STRATEGIES AND IMPACT OF COMMUNITY POLICING IN KIKUYU DISTRICT IN KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA

Kyulu, Francis Makau ✉

School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Kenyatta University, Kenya

m_kyulu@yahoo.com

Casper O. Masiga

Lecturer, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Kenyatta University, Kenya

mapero.operee@gmail.com

Abstract

The initiative of crime prevention and control through community policing has come in time as traditional policing failed to deal with problem of crime. This study assessed the strategies and impact of community policing on crime prevention and control in Kikuyu District in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study was guided by the contingency theory and descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised of 219 village elders and 214 junior police officers. Sample sizes of 50% of the target populations were enrolled in the study. In addition four police commanders, three community policing committee leaders and one National Government Administrative officer were purposively sampled and interviewed as key informants. Questionnaires were used to collect primary data from village elders and junior police while key informant interview schedules were used as primary data police commanders, community policing committee leaders, and National Government Administrative officer. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data was analysed using the thematic method. The study findings revealed that there was marked decrease in criminal activities as a result of community policing effort strategies adopted. However, the study revealed that mistrust/negative attitude towards police is major challenges facing community policing. The study recommends the government to come up with new community relations service strategies and policies to alleviate mistrust/negative attitude towards police.

Keywords: Community policing, Community involvement, Strategies, Impact, Crime solving, Mutual trust

INTRODUCTION

Policing functions within society have continuously become numerous, diverse and complex as the policing environment changes in the course of history. The processes of democratization, liberalization, constitutional developments and globalization have placed new demands on policing worldwide (Gills, 2000). The history of policing has been a history of police reforms carried out at varied intervals to meet prevailing and emerging challenges in tandem with democratization and constitutional developments (Jones, Newburn & Smith, 1994). Overtime according to The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), police organizations have undertaken policy, legislative and institutional changes to cope with developments within the political, economic and social arena (UNODC, 2011). With the rise of democratic institutions around the world, governments and civil societies have looked for ways to transform police agencies from organizations that have served to control citizens to organizations that are accountable to citizens (Neild, 2001).

The evolution of policing overtime has been characteristic of a movement from a politicized system to professionalism, then to constitutionalism, and ultimately to community policing (Virta, 2006).The community approach is a modern progressive and contemporary policing approach which is based on the assumption that the police alone cannot control crime and that they require the active support of the community to prevent and detect crime, reduce fear of crime, and improve communication between the community and the police. In the last three decades community policing (CP) has attracted increasing attention as a strategy to improve public security and safety. As an alternative policing strategy, it has been in existence for about three decades and has been widely practiced in North America and Europe (Brogden, 2004). Given the adversarial characteristics of the relationship between the police and the public in most developing countries, CP has been presented as viable strategy to re-build trust between the police and the public and to improve security (Muller, 2010).

While traditional policing has been characterized by reactive responses to crime, community policing emphasizes proactive problem solving to prevent and otherwise control crime (Sparrow, 1988; Maguire, 1997).The CP approach is a modern progressive and contemporary policing approach which is based on the assumption that the police alone cannot control crime and that they require the active support of the community to prevent and detect crime, reduce fear of crime, and improve communication between the community and the police. It is a process by which crime control is shared, or co-produced with the public, and a means of developing communication with the public thus enhancing the quality of life of local communities and building police legitimacy" (Virta, 2006).

Community policing can be traced back to the introduction of community constables, known as 'bobbies', by Sir Robert Peel in the newly created Metropolitan London Police District during the early 19th century (Patterson, 2007). Sir Robert Peel rationalized that "the police are the public and the public are the police" (Fridell & Wycoff, 2004). This statement forms the bases of community policing and as such the police should not be separated from the public. They should however be joined in partnership with the community towards dealing with the problems of crime and disorder.

In North America CP development has generally followed a trajectory, drawing deeply on Anglo-American roots, concerns, and police models. The policing philosophy recognized the importance of community problems, priorities, and relationships. The problems of the Anglo-Saxon crime fighting models were to be resolved by an historical resurrection of the solution in the community. Community policing as a concept was first introduced in the US in the 1960's to increase police-community contact and reduce the fear of crime (Cordner, 1999). It became a dominant policing strategy in the United States during the 1990's with the introduction of 100,000 new community police officers (Ibid). The deployment presented a change of focus to encourage problem solving and community engagement as opposed to reactive policing (Innes, 2003).

In Europe community policing is the dominant policing strategy in the western countries including Holland and Sweden (Mastrofski & Uchida, 1993). Community policing schemes in Sweden are geared towards reduction of crime and disorder. They are characterized by crime prevention strategies and build in evaluation measures. In Denmark, neighbourhood police stations are common and some quarter of police officers serve as the community police (Trojanwick and Bucqueroux, 1990). Through community policing the Danish police carry out various preventive measures including bringing together schools, social workers and neighbourhood police in one house which provide a troubleshooting base for a variety of police community functions (Ibid). The 'race riots' in the UK in the 1980s are thought by many to have accelerated the development of community policing and more targeted police responses in particular neighbourhoods. It developed over time from tactics to repair police and minority relations after the riots to becoming a central pillar of policing efforts for the wider population.

