

Effect of Peace Barazas on Crime Control in Machakos County, Kenya

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of peace barazas on crime control in Machakos. The study adopted descriptive case study research design so as to learn new insights and broaden the understanding of crime and crime control. The target population comprised of individuals who were directly or indirectly involved in crime control. These were the police officers, Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs, community policing members as well as senior village elders. Krejcie & Morgan sampling method was applied in coming up with the sample size. The research employed primary and secondary sources of data where primary data. From the study findings it's evident that peace Barraza were held at least three times in a month in all administrative units and members of the public attend the meetings whenever convened. The study concludes that practice is indeed an effective measure towards crime prevention and control in Machakos County. Through Peace Barazas, members together with security agents were able to identify and also address root causes of underlying conflict. The study recommended that measures should be taken by County Commissioners, to promote co-operation between local communities and regional authorities, particularly in criminal prevention. Peace actors should be capacitated with knowledge and skills so as to be able to discharge this mandate effectively. The National Steering Committee on peace building and conflict management should undertake the training and capacity building of peace committees.

Keywords: *Peace Barazas, Crime Control, Machakos County*

1.0 Introduction

The public participation bill 2018 provides a general framework for effective citizen involvement on issues affecting them such as development, crime. The National Government Coordination Act 2013 under section 15 provides for the appointment of National Administrative Officers who are responsible for the coordination of National Functions at the National and County levels of governance as set out in the Constitution 2010. It is through peace barazas that all matters pertaining crime, how to identify and report criminal's suspects as well as consequences of engaging in crime on an individual as well as the general public. The Kenya Civic Education Program established in 2009 emphasizes the role of public

education in informing citizens about their rights, roles and responsibilities on crime control through public forums such as barazas. The Institute of Social Accountability highlights how poor information management by duty bearers alienates citizens from effective engagement on issues that affect them such as crime. Involving the public is a procedural instrument that policy makers can use when shaping policies (Howlett, 2011). Different mechanisms of public participation include public forums such as barazas (Opiyo, Guyo, Moronge & Odhiambo, 2017).

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. Chumba, (2012) asserts that the security agents must improve their working relationship with the public they serve so as to effectively solve the security concerns that affect them. Christopher (2017) carried out a research in Nairobi County found out that there is need to partner with the public in every aspect of decision making including coming up with alternatives. He carried out his research in Busia County where he observed that leadership in Busia County demonstrated weak decision making process, inadequate communication and insufficient gathering of information and the solutions that best suit the problems they face. Christopher then suggested that other studies be carried out on effect of peace barazas on crime control in Machakos.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

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

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Realist theory describes that the world is a system of competing self-interested nations or states and that security studies play a key role in promoting peaceful coexistence (Baldwin, 1993). Realism believes that individuals have a probability of coming into conflicts whereby these conflicts encountered by human beings can be resolved generally through application of superior power, and thus realists are of the assumption that countries seeking to maximize their control. The realist sees lot of evil actions in the lives of human naturally and often finds recurrent patterns of evil deeds such as crime in humanity. Global security in the year 1976 was described as aspects with a straight bearing on a nation's structure and the members' sovereignty with firm accentuations on the control, threat and usage of force (Carnesale, 2016).

In the year 2012, Policy Strategy and the State Security of the US realized that threats imposed through anarchy in the global system impacts on the strategy of security (Stolberg, 2012) and security therefore is comprehended in the threat and insecurity language to the nations peaceful existence. Realist further argues that the organizations may offer laws to safeguard security though they don't eliminate the insecurity sources and hence it further undertakes that some threat exists in the global system. Realist therefore has defined security by using the language of nation interests and force (Stolberg 2012). Realist theory describes

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Realism believes that individuals have a probability of coming into conflicts and the conflicts can be resolved generally through application of superior power, and therefore realists undertake that countries or states seek to maximize their power. The realist sees lot of evil actions in the lives of human naturally and often finds recurrent patterns of evil deeds such as crime in humanity. Global security in year 1976 described security to be aspects with a straight comportment on the nation's structure and the members' sovereignty with firm accentuations on the control, threat and use of force (Carnesale, 1976). During the year 2012, the state security of US and the Strategy policy noted, threats that anarchy poses in the global system impacts on the strategy of security (Stolberg, 2012) and thus, security is comprehended in the threat and security language to peaceful existence of a nation. Realist further argues that the institutions might offer laws to safeguard security though they don't eliminate the insecurity sources and hence it then undertakes that some threat exists in the global system. Realist therefore has defined security by using the nation interests and force language (Stolberg 2012).

