ASSESSING EFFECT OF COMMUNITY PROBLEM SOLVING ON EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY SAFETY IN LAMU WEST SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Even though community policing elements such as community problem solving have been mentioned as a possible factor influencing monitoring and evaluation of community safety, there is limited research to ascertain this in Lamu West Sub County. The purpose of this study was to establish the effect of community problem solving on evaluation of community safety in Lamu West Sub-County. The study adopted quantitative design where data was collected from a sample of 405 respondents drawn from 32,873 of Lamu West Sub-County residents with the aid of a questionnaire. Correlation and regression analyses were adopted in data analysis to help in establishing the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The findings of this study demonstrated that there was statistically significant positive relationship between community problem solving and monitoring and evaluating community safety ($\beta=0.634$; $p<0.05$). The study found that aspects such as consultation, participation, engagement, professionalism, problem identification, proactive problem solving and mediation improves community safety. It is recommended that community problem solving should be strengthened because it builds trust, enhances information flow, and leads to the discovery of new areas where the police and the community may work together. Finally, community leadership should be people centered in order to enhance accountability that seeks to promote community safety. The study concluded that community problem solving significantly influence monitoring and evaluating community safety The study recommends that effective collaborations between law enforcement and community stakeholders are critical to public safety, and it's critical that government agencies, community organizations, nonprofits, companies, and private citizens all see public safety as a shared duty. Community leadership should be people centered in order to enhance accountability that seeks to promote community safety.

KEY WORDS: *Community Problem Solving, Evaluation of Community Safety, Lamu West Sub-County*

INTRODUCTION

Community safety is a global necessity. Community safety is about feeling safe, whether at home, in the street or at work. It relates to quality of life and being able to pursue and obtain the fullest benefits from your domestic, social and economic lives without fear or hindrance from crime and disorder (US Department of Justice, 2021). A safe and healthy workplace not only protects workers from injury and illness, it can also lower injury/illness costs, reduce absenteeism and turnover, increase productivity and quality, and raise employee. Across the globe, policing and community safety partnerships (PCSPs) or community policing programs set up to help make communities safer.

One of the fundamental objectives of police reforms globally is to (re)establish confidence in the state police and create relationship of trust between police officers and citizens (Zikhali, 2019; Biwott, 2017). The delivery of

community safety requires the integration and collaboration of services and partnership working to ensure a wrap around, holistic approach. Collaborative working helps maximise problem-solving in relation to crime prevention and disruption, enabling a proactive response to the top priorities and particular issues that are having the most negative impact on communities as they arise. Being motivated to this philosophy police emphasize community-based policing under the community policing umbrella. But community policing is run in different ways in different countries like UK, USA, Singapore, and India (Islam, 2018).

Researchers in the field of community policing found that police do not have adequate resources to address the underlying challenges and causes of societal problems and challenges hence they need support for other state agencies such as civil society (Diphoorn & Van Stapele, 2021). Equally, police need public support to obtain timely information for preventing and addressing crime problems. For instance, Diphoorn and Van Stapele (2021) observed that through social control, police have the opportunity to directly solve social environment. The police can serve as a catalyst, challenging people to accept their share of responsibility for overall quality of like in their respect communities.

Jannetta and Lachman (2011) also found that community policing enabled police to adopt their knowledge of the nature of a particular situation and adopt a systematic process for identification, understanding and responding to problems. Through adoption of SARA model, Habbert (2006) found that police were able to scan problems requiring their attentions, analyzing the situation for a detailed understanding of the problem and effectively solving the problem. Previous studies have left an empirical gap that this study sought to fill. Munyasia, Makokha, Sakataka and Oteki (2016) examined various factors affecting community policing project in Busia County using Teso South Sub- County. The study established that community policing was largely affected by the committee structures which were not conducive enough. In another study, Mwaura (2014) examined various challenges that faced the implementation of community policing project in Kajiado North Sub-County where it was established that low levels of basic mutual trust, lack of an enabling legislative and administrative environment, poor public image of police and declining police resources all affected the implementation. However, limited is known on how problem-solving dimension affects monitoring and evaluation of community safety in Lamu West Sub County, Lamu County, Kenya. The studies, Jannetta and Lachman (2011), Habbert (2006) and Makokha, Sakataka and Oteki (2016) show that community policing was affected by various challenges, but their scope did not include finding the influence of problem solving mechanisms on evaluating community safety.

Problem solving has been identified by different scholars and researchers as perhaps the most transformative aspect or indicator of community policing movement (Kalunta-Crumpton, 2009). Problem solving entails a paradigm shift from a reactive crime-response model to a more proactive problem-solving or a problem-oriented policing model. This indicator focuses on the need to prevent crime before it happens and systematically identifying and addressing specific social issues associated with criminal activities. Community policing is based on the premise that no one organization can solve local security problems, which require partnership, collaboration and joint problem-solving between the police, the communities they serve, and others (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2021). Potential partners for community-based policing might include: Other government agencies, community leadership, traditional and community leaders, non-governmental/ community-based service providers, and Private businesses.