Community policing in Africa is generally characterized by encouraging community participation in crime prevention and public safety schemes. After the collapse of the apartheid regime and the shift towards a democratic government, South Africa faced growing crime levels. Subsequently, national policies on security and safety have focused on community control, the structuring of the South Africa Police Service (SAPS), and on setting up public-private partnerships (Tait, 2003). According to Mengistu, Pindur and Leibold (2000), community policing

in South Africa is based on a partnership between community and police with the aim of finding creative solutions for contemporary community problems, crime and other related matters.

CP has been adopted in many of the developing countries emerging from different kinds of conflicts or making a transition from years of authoritarian rule characterized by politicization of policing institutions, gross abuse of human rights by the police and lack of accountability (Ruteere & Pommerolle, 2003), which created a poor relationship between the police and the public (Goldsmith, 2005). Advocates of CP regard it as a viable alternative to address the problems of trust and lack of accountability in the police. In Kenya, efforts to establish community police partnership programs started at the beginning of the 1990s spearheaded by the private sector in partnership with the police and were limited within the Nairobi central business district (Ruteere & Pommerolle, 2003). The adoption of CP as a crime reduction strategy in Kenya derives on the understanding that, criminals live among the community either as friends, siblings and or relatives. To reduce crime, therefore, the members of the community should proactively collaborate promptly with the police. As part of the national police reforms, community-policing projects have been initiated in various parts of Kenya since its roll out by the government in April 2005. The report of the National Task Force on Police Reforms formed after the 2007-08 post-election violence further made a strong case that CP should be strengthened in order to ensure the participation of the public in provision of public safety and security services. It also recommended the fast tracking of a National Community Policing Policy (NCPP) to provide a legal and institutional framework for the implementation of CP (GoK, 2009). Consequently among the areas where CP pilot projects have been initiated is Kikuyu District in Kiambu County. It is against this background that the study focuses on the district to assess the impact of CP with a view of identifying pertinent community policing strategies and suggesting an improved community policing strategy for Kenya. The period after the mid-80s saw increase in criminal violence, which has been attributed to the tensions of changes in the social, political and economic spheres. Poverty-induced frustration, unemployment and increased school drop-out led many young people to engage in criminal activities (Gecaga, 2007). The inability of the police to deal with crime and cases of collusion with criminals reduced the confidence of people in this institution. Helpless in the hands of criminals, this period saw the rise of private initiatives which led to the proliferation of vigilante /urban militia groups as people sought to guarantee themselves of security from criminals, (Ibid; Hills 2007). While assessing the true nature of crime is difficult, there have been perceptions that crime in Kenya has been spiralling out of control (GoK, 2009). This has caused considerable anxiety among the public. However, while recent official statistics suggest declining trends in most crimes with 2004 recording more cases

in the major categories with the exception of drug related cases that have picked in 2005; the fear of crime still dominates public minds.

Statement of the Problem

Crime and the resultant fear of crime have overtime threatened the quality of life of the societies in the world. In the global system of independent nations crime and social disorder are dealt with by the specific national Police agency. Over time, the national police agencies have been expected to ensure a society in which people are freed from fear of crime and social disorder. The participatory turn in public security and safety is a fairly recent phenomenon. It has been attributed to the dominance of the neo-liberal approaches to governance (Pelser 1999; Muller, 2010) and the emergence and prominence of participatory democracy that has created room for consideration of alternative forms of service delivery thus challenging the state-centric model that has been dominant for much of the 19th century. As a result, the monopoly of the state as a provider of public services has been changing with entrance of non-state actors laying a claim to what was normally the preserve of the state. While other public sectors such as health, education and agriculture have for long embraced non-state actors in their model of service delivery, the security sector has not until rather recently began to undergo such changes by accommodating, although reluctantly, other actors partnerships in service delivery (Marks, Shearing and Wood, 2009).

These partnerships include private security firms and the community. However, despite many countries in the developing world adapting and implementing Community Policing (CP) in the last two decades, available literature suggests that there is still a significant divide between the official intentions and the practical realities (Brogden 2004; Kyed 2009). Nevertheless this has not dampened the enthusiasm for CP because countries like Kenya have considered adapting and expanding their reach as it is perceived as an important element in the reforms of policing strategies. Since CP in Kenya is still at its early stages of institutionalization, this study seeks to evaluate its impact on crime prevention and control in Kenya in view of establishing its usefulness in dealing with the problem of crime and disorder in Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Community Policing Strategies

Community policing should be designed to fit specific needs and resources of each community (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux 1998). The first critical step in preparing to implement community policing is to raise the public's awareness (Ramsay, 2002). It is the responsibility of the police to initiate programs that provide the residents with the skills they need to practice community

policing in their neighbourhood (Ibid). Training should focus as much on the community as the police (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux 1998). The goal of such training is to reach a point where the community can deal with crime and disorder problems on their own without the assistance of government. Considerations for the type of training are cultural awareness, improvement of communication skills, dispute resolution abilities and contact skills.

Police departments throughout the United States have been involved in community training for many years (Ramsay, 2002). This truly community-based approach not only ensures greater resident access to the training but also sends a powerful message that the police consider this training so critical that they will come to the community to provide it. Without education and training the residents risk being unduly influenced and misinformed. In Kenya to create a platform conducive for the working of the program, the CP policy framework's main objectives are to: improve on information sharing and handling by creating awareness on the part of the members of the public on the nature and quality of information required for security purposes; building a strong partnership that enables consultation and participation; provide human and physical capacities and mobilisation of adequate resources for successful implementation of CP.