Thus, there has been domination of realism on the security study to a bigger extent and that can be proved on its dominance over security language researches specifically regarding nations as referent objects, anarchy and using force as major characteristics of the global system. The realist ideas can be applied in attempts of finding out best means that citizens can be involved in finding lasting solutions to security threats without applying the traditional methods of applying force by the security agents. It helps understand how well citizens can work closely with the security personnel to find lasting solutions to the security challenges that surround them such as crime. This study embarked on realist approach in that the theory clearly defines the world to be a system of contending self-interests result to conflict over power, limited resources or even access to Government resources that fuel crime rates as those disadvantaged fight for their own space and means of survival.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Peace Barazas and Crime Control

Citizens are central to governance. To make a difference for development, policy formulation and decision making, institutions and governments need to be visible and value citizen involvement. According to Mario (2015), involving the inhabitants is not supposed to be convoluted. The success of a big number of public policies relies on proper engagement of the inhabitants. Participation of the citizens enhances trust-building within the institutions we have. The trust of the citizens within the institutions tends to a big asset for nations since the trust allows for smooth execution of the public policies as well as delivery of services. The global community is identifying the critical significance of involving inhabitants with robust growth of open Government Partnership as well as the lively or continued discussion of engagement of the citizen in the process of Sustainable Development Goals.

In the US almost all inhabitants have a right of engaging in their nation's governance. Engagement of the inhabitant was established in mid-1960s where USA under President Lyndon Johnson established his Great Society Programs (Sharpe & Cogan, 1986). Inhabitants engage in various means in the government of America. The voting of officials happens in the electoral and the nominating processes. As well, they act as members of a committee in groups, writing letters receiving and sending information as well as calling up the hotlines.

As well, they are engaged in critical decisions for instance the schools to be closed or the way a particular new highway is supposed to go. They tend to be engaged in development of regulations and budgets; they serve the government and also the government serves them. Participation of the citizens in the government of America has a deeply and long entrenched history, and US still is amongst the major participatory of states. Involvement in US tends to be most frequent and direct at the domestic level whereas at greater levels the inhabitants depends a lot on representation.

The need for enhanced community consultation and involvement in South Africa is clearly outlined in the Constitution (1996). The South African Government regards citizen involvement as the cornerstone of democracy and service delivery not as a privilege but a constitutional right. Public involvement is a process that provides individuals with an opportunity to influence public decisions that affect their lives, security being one of them. It makes sure that the citizens own a direct say in decisions affecting them. Madumo and Thornhill (2011) pointed out, in the history of SA, the concept of ward committees (being a way of enhancing public involvement) was initially established in Cape of Good Hope where Burghers pushed for a bigger share in the Government of the Colony in the 18th Century. The Ward Masters governed those wards and they were in charge of keeping a record of individuals living in the regions and reporting to the High court committee on certain crime and municipal related issues.

Today, participation of the public is greatly deemed a standard exercise and it is deemed as an important feature for an effective contemporary democracy. This is supported by Wakeford and Pimbert (2011) who point out, democracy with no deliberation and participation of the citizens is a meaningless an empty concept. Creighton (2015) proposes some additional benefits of involving the public in that it enhances the value of the made decisions, it minimizes on costs and delays, it brings about building of consensus, increased convenience of execution, maintaining legitimacy and credibility, get ahead of the attitudes and concerns of the public and also development of the civil society. Davids, Caesar and Theron (2017) holds that involvement of the public results to a proper policy result of the matters on the table and helps the citizens to develop and better their living conditions. Engagement of the inhabitants builds a fresh direct relation between citizens and makers of decisions. Carrim (2011) states that inn the fresh system of the government of SA, municipalities is supposed to be strongly entrenched in the inhabitants.

