members as well as opinion leaders in Yatta Sub-county. Sample size was 197. The research employed primary and secondary sources of data. Results also showed that leaders moved from one place to another, mobilization of locals in time, increasing understanding between communities and government policing agencies and the community about their role is security; enhancing dialogue between communities and government policing agencies. Security meetings formed an integral part of effective crime prevention, given that they enhanced trust, cooperation, communication, ingenuity, integrity, initiative, discretion, leadership, responsibility, respect, and a broadened commitment to public safety and security. Security meetings had a significant effect on crime prevention and control, it is imperative on the government through the Ministry of Interior and The study recommended that it is important to identify which social groups are most seriously affected by the problem and develop a framework that will guide the Rolling down of the programme. The security agencies should strive to hold regular and structured meetings which produce actionable resolutions which must be implemented.

Keywords: *Security Meetings, Crime Control, Machakos County*

1.0 Introduction

In the recent years, crime prevention has become an effective strategy to control crime in that it brings about a balance between prevention and punishment (Waller, 2006). There are some positive effects felt from testing other strategies of controlling crime and therefore a need to test other strategies of controlling crime to protect citizens and their property (Sherman, 2006). We live in an unsafe society and a detailed study on crime control and security management has not been given the attention it deserves (Karen, 2005).

According to Joseph S. Nye, Jr and Sean M. Lynn-Jones on International Security, the Center for Science and International Security Studies (CSIA) convened a meeting on the past,

present and future of international security so as to discuss the American national security policy amongst other issues related to crime (Kempa, 2017). The Constitution of Kenya 2010 article 240 outlines the establishment of National Security Council. This council exercises supervisory role over the National security organs as well as reporting to the Parliament on the security state of the nation. According to Joan Eisenstodt, a founder and chief strategist of Eisenstodt Associates, 2018; security meetings are a proactive strategy that helps security agents react to safety and security issues. In light of the Presidential directives issued, the National Police Service is expected to re-engineer effective security management strategies in controlling crime which is well organized in the various security meetings (National Security Conference, 2018). The roundtable security meetings were introduced as a complementary mechanism to facilitate security engagements (Global Relations Forum, 2013).

1.1 Problem Statement

Kenya is experiencing a challenge with the rise in the crime levels. Peri-urban and rural communities have not been spared either (Murithi & Wanjohi, 2014). Yatta is faced by a number of security threats such as robbery, theft, murder. Its closeness to Thika town makes its prone to these crimes as criminals tend to easily hide in Yatta after committing crime in Nairobi Thika and their environs. Mohammad and Aktar (2016) found that elected leaders in Bangladesh are not committed to involving the public but only involve only the influential hence the need to carry out further research on the importance of involving citizen on matters affecting them. Biwott (2017) carried out a research on factors that influence the implementation of community policing programme in Kenya, a case of Nyeri Police Station concluded that there is need to have a comprehensive mechanism that motivates and encourages inclusive decision making among security agents hence the need for conducting security meetings that involve security agents from different departments to identify and discuss issues related to crime control.

1.2 Research Objective

The study objective was to determine the effect of security meetings on crime control in Machakos County, Kenya.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Securitization theory outlines that national security policy is not naturally given but carefully designed by political class and decision makers. Securitization is the process of state actors transforming subjects into matters of security. The social constructivist method of conceptualizing security is known as securitization. According to securitization theory, political issues are classified as extreme security concerns to be dealt with as an urgent matter. Securitization theory challenges traditional approach to security by sparking a debate between narrower and wideners. Narrowers were concerned with the security of the state while wideners included other threats that affected people rather than the state.

Therefore, securitization is an important theory as it helps one understand traditional approaches to security that over focused on the state rather than the people. This theory can be applied in evaluating how well security management strategies can be applied to effectively control crime and all other factors surrounding effective security management strategies. Securitization is being applied interdisciplinary work such as terrorism (Buzan,

2006) and transnational crime which are threats to effectively managing security (Williams, 2008).

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Security Meetings and Crime Control

When Turkey's approach to security in the 21st century task force was launched, the security roundtable meetings were introduced as a mechanism to facilitate community engagement. The UN Security Council is one of the 6 principal organs of the UN charged with ensuring international peace and security. It has its headquarters in the New York, United States. It is the most powerful body with the responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Security Council takes the lead in determining the existence of a threat to the peace. The Security Council meeting held in 2019 discussed the maintenance of international peace and security as well as peace and security in Africa, women peace and security as well as threats to international peace and security. The Security Council reaffirmed its resolutions in respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and unity of Iran in accordance with the purposes and principles of this specific charter. The Security Council members meeting held in the New York on 19th July 2018 discussed the situation in DRC and South Sudan. Other issues discussed included the progress in further strengthening the cooperation between member states in peace and security. This Security Council determines when and where the UN peace operation should be deployed.