A community policing program must be a department wide philosophy that is maintained at all times (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1998). Developing a common strategic vision in community policing in partnership with key stakeholders is critical for the success of a community policing program. The big six groups that must work together in order for community policing to be successful are the Police Department, the Community, Elected Officials, the Business Community, Other Agencies (Social services, Public health department and non-profit organizations) and the Media. It is easier to take large ideas and make them smaller and more manageable (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1998).

The process of design and implementation of CP initiative involves multiple agencies at different levels based on their specific interests. Key stakeholders include: the private sector represented through the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) who have been active in the early experiments mostly in Nairobi by providing funding for the first pilot programs; NGOs such as Saferworld and PeaceNet, a Kenyan NGO supported by donors, playing some role in advocacy, funding training and production of curriculum and materials, as well as supporting some pilot projects. NGOs are considered vital in terms of education and sensitisation of the public. The Provincial Administration and internal Security Ministry (administrative officers and police officers) through their national network conduct trainings and raise awareness, especially through the role of the local chiefs and sub-chiefs. They are expected to 'explain, support and

disseminate CP programs and ideas in various public security and development functions within their jurisdiction (GoK 2009a).

CP is built on the principles of voluntarism, partnership, prioritization of community needs, legal compliance, emphasis on promoting trust between communities and the police based on integrity responsiveness, transparency, and accountability and being proactive. Ultimately, CP is expected to lead to improved community safety, reduced crime and the fear of crime, enhance access to justice and create more peaceful communities (Saferworld, 2008). Effective community policing, however, calls for constant supervision. Supervisors can assist officers and community members in developing and managing problem solving systems and address the progress made in the accomplishments of dealing with crime and disorder.

The models through which CP is operationalized differ across countries. In Latin America, for example, Frühling (2007) identifies three models, namely through a central commission that is vested with no power to make any binding decisions and whose members are drawn from different sectors of the government, non-government and the police; a mixed model that combines the activities of local committees and a central commission; and thirdly, a model where police and community relations are totally decentralised corresponding to respective police stations (Frühling, 2007). The third model seems to be more prevalent in different contexts in Africa and Latin America where it takes the form of Community Policing Forums (South Africa), Community Policing Committees (Mozambique & Mexico City), Community Liaison Officers (Zimbabwe & Uganda), and Crime Prevention Panels (Malawi) (Kyed, 2009). In some contexts members of these units are formally elected such as in Mexico and South Africa, while in others, they volunteer on the basis of their position as important social actors in the community. Similarly, their functions vary across different countries: the two primary functions replicated widely include sharing criminal intelligence information between police and the public and promotion of dialogue between officers and members of the community, (Brogden 2004); other functions include ensuring accountability, setting policing priorities and evaluation of policing services though there are variations on the extent to which these are emphasised depending on context (Frühling, 2007).

The Benefits of Community Policing

CP as an alternative policing strategy has been in existence for about three decades and has been widely practiced in North America and Europe than in other regions (Brogden 2004). Its spread in the developing countries is credited to the globalisation of policing through international aid programs geared towards reforming policing organisations in these countries (Brogden 2004; Hills 2008) but also due to increase in crime, which the traditional model of

police is unable to address in contexts of limited resources (Ruteere & Pommerolle, 2003). Debate continues on major aspects of CP, but there is near consensus on its key objective of '(re)establishment of confidence in the police by bringing them into closer contact with the local population' and also making them more accountable to the local residents (Muller 2010), in addition to promoting problem solving with its emphasis on 'consensual extra-legal strategies' instead of reliance on the instruments of the criminal law and procedures to solve local policing problems (Brogden, 2002).The foundations of a successful community policing strategy are the close, mutually beneficial ties between police and community members.

According to Skogan (2006) CP is considered a popular contemporary policing approach that responds to the decline in public confidence in police, and the growing evidence that police forces themselves cannot fight crime. With the police no longer being the sole guardians of law and order, all members of the community become active allies in the effort to enhance the safety and quality of neighbourhoods. One of the most obvious changes that normally come with community policing is the assignment of territorial responsibilities (Oliver, 1998). Officers are assigned their professional territory and are responsible for what happens in that area. They now have an opportunity and obligation to have an impact of difficult problems (Ibid). The gathering of information first hand and learning about the dynamics of the community allows the police to do a better job overall (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990).

The police and the public both benefit from community policing (Whisenand & Ferguson, 2002). On the other hand, the public receives a commitment to crime prevention and because they are directly involved, they will gain knowledge on how police operations are conducted. Officers will not only be held accountable to their supervisor but also to the public (Ibid). The police obtain greater citizens support and share the responsibility. They receive greater job satisfaction and have better internal relationships (Whisenand & Ferguson, 2002). Community policing also provide the police an opportunity to work directly with the young before their problems escalate to the point where arrest and incarceration are inevitable (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1998).There is no question that the placement of a community policing philosophy is expensive but when it comes to helping our children "nothing can beat the human touch" (Ibid).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted descriptive survey design to structure the research and bring all the major parts of research work together in addressing the research questions. The study employed interviews and questionnaires to collect data from the participants. Both qualitative and

quantitative approaches were used in order to capture and analyze all the necessary data comprehensively.