In Kenya, peace barazas are used as avenues to communicate Government policies and decisions. They are also used as forums for people to express their wishes to the Government. The public participation bill 2018, an Act of Parliament provides a general framework for effective citizen involvement or participation on issues affecting them such as development as well as challenges such as crime. This Act enhances, promotes and facilitates citizen involvement in Governance processes and in particular to promote transparency and accountability in decision making as well as enhance public awareness and understanding of Government process and promote community ownership of public decisions that affect them. There exists a close relationship between peace education and crime control.

One mandate of National Government Administrative officers is to pass Government policies to the public as well as preach peace in such gatherings. This is provided for in the National Government Coordination Act, 2013 where National Government Administrative Officers appointed under section 15 are responsible for the coordination of National Government functions at the national and county levels of government as set out in the constitution or any

other law to the executive arm of government. It is through these forums that Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs, Assistant County Commissioners as well as Deputy County Commissioners discuss all matters pertaining crime, how to identify and report criminal suspects as well as negative consequences of crime on an individual and even the general public.

Citizens get power to participate on issues affecting them from the constitution. It is a constitutional right for the people and an obligation on the part of the government. Through peace barazas, citizens get to involve themselves in governance matters through this sovereign power vested upon them from the Constitution 2010. The duty bearers (leaders) who are mainly the Government representatives provide forums and opportunities for citizens to participate and engage in matters affecting their lives. These forums include peace barazas and peace meetings. This leads to improved coordination and cooperation between public officers and community members in strategizing on how to control crime hence fostering a secure environment for all. This civic education helps citizens feel that they belong and have trust in their government.

The Kenya National Civic Education program believes that civic education plays critical role in informing citizens about their rights and responsibilities mainly through public forums such as barazas. This education is aimed at increasing the citizens understanding of the Constitution as well as creates awareness of the reform process brought by the Constitution. Peace barazas results to Kenyans who are patriotic, who support initiatives of crime control and who actively participate in holding duty bearers and the general leadership into account. The Institute for Social Accountability TISA) emphasizes that poor information management on the part of duty bearers alienates citizens from effective engagement on issues that affect them such as security issues. This calls for strengthening of communication mechanisms such as barazas, meetings for proper planning and implementation of strategies on crime control.

3.0 Methodology

The study adopted descriptive case study research design so as to learn new insights and broaden the understanding of crime and crime control. The target population comprised of individuals who were directly or indirectly involved in crime control. These were the police officers, Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs, community policing members as well as senior village elders. Krejcie & Morgan sampling method was applied in coming up with the sample size. 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.

4.0 Results and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

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

Table 1: Public Peace Barazas Availability

Public Baraza	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	134	85.9
No	22	14.1
Total	156	100.0

Majority of the respondents as shown by 85.9% agreed that there were public peace barazas in their localities while 14.1% were of the contrary opinion. This therefore implies that there were there were public peace barazas which were considered to be effective means of crime control in Machakos County. The findings are in line with those of Mario (2015) who revealed that involving the inhabitants is not supposed to be convoluted. The success of a big number of public policies relies on proper engagement of the inhabitants. Participation of the citizens enhances trust-building within the institutions we have. The trust of the citizens within the institutions tends to a big asset for nations since the trust allows for smooth execution of the public policies as well as delivery of services.

Participants were required to clarify whether they had ever participated in Barraza's. Results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Participation in in a peace Barraza's

Participation	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	146	93.6
No	10	6.4
Total	156	100.0

Majority of the respondents as shown by 93.6% agreed that they participated in peace barazas while 6.4% were of the contrary opinion. This implies that majority of the participants had previously been involved in peace barazas and therefore they were in a position to give their views on effectiveness of peace barazas in security management in Machakos County. Creighton (2015) proposes some additional benefits of involving the public in that it enhances the value of the made decisions, it minimizes on costs and delays, it brings about building of consensus, increased convenience of execution, maintaining legitimacy and credibility, get ahead of the attitudes and concerns of the public and also development of the civil society. Respondents were asked to indicate their role in peace barazas. Results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Respondent's role in peace Barazas