Across the continent implementation of the community policing strategy and specifically the role of monitoring community safety is still a daunting task. For instance, in Nigeria, Arisukwu, Igbolekwu, Oye, Oyeyibo *et al,* (2020) observe that the absence of social infrastructure, inadequate police presence and government support to unemployed youths made the crime situations worse in rural areas. There was low level of community interactions with the police in crime prevention and control in rural Nigeria. In Rwanda, Bizimana and Umutoni (2019) discuss how community night patrols commonly referred to as *irondo ry'umwuga* have been effective in crime prevention.

In a study in Kenya, Kiptoo (2017) opined that problem-oriented community policing is mainly concerned with encouraging creative problem solving among community members and police officers in identifying the root causes of the problem and figuring out how the problem can be best addressed. Kiptoo (2017) observed that police

departments grounded on community policing tend to train and assign their officers to duties which are focused on creative and active problem solving and prevention instead of just reacting to criminal activities and disorderliness. Personal Safety and the right to live devoid of fear is fundamental for people in Kenya, particularly among the poor and underprivileged individuals. Social and economic development can be improved, hence benefiting the Kenyan economy and quality of life of the general population through reduction in criminal activities. There are still numerous cases reported, which depict deplorable community safety in some parts of the country. One such area is Lamu Lamu West Sub-County. An example includes the killing of six people in Witho and another in Bobo –Sunkia villages in Hindi, in Lamu West, and which resulted in mass exodus of residents. This raises questions as to the strength of monitoring and evaluation of community safety in the area.

Though community policing elements such as community problem solving have been mentioned as a possible factor influencing monitoring and evaluation of community safety, there is limited research to ascertain this in Lamu West Sub County.   This study has been prompted by the paucity of past studies on the significance of problem solving on monitoring and evaluation of community safety in Lamu West Sub County. Nevertheless, existing studies conducted in different counties in Kenya appear to ignore community problem solving with respect to monitoring of community safety.

Study Area
The study assessed the community policy indicators on monitoring and evaluating community safety in Lamu West Sub-County. The area is also one of the electoral constituencies of Lamu County, Kenya. It is one of two constituencies in Lamu County. The constituency has eleven wards, all electing MCAs for the Lamu County Assembly. Over the last decade, the area has been marred with insecurity stemming from terrorist activities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The study utilized a descriptive survey research to effectively assess the community policing elements on monitoring and evaluating community safety in Lamu West Sub-County. Mugenda and Mugenda (2012), highlights that a descriptive survey configuration reveals existing associations among factors under examination. The exploration approach doesn't at any rate endeavor to transform anything in that course of action.

Target population is defined as a universal set of the study of all members of real or hypothetical set of people, events or objects to which an investigator wishes to generalize the result. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define the target population as a complete set of individuals, case or objects with the same common observable characteristics. The study targeted 32,873 households 15 Community policing committee members, 15 chiefs, 5 police officers, 4 ACCS and 1DCC.Table 1 shows the target population.

A sample is a smaller group or sub-group obtained from the accessible population (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). This sub-group is carefully selected so as to be representative of the whole population with the relevant characteristics. The researcher adopted the 30% of the total population. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a sample can comprise of 10-30% of the population provided it is sufficient.

Using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of sample size determination a population of 9,862 gives 370 as the sample size. Moreover, using proportionate sampling technique, each stratum was apportioned the random samples. Finally, simple random sampling technique was used to obtain the required samples in each stratum.

The study adopted multistage sampling procedure. Purposive sampling technique was employed to select community policing committee members, chiefs, ACCS and DCC. This is justified by the fact the there is only one chief ACCS and DCC in a given location. Furthermore, household heads were selected using proportionate sampling technique to apportion the samples in each category. Finally, simple random sampling technique was used to obtain the required samples for the households.

Data was collected using questionnaires. The study utilized a 5 Likert scale guided the responses, which is represented as follows (SA) = Strongly Agree; (D) = Agree; (N) = Neutral; (2) = Disagree; and (1) = Strongly Disagree. Data was analysed for descriptive statistics and inferential statistics using SPSS.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Community Problem Solving and Community Safety

The study participants indicated that community problem solving is fundamental for enhancing community safety. Professionalism, problem identification and proactive problem solving were identified to be fundamental improving on community safety. The study found that 24.5% agreed that the involvement of all key stakeholders in maintaining security has enabled easy problem solving. This was supported by 30.7% of the respondents who agreed that their community and the police have been able to eradicate persons who are a problem to the community. This implies that for a long-lasting security concern to be resolved, all the stakeholder within the community have to collaborate with existing security agencies. The study found that proactive problem solving is fundamental for community safety.