Study Location

The study was conducted in Kikuyu district in the Kiambu County, Kenya. The district is located to the west of Nairobi City and comprises of four divisions, 14 locations and 30 sub locations and covers an area of 233 sq. km. Kikuyu district has overtime experienced a rapid population growth, due to its proximity to Nairobi city, with the population mostly composed of people working in the City of Nairobi. Despite the good agricultural soils, farming plots in Kikuyu district have gradually grown too small for farming and as such many people have opted to convert some of these plots into residential or commercial areas, for low income housing which is more profitable. Due to the prevailing circumstances, the community in the district is fairly heterogeneous hence expected to provide adequate information for generalisation. The district presents a favourite environment for the study because it has an existing community policing pilot-project.

Study Population

The study targeted a population that included the village elders (men and women aged between 18 and 65 years) and police officers of within Kikuyu district. The study used the village elders since they are the ones handling matters involving the community in the district. There were 219 village elders involved in community policing and 214 police officers, both Kenya Police and Administration Police officers serving in Kikuyu District during the period of the study.

Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Populations of village elders were grouped based on their administrative wards (strata) and a simple random technique used to select a sample from each division. The method allowed an unbiased manner of selection of participants so that each potential participant had an equal possibility of being selected to the sample and thus the samples will yield data that can be generalised to the whole population. From the target population of 219 village elders, 50% (109) and three CP committee leaders were randomly selected from village, location and district community policing committees based on their relative participation levels in community policing activities within the district. This is because they are considered to be rich in information on community policing as they are the entry points within all other categories. Hence the study sample population was 222 respondents comprising of village elders, police commanders,

community policing committee leaders, central government administrative officers and police officers

Police officers within the police posts were also sampled using the simple random sampling method to ensure that all officers had equal and independent chances of being selected without bias. From the target population of 214 police officers 50% (107) was randomly selected. In addition two Police commanders one from each police formation were purposively sampled based on their relative participation levels in community policing activities within the district.

Research Instruments

Questionnaires and key informant interview schedules to collect information from the respondents. Questionnaires were used to collect data from the sample of police officers and village elders and members of the community policing forums. The questionnaires were used because of their ability to collect information from large samples and uphold confidentiality as well as saving on costs and time. A structured key informant interview schedule were used to guide interviews with the police commanders, central government administrative heads of the four divisions and leaders of the community policing forums because of its flexibility to gather in-depth information on the subject of the study.

Instruments Reliability and Validity

A pilot study was conducted in Kabete district involving 10 community elders and 10 police officers using test re-test method. The two results were subjected to Cronbach Alpha correlation to test the questionnaires reliability. Cronbach Alpha correlation results score was above 0.7 which was an indicator the questionnaires were reliable. The pilot study was also used to test the feasibility of the study and also check the adequacy of the research instruments. The pilot study checked on any unforeseen problems respondents may encounter while interacting with research instruments and informed the improvement of the instruments. It assisted in ascertaining the accuracy and consistency of the research instruments before embarking on the actual data collection.

The validity of the research instruments was emphasized in this study due to its value in determining whether the research accurately measures what it envisioned to measure. The research instruments were subjected to content validity by engaging subject matter specialist who ensured the items addresses specific objectives of the study. The responses from the pilot study assisted in determining whether the questions and topics reflected in the instruments are accurately prompting the types of responses expected.

Data Collection

Primary data was gathered by assisted and self-administering of questionnaires to respondents with the help of research assistants. The questionnaires were distributed to village elders and members of the community policing forums during their monthly meetings. Primary data also gathered by interviewing police commanders, national government administrators and leaders of community policing committee. On the other hand, secondary data was collected through extracting information related to the topic from police records.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data was analysed using the thematic analysis method. On the other hand, quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, modes, means, variances or standard deviations to examine the impact of community policing based on the three independent variables. Cross-tabulation was used to facilitate relationship between the study variables. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer application was used to facilitate the data analysis. Analysed quantitative findings were presented in tables and charts while qualitative results were presented as verbatim key voices.

Data Management and Ethical Considerations

To ensure safety and confidentiality, data was stored electronically by use of computer and protected with passwords to deny unauthorized access. Respondents were assured of their safety and confidentiality and informed that the research is for academic purpose only. An informed consent was, however, sought from all the respondents. Authority to carry out the study was sought from the university and in addition, permission to collect data from the government administrative officers was sought from the County Commissioner and the Police department respectively.

RESULTS

Background Information on Community Policing

Elders at 38.2 %, business community and community organisations like faith organisations form a sizeable portion of important stakeholder at 30% and 22.7 % respectively. The media which is a powerful tool in information dissemination scored 9.1% which means it's not a prominent stakeholder especially in the rural areas where in most cases media don't operate. It was established that majority (97%) of the respondents agreed that NPS involves the community to fight crime in Kikuyu district. Study findings revealed that information sharing (86.8%) was the major form of partnership between the community and NPS in CP activities.

Others were problem solving (17.6 %), training (12.1%) and resource mobilization at 9.9%.   A number of reasons were advanced on failure of the community to partner with police in CP. Mistrust of the police by the community being the major (34.5%) reason, reluctant to embrace CP and negative perception on police officers equally scored 25.5 % while lack of confidentiality among the police scoring 14.5%. All the reasons advanced calls for awareness creation in order to bring the community and police together in their effort to make CP a success. The study established that a wide range of crime concern affected Kikuyu district. These crimes comprised of burglary/house breaking coming first at 25.5 %, assault (17.5%), robbery (17.1%). Other are carjacking/dismantling of car parts, mugging, drugs, rape and defilement, Illegal brews, organised criminal gangs and stock theft.