The Security Council also establishes a peace operation by adopting a Security Council resolution that sets out the mandate and size of the operations. A roundtable security meeting on Western Sahara was held on 21st and 22nd March 2019 in Switzerland that took place in accordance with (UN Security Council resolution 2440) as a further step in reaching a long lasting solution that would provide for the self-determination of the people of West Sahara.

The Peace and Security Council is the standing decision making organ of the African Union for prevention, management and resolution of conflicts and insecurity. It is the Key pillar of the African peace and security architecture (APSA) which is the framework for promoting peace, security and stability in Africa. The establishment of this peace and Security Council was adopted in 2002 in Durban, South Africa and entered into force in December 2003. The peace and Security Council in conjunction with the chairperson of the African Union commission anticipate and prevent disputes as well as policies which may lead to crimes against humanity. It also promotes harmonization and coordination of efforts between the regional mechanisms and the African Union in the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa.

The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) is the term for the African Union mechanism for promoting peace, security and stability in the African Continent. The peace and security council (PSC) of the African Union held a security meeting on 5th September 2019 to discuss progress made in the practical steps for silencing the guns in Africa as well as the challenges facing security sector reforms (SSR) in Africa. It was stressed that good governance of the security sector is important for sustainable economic and political development in Africa. This council acknowledged that Security Sector Reforms is a delicate, sensitive and complex process that should be carried out carefully. This council encourages for continuous meetings among the member states to share their experiences, lessons learned and best practices in the implementation of Security Sector Reforms.

The objectives of IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority on Development) states that it is strongly committed to the promotion and maintenance of peace, security and stability in Africa. Its Security Sector program conducted and held a four-day security meeting in Mombasa on 17th October 2019 with its member states on Border security and management to strengthen their capacity in countering transnational threats. On 30th September IGAD held a security capacity building forum with the high level Federal Government of Somalia officials to contribute to the enhancement of institutional capacities in formulation and updating of Somalia's National Security Sector Reforms (SSR). Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) ON 26th September 2019 in Mombasa held a three-day security meeting and training workshop on Youth engagement in preventing terrorism and related Transnational Security Threats for Kenya.

In Kenya, the 2010 Constitution article 240 outlines the establishment of the National Security Council that comprises of the President, Deputy President, AG, Director National intelligence service, CS in charge for Interior, Defense, Foreign Affairs, Chief of Kenya Defense Forces and also inspector General National Police Service. The council exercises a supervisory role and control over national security organs as well as report yearly to the Parliament on the state of security in the Country. The National Security architecture outlines how the National Security Council operates through a layer of seven committees namely: National Security Advisory Committee, Joint Regional Security Committee, County Security and Intelligence Committee, the Sub county security Intelligence committee, Ward/Division Security and Intelligence committee, Location peace and security committee and sub location peace and security committee.

All the outlines Security Committee coordinate and review matters involving national security in their respective capacities for the purpose of assessing and taking action on security matters within their mandate. They facilitate information sharing as it is shared from the sub-locational and village levels to the national Security Council on crime and other issues around national security. The location and sub location peace and security committee meetings are chaired by Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs where security concerns of their respective areas are shared to the Divisional Security Intelligence Committee for further discussion and all unresolved security concerns are escalated to up to higher committees at the sub county, County, Region and up to the National Security advisory committee and finally to the National Security Council for Action.

3.0 Methodology

This research adopted a descriptive case study research designs. Target population was 230 individuals who comprised of individuals participating directly or indirectly in crime control. These were the Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs, the Police, Community Policing members as well as opinion leaders in Yatta Sub-county. Krejcie and Morgan sampling method was applied in coming up with the sample size which was 197. The research employed primary and secondary sources of data where primary data was gathered from participants whereas secondary data was gathered through relevant documents such as Government reports, policy documents, community policing manuals as well as civil society publications as well as UN documents. This research employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches of analyzing and interpreting data. Quantitative technique was employed to analyze numerical data where the researcher upon receiving the questionnaire, then coding and entering that data into computer for producing figures whereas qualitative approach engaged the use of the study

and gathering a number of observations, personal experience and also empirical materials. The qualitative data gathered from questions that were of open-ended form were classified based on the objectives of the research and reporting in themes together with quantitative presentations.

4.0 Results and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

4.1.1 Public Security Meeting

Respondents were asked to clarify whether there were public security meetings in their localities. Results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Security meetings Availability

Security meeting	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	123	78.8
No	33	21.2
Total	156	100.0

Source: Research data, (2020)

Majority of the respondents as shown by 78.8% agreed that there were public security meetings in their localities while 21.2% were of the contrary opinion. This therefore implies that there were security meetings which were considered to be effective means of crime control in Machakos County.