Roles in Baraza	Frequency	Percentage
Convener	46	29.5
Participant	75	48.1
Peace maker	25	16.0
Never participated	10	6.4
Total	156	100.0

From the study findings, 75, (48.1%) of the respondents indicated that contributed in peace making process as general Participant, 46, (29.5%) of the respondents indicated as a mere as a convener, while 25, (6.4%) of the respondents indicated they participated as a Peace maker. This implies that in peace barazas, participants acted on various capacities among which include peace maker, community member or as a convector. Davids, Caesar and Theron (2017) holds that involvement of the public results to a proper policy result of the matters on the table and helps the citizens to develop and better their living conditions. Engagement of the inhabitants builds a fresh direct relation between citizens and makers of decisions.

4.1.1 Individual Coordinating the Peace Barraza

Participants indicated that, the peace Barraza's were coordinated by either the area chief, assistance chief, in rare occasions the sub- county commissioner were also present. in most cases the peace Barraza were held at least once per month.

4.1.2 Challenges in Implementing Peace Barazas

Reports show that holding peace Barraza's with members of the community (Barazas) is a challenge to the implementation of community policing, also inadequate collaboration among security agencies is a challenge to the impeding holding of peace Barraza's. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements relating on peace Barazas

Table 41: Statements relating on peace barazas

statements	Mean	Std Dev
Holding peace barazas is an effective crime control strategy	4.36	0.36
Peace Barraza are held at least three times in a month in all administrative units	4.00	0.25
Members of the public attend the meetings whenever convened	3.85	0.74

From the study findings majority of the respondents agreed that (mean =4.36 std dev = 0.36) Peace Barraza are held at least three times in a month in all administrative units (mean =4.00 std dev = 0.25) and members of the public attend the meetings whenever convened (mean = 3.85 std dev = 0.74)

4.1.3 Measures to Enhance Security Though Peace Barraza

In order to effectively implement the community policing, through peace Baraza, there is need to creating self-awareness in the society, provide more funding, deploy adequate number police officers in each area must be assigned. On job training must be given the officers so as to update and scale up their knowledge and skill on crime management issues in general and community policing implementation in particular. Government and any concerned body must give emphasis to the programme. Enough budgets, fulfilling essential materials to officers is a must to implement community policing.

4.2 Discussion of the Findings

There were public peace barazas which were considered to be effective means of crime control in Yatta Sub-county, Machakos County, majority of the participants had previously been involved in peace barazas and therefore they were in a position to give their views on effectiveness of peace barazas in security management in Yatta Sub-county in Machakos County., 75, (48.1%) of the respondents indicated that contributed in peace making process as general Participant, 46, (29.5%) of the respondents indicated as a mere as a convener , while 25, (6.4%) of the respondents indicated they participated as a peace maker . This implies that in peace barazas, participants acted on various capacities among which include peace maker, community member or as a convector. Participants indicated that, the peace Barraza's were coordinated by either the area chief, assistance chief, in rare actions the sub-county commissioner were also the view of majority were that in most cases the peace Barraza were held at least once per month.

Reports show that holding peace Barraza's with members of the community (Barazas) is a challenge to the implementation of community policing, also inadequate collaboration among

security agencies is a challenge to the impending holding of peace Barazas. From the study findings it is evident that peace Barazas were held at least three times in a month in all administrative units (mean = 4.00 std dev = 0.25) and members of the public attend the meetings whenever convened (mean = 3.85 std dev = 0.74)

5.0 Conclusion

Although Peace Barazas are considered amongst the traditional security management approach this study concludes that practice is indeed an effective measure towards crime prevention and control in Machakos County. Through Peace Barazas, members together with security agents were able to identify and also address root causes of underlying conflict.

6.0 Recommendations

Although public peace barazas were found to be traditional and less effective, their contribution cannot be underestimated, therefore measures should be taken by County Commissioners, to promote co-operation between local communities and regional authorities, particularly in criminal prevention. Peace actors should be capacitated with knowledge and skills so as to be able to discharge this mandate effectively. The National Steering Committee on peace building and conflict management should undertake the training and capacity building of peace committees.

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