Strategies Used in Community Policing

General Involvement of The Community in Solving Crime Related Concern

Research findings found that information sharing (55.1%) is the major strategy largely used by NPS to involve the community to address crime related concern in the district. Other strategies include, intelligence gathering at 10.8%, attending CP committees meetings (8.2%), initiating patrol groups with the community (6.3%) among other strategies. Information sharing strategy is preferred because it ultimately leads to all other strategies identified which are information acquisition related.

Community Involvement in Identifying and Reporting Crimes Facing the Community

The study established that 43.2% secretly report to the police, 41.4% use CP committee meetings while 8.4% report to the area chief. From the study findings it implies that the community is having more confidence with the police resulting with many citizens preferring to deal with police directly. Reporting to the area chiefs has not been neglected though it is not highly preferred; the reason could be diminishing role of the chiefs, long chain of reporting and possibly reduced respect of the chief system among the community in Kikuyu district.

Community Involvement in Solving Crime

Participation has increasingly become one of the criteria by which public programs and projects are to be evaluated. The aim of applying participation is to 'make people central to development by encouraging beneficiary involvement in interventions that affect them and over which they previously had limited control or influence. It is with this in mind that the study sought to establish the extent to which community members are involved in problem solving. It was

established that 49.5% to a large extent were involved, 45% to fair extent and 5.5% to a small extent.

On police and community partnerships in dealing with crime problem and disorder, the study established that majority (88.4%) of the elders agreed that positive relationship exists between police and has been sustained, whereas 11.6% did not agree. 88.4% of the community has been participating in community policing, while 11.6% has not been involved. 88.45 of the community and police are jointly involved in crimes prevention, whereas 11.6% did not agree. 55.8% felt that that community needs has not been incorporated in community policing, whereas 44.2% agrees on the same. 54.7% felt that the rate of involvement of the community in crime prevention and control efforts is adequate whereas 45.3% are to the contrary opinion. 50.5% of the elders agree that there is adequate proactive involvement of the community in dealing with the problems of crime and disorder; however, 49.5% feel that there is no adequate proactive involvement of the community in dealing with the problems of crime and disorder.

Involvement of Elders

The study deemed it important to establish reasons of elders' involvement in CP. Figure 1 presents the findings.
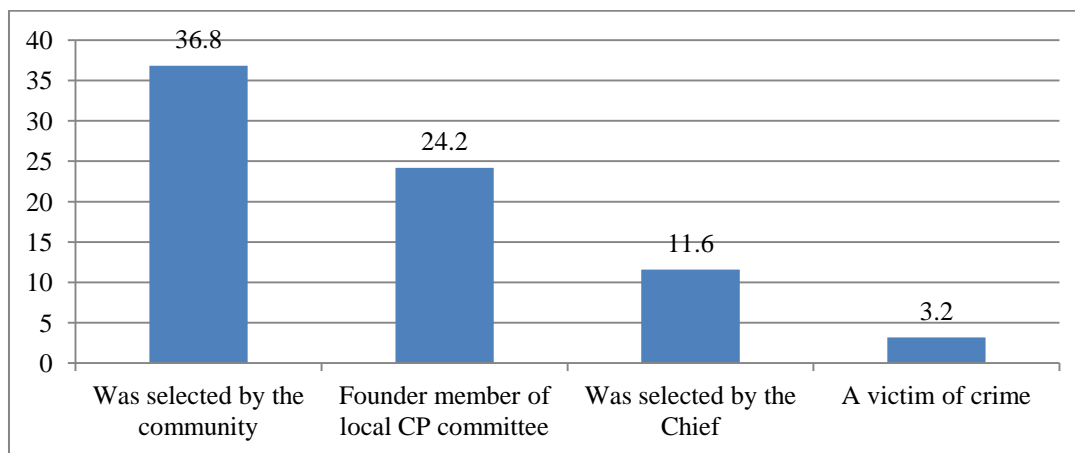

Figure 1: Reasons for elders' involvement in community policing

The study findings shows that 36.8% indicated the reasons for elders being involved in community policing was due to being selected by the community members, 24.2% because he/she is founder of the CP, 11.6% were selected by the chief and 3.2% of the elders being a victim of crime in the area. From the study findings, it can be deduced that the community has a great say on who should sit on the CP committees. It also implies that the chiefs still have

influence on the selection of committee members. It also implies that being a victim of crime has no major influence on one to be involved in CP activities unlike being a founder member.

The study revealed that elders played different roles which includes, provision of intelligence (70.9%), committee official (14.2%), representative of faith organisation, business community and youth/ women at 6.7%, 4.5% and 3.7% respectively. From the study findings it implies that apart from the official role of each member of the CP committees the elders have a critical responsibility of gathering intelligence on behalf of the NPS.

Proactive Problem Solving in Dealing With Crime

The study established that 70% of the respondents were in agreement that there is an enhanced programme on proactive problem solving mechanism in partnership between NPS and the community, 30% did not agree on that view. On the issue of elimination or reduction of crime problems, 78% were of the view that crime has not been eliminated or reduced while 22% felt that it has been eliminated or reduced altogether. 55% of the respondents were of the view that proactive problem solving has led to deterrent of offenders, have protected victims and has made crime prone areas less conducive for recurrence while 45% was not in agreement on the same. Though the respondents have agreed there is a programme of addressing proactive problem solving in dealing with problem of crime the initiative have not been fully adopted.