4.1.2 Participation in Security Meetings

Table 2: Participation in Security Meetings

Participation	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	140	89.7
No	16	10.3
Total	156	100.0

Source: Research data, (2020)

From the study findings, majority of the respondents as shown by 89.7% agreed that they participated in security meetings while 10.3% were of the contrary opinion. This implies that majority of the participants had previously been involved in security meetings and therefore they were in a position to give their views on effectiveness of peace barazas in security management in Machakos County.

Participants indicated that, the securing meetings were controlled by the district county commissioner; others indicated the OCS, sub- county commissioner, assistant county commissioner and it helped in planning of crime management strategies. It was noted that coordination of security meetings in Machakos County was retrogressed by failure by the ordinary citizens to attend security meetings, lack of cooperation and disunity, involvement of politics, protecting community policing from criticism. Other challenges include difficulty in determining the intricate relationship between community policing and crime and inconsistent consultation with the general public concerning appropriate time of meetings, lack of provision of guidelines community liaisons.

4.1.3 Measures Put in Place to Ensure Security Measures Happen as Planned

Results show that leaders moved from one place to another, mobilization of locals in time, increasing understanding between communities and government policing agencies and the community about their role is security. Further, they have been enhancing dialogue between communities and government policing agencies; enhancing policing through education and capacity building of members of the community to enable constructive participation in addressing issues of security and/or enhancing of accountability of the government policing agencies to the community they serve.

4.1.4 Measures to Improve Enhance Security Meetings for Better Crime Controls

Local communities must be directly get involved in policing exercise, there is need to develop a cultures of sharing responsibility and decision-making as well as sustained commitment from both government policing agencies and the community. With regard to safety and security needs; resolving conflict between and within community groupings through dialogue to enhance peace and stability and basing problem solving activities on a consultative approach that constantly seeks to approve responsiveness to identified community needs.

Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements relating on security meetings.

Table 31: Statements Relating On Security Meetings

Statements	Mean	Std Dev
Security meeting are effective strategy for crime control	4.15	0.36
Security meeting are held at least twice in a month in all administrative units	3.82	0.25.
Members of the committee, attend the meetings regularly	3.60	0.14
Members implement the decisions made at the meetings	3.56	0.17

Source: Research data, (2020)

From the study findings, majority of the participants agreed that security meetings were effective strategy for crime control (means = 4.15, std dev =0.36), Members of the committee, attend the meetings regularly (means =3.60, std dev =0.14), Security meeting are held at least twice in a month in all administrative units (means = 3.82 std dev =0.25) and members implement the decisions made at the meetings (means = 3.56 std dev =0.17)

4.2 Discussion of Findings

On role effectiveness with securing meeting, participants indicated that, the securing meetings were controlled by the district county commissioner; others indicated the OCS, sub-county commissioner, assistant county commissioner and it helped in planning of crime management strategies. It was noted that coordination of security meetings in Machakos County was retrogressed by Failure by the ordinary citizens to attend security meetings, lack of cooperation and disunity, involvement of politics, protecting community policing from criticism, difficulty in determining the intricate relationship between community policing and crime and inconsistent consultation with the general public concerning appropriate time of meetings, lack of provision of guidelines community liaisons.

Results show that leaders moved from one place to another, mobilization of locals in time, increasing understanding between communities and government policing agencies and the community about their role is security; enhancing dialogue between communities and government policing agencies. in their recommendations “*there is need to enhance policing through education and capacity building of members of the community to enable constructive participation in addressing issues of security and/or enhancing of accountability of the government policing agencies to the community they serve*”.

To improve on crime control local communities in Yatta Sub-county must be directly get involved in policing exercise, there is need to develop a cultures of sharing responsibility and decision-making as well as sustained commitment from both government policing agencies and the community, with regard to safety and security needs; resolving conflict between and within community groupings through dialogue to enhance peace and stability and basing problem solving activities on a consultative approach that constantly seeks to approve responsiveness to identified community needs. Results show that security meetings are effective strategy for crime control (means = 4.15, std dev =0.36), members of the committee, attend the meetings regularly (means =3.60, std dev =0.14), security meeting are held at least twice in a month in all administrative units (means = 3.82 std dev =0.25) and members implement the decisions made at the meetings (means = 3.56 std dev =0.17)

5.0 Conclusion

Security meetings formed and integral part of effective crime prevention, given that they enhanced trust, cooperation, communication, ingenuity, integrity, initiative, discretion, leadership, responsibility, respect, and a broadened commitment to public safety and security.

6.0 Recommendations

Security meetings had a significant effect on crime prevention and control, it is imperative on the government through the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of Government to devise a thorough knowledge on mechanisms which generate, alter and alleviate the feeling of insecurity though security meetings. Equally, it is important to identify which social groups are most seriously affected by the problem and develop a framework that will guide the Rolling down of the programme. The security agencies should strive to hold regular and structured meetings which produce actionable resolutions which must be implemented.

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