By jointly identifying possible causes of insecurity in the community and putting in place adequate measures to address these threats, community policing can go a long way in improving safety. This is because community policing allows people to resolve their problems amicably, helps in reforming and eradicating individuals who are problematic in the society and ensures that every stakeholder is involved in the process of improving on peace and security. This finding concurs with that of Wehrman and DeAngelis (2011) who maintain that the underlying goals of police-community partnerships should be to find ways for police agencies to strengthen their links with their communities. This can be accomplished through increasing people' trust in the police, which will lead to a greater willingness to collaborate with officers on anti-crime measures. Foot, bike, and Segway patrols are among the anti-crime activities.

Furthermore, it was established that 28.8% agreed that community policing has enabled people to resolve their issues amicably while 30.4% also agreed that there was unanimous agreement on resolving issues that affect the community. According to Jannetta and Lachman (2011), the perceptions of both police and community supervision officers are more multifaceted and often more useful than general information on probationers and convicted felons because the resulting information speaks to the supervisees' specific circumstances and whether they are truly at risk for reoffending. To have the greatest influence on public safety, cooperation between police and community supervision organizations should ideally include both intelligence and information sharing.

Researchers have argued that community policing requires a proactive approach to solving problems in the society for enhanced safety. Consistent with findings of the present study, Biwott (2017) indicated that problem solving determines whether effective actions are taken to prevent crime incidences. Nevertheless, Munyasia et al. (2016) found that community policing was largely ineffective because of structure which was not conducive enough.

Similarly, Mwaura (2014) found that community policing project in Kajiado North Sub-County was affected by low levels of basic trust and lack of enabling legal and administrative environment. The findings of this study imply that proactive problem identification and solving is a fundamental aspect of community policing which can help in enhancing monitoring and evaluation of community safety. It's only through a proactive identification and solving of problems in the community that eminent security threats can be identified and diffused before happening. By closely working with the police, community can be able to provide vital security related information and potential threats in the community. Community policing in Lamu West sub-county can be improved through a proactive problem identification and solving through community and police partnership.

Table 1: Community Problem Solving

Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
The involvement of all key stakeholders in maintaining security has enabled easy problem solving	16.6%	32.5%	14.1%	24.5%	12.3%	2.83	1.30
There is unanimous agreement on resolving issues that affect the community	6.7%	36.2%	16.6%	30.4%	10.1%	3.00	1.15
My community and the police have been able to eradicate persons who are a problem to the community	9.8%	33.7%	13.2%	30.7%	12.6%	3.02	1.24
Community policing has enabled people to resolve their issues amicably	12.0%	30.7%	14.7%	28.8%	13.8%	3.01	1.27
Overall Mean Index						**2.97**	**1.01**
Valid N (Listwise)						**326**	

Monitoring and Evaluating Community Safety

Monitoring and evaluating community safety is critical in documenting safety concerns in a community. The findings indicates that 30.7% of the respondents disagreed that there was adequate sensitization on monitoring and evaluating community safety. Moreover, 29.4% also disagreed that monitoring and evaluation of community partnership has result to increase in community safety. This could hamper efforts of evaluating safety and security issues in a community. These findings agrees with those of Sherman (2001) indicates that the effectiveness of community policing is heavily reliant on information from members of the public, who provide information with authorities on a regular basis, resulting in enhanced societal security.

Community challenges should take the shortest time to be resolved for a sustainable peace to be realized. From the study findings, it was established that up to 33.7% of the respondents agreed that the timelines allocated for the community problem solving has greatly reduced through monitoring and evaluation. Moreover, 26.4% of respondents similarly agreed that monitoring and evaluating has assisted in documenting the security progress of the community. It is no surprise the majority of respondents agreed that Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Leadership has greatly Improved community safety. This could be a factor that leads to accountability and responsiveness of community leaders to the needs of the community pertaining security safety in Lamu West Sub-County. Thatcher (2001) reports that community policing, on the other hand, encounters a number of roadblocks, one of which is a clash of values and priorities followed by social institutions.

Inferential statistics allows researchers to describe data and draw inferences and conclusions from it. By using inferential statistics, an individual can deduce what a population believes or how it has been affected based on

sample data. This section begins with the diagnostic tests followed by ANOVA tests. Moreover, Pearson Correlation as well as regression analysis were run.