Community Policing Committees or Forums

The study results revealed that 96.7% of the respondent are aware of the presence of CP committees or forums while a partly 3.3% are not aware of such forums. The high score implies that the officers are usually involved in all police activities, CP being one of such activities. This was confirmed by the deputy officer commanding station, who noted that;

"As a standing order each and every police officer in general duty must be involved in community policing activities as one way of fighting crime in Kikuyu district. Even the traffic policemen who do not directly deal with criminal assignments are sensitised on CP in order to make the initiative all inclusive in terms information sharing among all officers"(Deputy OCS, O,I, 15/09/2013.).

Formation of Structure of CP Committee

The study found that there is well established structure of CP committees from the district level, locational level, and sub-locational level down to the village level. The CP committees meets once in a month and hold emergency meeting as need arises. The guidelines for CP committees operations are clearly stipulated by NPS guidelines on CP operations and it was

confirmed by commander of AP at Kikuyu District Administration Police Head quarter who indicated that,

"There is a written guidelines on how to manage CP committees on when to meet, who chairs the meeting and how to communicate the deliberation to relevant authorities"

The guideline stipulates that the meetings must be held once in a month for sub-location, location and district committees and be chaired by a civilian. The NPS sits in the meetings and are responsible of taking minutes at the district forum only.

Enhancement of mutual trust and confidence between police and community

Mutual trust and confidence between police and community is one of the strategies of CP which ensures the problem of crime is addressed. It is with this mind, the study sought to establish how mutual trust and confidence is enhanced between police and community. The findings are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Mutual trust and confidence enhancement between police and community

Mutual trust and confidence enhancement strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation
Police officers responses		
Constant presence of police officers through informed beats and patrols in their territories	4.04	.893
Developing a common strategic vision in community policing in partnership with key stakeholders	3.51	.970
Established community neighbourhood watches	3.23	1.116
Joint training programs on the practice community policing in neighbourhood	3.20	1.035
Constant supervision of the community policing initiative by police commanders and community leaders.	3.19	1.556
Involving the media and other stakeholder in awareness programs	3.07	1.114
Community responses		
Joint training programs on the practice community policing in neighbourhood	2.68	1.249
Developing a common strategic vision in community policing in partnership with key stakeholders	1.95	.867
Constant presence of police officers through informed beats and patrols in their territories	2.62	1.064
Established community neighbourhood watches	2.40	.983
Constant supervision of the community policing initiative by police commanders and community leaders.	2.06	1.201

Key: (1: Poor; 2: Fair; 3: Average; 4: Good; 5: Very good)

Table 1 findings (mean>3.0) indicate that most of the police officers were in agreement there is; constant beats and patrols by police officers, there is development common strategic vision of

CP, there is establishment community neighbourhood watches, joint training programs, constant supervision of the CP and involvement of the media.

However, the study findings (mean -2.85) the community respondents agree that there is poor presence of police officers through informed beats and patrols in the territories, mean (~2.71) and a standard deviation (~1) shows that community members feel that there is poor joint program on the practice community policing in the neighbourhood, mean (~2.31) and a standard deviation (~1) also agreed that there is poor establishment of community watches, mean (~1.80) and a standard deviation (~1) feel that there is poor constant supervision of the community policing by police commanders and community leaders and also there is poor development of common strategic vision in community policing partnership with key stakeholders as shown in Table 1.

Some authors are sceptical and highlight examples that suggest that CP does not lead to better relations between the police and the public, especially those marginalised socially and (Frühling, 2007; Kyed, 2009; Muller 2010). Discussing the experience of community policing forums (CPFs) in South Africa, Brogden (2002) finds little impact in improving understanding and changing mutual perceptions. Muller finds little change in the image of the police when it comes to the problem of 'arbitrary and sometimes criminal behaviour' as agents attached to CP in Mexico City continued to be accused of involvement in "extortion of local residents and delinquents' (Muller, 2010).

Following Frühling (2007), this study is also doubtful that community police partnership can transform the public apathy towards the police without addressing the fundamental causes of the police performance, which as we have noted, has linkages to other issues such as availability of equipment for the police and improving working conditions and terms of employment. On this point, it is hoped that the on-going police reforms will provide more resources to address the issue of lack of requisite tools if CP is to have any hope of making a contribution in changing public attitudes.

Training of Elders in Community Policing

The study findings clearly indicated that majority (95.8%) of the elders are trained on CP while 4.2% indicated that they are not. This implies that the NPS has a clear plan of ensuring that CP succeeds by training almost every member of the CP committee. The CP guidelines stipulates it is a must and NPS has done exactly so. It was also established majority (71.1%) got their training from NPS, 16.7% from NPS and Foreign government while 12.3% were trained by fellow elders. No training was conducted by NGOs or advocacy organisations. The reason why the NPS has scored highly is because it is the Kenya government through the NPS which has

the role of initiating CP policing and it is mandatory for all CP members to be formally trained before embarking on CP activities. The elders who are experienced on issues of CP are allowed to train a new member who joins an existing CP committee to ensure smooth running of the committees. There is a joint programme between NPS in Kikuyu district and the Swiss government on training and exchange programme for experience sharing thus accounting for a significant role of a foreign government in CP activities in Kikuyu district. Apparently there is no training that was conducted by NGOs or any advocacy organisations. The reason why the NGOs or any advocacy organisations are involved is because of their tendency to be critical of any government plans and the mostly operate in major towns, a view that was supported by one CP committee leader who observed,

"The NGOs and civil society have not been involved in the CP work due to their habit of criticising the government. We invite them whenever we are having our meetings but they don't turn up. They only turned up during the first anniversary celebrating initiation of CP work in the district but were not happy because they complained it's a government project with no funding and therefore they don't see any reason to participate"

Davis, et al. (2003) observe that 'few people tend to participate on a regular basis and those that do often feel that their concerns are secondary to those defined by police (2003) while Frühling (2007) finds that citizens are not well prepared to interact with the police and to take action to resolve the security issues that affect them.

Impacts of CP Efforts to Prevent and Control Crime in Kikuyu District
Estimated Number of Crime Cases Reported Per Month in 2010 And 2011
At the level of the community, the way the police and the community interact and the dynamics of the interaction are considered important for the success of CP. The success is reflected by the trend on the number of criminal cases reported within a given period. It is with this in mind that the study sought to know the statistics of reported crime before and after the initiation of CP effort in Kikuyu district. The study findings are shown Figure 2.
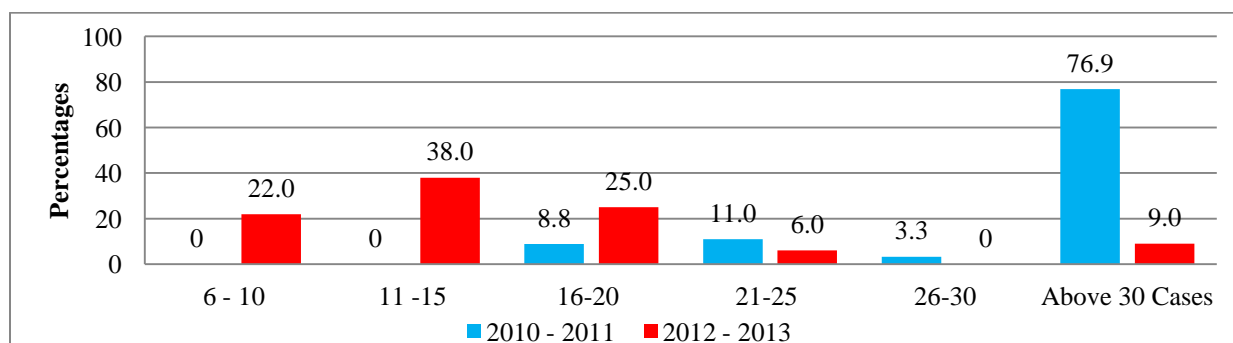

Figure 2: Reported criminal cases per month in 2010 and 2011 in the district

As indicated by the comparison study results for 2010 -2011 and 2012 -2013 in Figure 2, there was a marked decrease of reported crime cases. For example in 2010 -2011, majority (76.9%) of the reported cases was above 30 cases per month in the district, but in 2012 - 2013 period the number of reported cases drops by almost by half recording 38% for 11 – 15 cases per month in the district. The marked decrease in reported cases can be attributed to the CP efforts which have led to either criminals changing their ways, moving out of Kikuyu district, increased convictions or crime related problems addressed by the village elders before they are reported. This is supported by an interview done by the study where one CP policing chairperson noted that,

"These days the community is making use of the village elder's courts organised by the Chiefs and Assistants chiefs to solve family disputes, stock theft and petty crime instead of reporting them to the police. The reason why villagers are referring such cases to the elders is due to the CP initiative where by the community is encouraged to solve their disputes at the local level using the elder's courts.

Reasons for reduction of reported crimes

The study found it importance to establish the contribution of CP efforts in crime reduction. The results are shown by Figure 3.
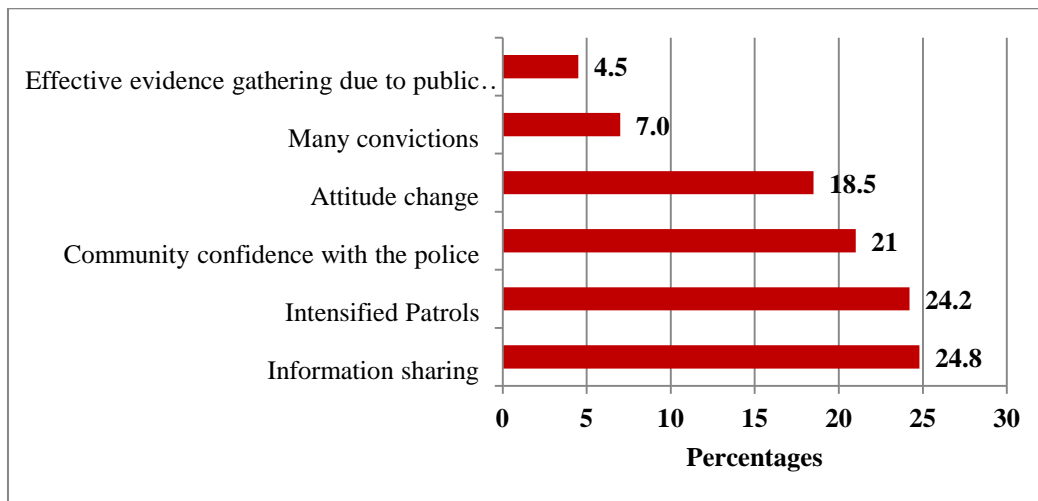