Table 2: Monitoring and Evaluating Community Safety

Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev
There is adequate sensitization on monitoring and evaluating community safety	15.6%	30.7%	16.6%	23.9%	13.2%	2.88	1.30
Monitoring and evaluation of community partnership has result to increase in community safety	18.4%	29.4%	16.3%	23.9%	12.0%	2.81	1.31
The timelines allocated for the community problem solving has greatly reduced through monitoring and evaluation	12.6%	22.7%	16.9%	33.7%	14.1%	3.14	1.27
Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Leadership has greatly Improved community safety	9.8%	26.7%	16.6%	30.1%	16.9%	3.17	1.26
Monitoring and evaluating has assisted in documenting the security progress of the community	11.0%	28.5%	15.6%	26.4%	18.4%	3.12	1.31
Overall mean Index						**3.02**	**0.89**
Valid N (listwise)						**326**	

Descriptive Statistics for Community Problem Solving, and Monitoring and Evaluating Community Safety
Using mean computations for the specific independent variables scores and dependent variable scores. The average mean scores for the variables were then used as input data for correlations. The mean scores were computed as shown in Table 3. The results show that the mean scores for Community Problem Solving was 2.97, while that of Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Safety was 3.03. When rounded off all the scores were 3.0, the neutral score. All the mean score were close to the neutral score, implying that the variables needed to be enhanced in Lamu West Sub County.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Community Policing Elements, and Monitoring and Evaluating Community Safety

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Community Problem Solving	326	1	5	2.97	1.013
Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Safety	326	1	5	3.03	.897
Valid N (listwise)	326				

Association between Community Problem Solving and Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Safety
A Pearson correlation analysis was run to determine the nature and significance of relationship that existed between the independent and dependent variables of the study. The results were as presented in Table 4. It was found that there was a positive pearson correlation between community problem solving and monitoring and evaluation of community safety at $r = 0.716$; $p = 0.000$. Given that p is less than 0.05, the results are interpreted to be statistically significant. This implies that a unit increase in Community Problem Solving attracts an increase of 0.716 in monitoring and evaluation of community safety.

This infers that focusing on appropriate problem identification coupled with professionalism could enhance monitoring and evaluating community safety. Proactive problem identification and solving can go a long way in controlling criminal activities before their surface. Proactive problem identification and solving thus is fundamental part of community policing which needs to be implemented for community safety in Lamu West Sub-County. By constantly identifying and addressing the possible causes of problems in the community through community partnership, it is possible to address community possible problems.

Table 4: Correlations Community Problem Solving and Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Safety

		Community Problem Solving	Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Safety
Community Problem Solving	Pearson Correlation	1	.716[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	326	326
Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Safety	Pearson Correlation	.716[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	326	326

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression Analysis
A linear regression was computed to determine the the influence of Community Problem Solving, and Monitoring and Evaluation of Community. The findings is presented in the Model Summary, ANOVA and Beta coefficients sections.

Model Summary
The results shows that the adjusted R Square value of 0.513 (r^2 = 51.3%) indicates that up to 51.3% in monitoring and evaluating community safety is explained by community problem solving. This leaves 48.7% as unexplained variation that can be elucidated by other factors outside the model.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.716[a]	.513	.511	.627

a. Predictors: (Constant), Community Problem Solving

Model Robustness
The strength of the model was tested at 0.05 alpha by using the three independent variables. The results are presented in Table 6. The results indicates that the model was statistically significant in predicting monitoring and evaluating community safety using community problem solving at 0.05 alpha levels, r^2 = 0.716, $F_{(3,324)}$ =341.211; $\rho<0.05$.

Table 6: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	134.010	1	134.010	341.211	.000[b]
	Residual	127.250	324	.393		
	Total	261.260	325			

a. Dependent Variable: Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Safety
b. Predictors: (Constant), Community Problem Solving

The coefficients
The strength and significance of each independent variable was analyzed and presented in Table 7. It was observed that community problem solving had a statistically significant influence on monitoring and evaluating community safety (β = 0.634; p =0.000). This indicates that a unit increase in community problem solving increases monitoring and evaluating community safety by 0.614 positive units.
The overall model of the research:
$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$$
$$Y = 1.145+ (0.634* \text{ community problem solving}) +0.57$$

Table 7: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	*Std. Error*	*Beta*		
1 (Constant)	1.145	.108		10.632	.000
Community Problem Solving	.634	.034	.716	18.472	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Safety

Conclusion

The study concluded that community problem solving significantly influence monitoring and evaluating community safety (β=0.634; $p<0.05$). This infers that focusing on appropriate problem identification coupled with professionalism could enhance monitoring and evaluating community safety.

Recommendations

First the study recommends that effective collaborations between law enforcement and community stakeholders are critical to public safety, and it's critical that government agencies, community organizations, nonprofits, companies, and private citizens all see public safety as a shared duty.

It is recommended that community problem solving builds trust, enhances information flow, and leads to the discovery of new areas where the police and the community may work together. Community leadership should be people centered in order to enhance accountability that seeks to promote community safety.

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