Figure 3: Contribution of CP efforts in crime reduction

From the study findings in Figure 3, of the respondents interviewed 24.8% indicated that information sharing between the community and the police contributed greatly to the reduction of reported crime In addition, intensified police patrols (24.2%), community confidence with the

police (21%), and attitude change (18.5%) has also a significant contribution to reduction of reported crimes. In a small way many conviction (7%) and effective evidence gathering due to public cooperation and pressure have also contributed to reduction of reported crimes. Despite its adoption in many developing countries, there is debate on its impact on community police relations, crime rate and police behaviour. Proponents, especially governments and NGOs involved in the program claim it contributes to reduction of fear of crime and crime rates. In South Africa, Malawi, Botswana, it is claimed that there is improvement in co-operation between local communities and police in developing and implementing crime reduction services for victims of crime, particularly of rape and domestic violence (Brogden, 2004). In Uganda, Davis, Henderson and Merrick (2003) suggest that CP has contributed to strengthening of the links between police and the communities and decreased domestic violence. Others have pointed to the change in giving communities powers of accountability in regard to the state police, as a positive development (Brogden, 2004).

Extent of impact of prevention and control crime in Kikuyu district

The study found it prudent to assess the extent of CP impacts to prevent and control crime in Kikuyu district. The study findings are tabulated in Table 2.

Table 2: Extent of impacts of CP efforts to prevent and control crime

CP Efforts	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gathering of crime intelligence first hand before occurrence has greatly improved	1.55	.637
There is enhanced citizen support in crime prevention and control	1.60	.728
There is marked drop in crime in Kikuyu district	1.60	.648
Improving information flow between the police and the public has been realised	1.64	.606
Mutual trust and confidence between the police and the public has been achieved to a large extent	1.77	.731
Assigning of territorial responsibilities (patrol bases police posts) has been achieved	1.81	.773
Prevention of corruption and promotion of accountability and transparency has improved	1.86	.569
Provided police with an opportunity to work with the youth in crime prevention	1.95	.705
Respect for human rights and improved fundamental freedoms	2.78	5.157

Key: 1=Great, 2=Fair and 3 Low Extent

The study results in Table 2 shows that, through the community policing there has been improvement in the following areas as shown by >1.00 and a standard deviation (~1) which

indicates that there has been improvement in; gathering of crime intelligence first hand before occurrence has greatly improved, there is enhanced citizen support in crime prevention and control, there is marked drop in crime in Kikuyu District, improving information flow between the police and the public has been realized, mutual trust and confidence between the police and the public has been achieved to a large extent, assigning of territorial responsibilities (patrol bases and police posts) has been achieved, prevention of corruption and promotion of accountability and transparency has improved and also it has provided police with an opportunity to work with the youth in crime prevention but it has not improved respect for human rights and improved fundamental freedoms as shown in Table 2. Segrave and Ratcliffe (2004) advocates for community policing have highlighted many reasons why community policing is beneficial to society. These arguments were broken down into three areas. Mobilisation and empowerment of communities to identify and respond to concern, improved local physical and social environment, increase in positive attitudes towards police and reduced fear of crime this supports above findings.

The Benefits of Community Policing

There were increased number of crime cases between the year 2010 and 2011 but in the year 2012 there was marked reduction in the number of cases. Community policing has improved gathering of crime intelligence first hand before occurrence has greatly improved, there is enhanced citizen support in crime prevention and control, there is marked drop in crime in Kikuyu district, improving information flow between the police and the public has been realized, mutual trust and confidence between the police and the public has been achieved to a large extent, assigning of territorial responsibilities (patrol bases police posts) has been achieved, prevention of corruption and promotion of accountability and transparency has improved and also it has provided police with an opportunity to work with the youth in crime prevention but it has not improved respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms has improved.

The challenges facing community policing are mistrust/negative attitude towards police, lack of funds, new posted officers who need to be trained on CP, language barrier and lack of awareness of CP among the public, poor management of the CP committees, lack of commitment among the committee members and lack of support by senior officers. Challenges facing community policing are lack of act of parliament/policy on CP, no budget allocation, chiefs/assistant chiefs opposing membership of the CP committee, long chain of command, past bad police image and lack of participation by senior officers respectively.

The community members and police suggests that there is need to ensure continuous training on the objectives and benefits of CP to the Police and community, provision of adequate

facilities and equipment, adequate budgetary allocation of CP, NPS to adopt CP as one of its functions, have a section headed by a senior officer responsible for CP for supervision, assigning specific officers to CP programme and have an independent oversight committee to oversee CP so as to improve on community policing.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion it was revealed that community policing concept has been understood and embraced in Kikuyu District mainly due to the partnership of both the NPS and the community from initiation, implementation and operation which has led to reduction of criminal activities. The study findings revealed that there was marked decrease in criminal activities as a result of community policing effort strategies adopted. However, the study revealed that mistrust/negative attitude towards police is major challenges facing community policing. The study recommends the government to come up with new community relations service strategies and policies to alleviate mistrust/negative attitude towards police.

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