INFORMATION MANAGEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY POLICING AND CRIME PREVENTION IN MERU COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Evidence on effectiveness of community policing information management system on crime prevention in Meru County is not clearly documented. This study will help to gain insight into role of community policing information management on crime prevention in Meru County. The study sets out to: examine how intelligence gathering affect crime prevention in Meru, Kenya, interrogate data profiling of criminals in relation to crime prevention in Meru County, assess effect of data processing in crime prevention in Meru County and to establish how information sharing affect crime prevention in Meru County. The research will use social disorganization theory. Descriptive research design will be applied. The research will target about 160 residents residing in Meru County Kenya. The piloting was will be conducted using 14 respondents which are 10% of the sample size. Key informants will be drawn from the community policing members in Meru and National Police Service members. The sampling of the respondents will be done by stratified random sampling technique while the informants will be purposively sampled. The study will utilize quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Data collection will be done by use of questionnaire and structured interviews. Secondary data will be gathered using a thematic review of related literature on community policing and crime prevention. Consultation between the researcher and the supervisor will ensure content validity and guarantee that the research instrument measure what they intend to. Descriptive statistics will be used in presenting quantitative data in form of tables while qualitative data will be analyzed using content analysis.

Keywords: Intelligence Gathering, Data Profiling and Crime Prevention.

INTRODUCTION

There are debates surrounding community policing and information management. Community policing is as old as law enforcement itself. When Sir Robert Peel was England's Home Secretary in 1829, he established Metropolitan Police. Peel (1829) asserts that fundamental secret to effective policing is that "people are the police, and police are the people." Peel thought it was possible to prevent crime without meddling in people's personal affairs. Peel's philosophy of prevention serves as foundation for community policing, which has been adopted by several law enforcement agencies worldwide (Patterson, 2007). Metropolitan Police District of London was first to implement community policing. When country's capital was experiencing an increase in crime, British parliament aimed to combat it. It was intended for citizens to get to know one another so they might identify questionable individuals or criminal behavior. When there was an issue, the public might also get in

touch with police. This has a significant impact in discouraging criminal activity in immediate area (The Lectric law Library 2018).

America uses intelligence-led policing and predictive policing approaches. Intelligence-led policing combines information sharing, problem-solving policing, and police accountability. Information sharing enables different states to be aware of any threat that may come around. Predictive policing is used to predict when and where a crime may occur in the future. The sharing of this information enables the police to prevent a crime as they all have access to such information. Information sharing among states enables the police to identify and predict where a particular crime will happen or where a certain criminal will visit next (LeCates, 2018).

In Japan, crime is at the words lowest rate. Knowing prevention efforts requires an analysis of origins and consequences of criminal activity. It is advisable to take into account criteria other than typical number of criminal episodes or perpetrators. In Japan, one of the safest countries in the world, local authorities are implementing crime prevention programs, have received less attention. In the Japanese socialization paradigm of crime control, social and cultural organization and data gathering on offenders encourages civility and a low street crime rate. (Meissner, Michael, Evans, Camilletti, Bhatt, & Brandon, 2014).

According to Daniel (2010), police in Tanzania implemented a unique reform in 2006 with the goal of fostering confidence between police departments and community members. Disclosure of senior police officials' private phone numbers was one of the significant actions made in an effort to promote communication between public and law enforcement. One of the biggest successes was the public providing police agencies with important information that helped them comprehend crimes and criminal activity. Despite their successes, police were for a long time plagued by budgetary neglect, a bad reputation, and popular mistrust.

Afolabi *et al.* (2016) examined intelligence gathering and crime prevention in Portharcourt, Rivers state, Nigeria. The use of structured questionnaires was applied for the study and distributed to two hundred (200) respondents through random sampling. Tables, charts, frequencies and percentages were used for the analysis of the data. The study showed that intelligence gathering impacts crime prevention significantly.

In Nigeria Detection of criminals relies on a comprehensive, methodical investigation and study of the scene of the crime to identify certain characteristics of the perpetrators. In order to be able to foresee the perpetrator, you must acknowledge the warped validity of the culprit's viewpoint. This has a significant impact on preventing crime. Kenya began establishing community policing programs in1990s, with corporate sector leading charge with police. Initially, these initiatives were only available to Nairobi Central business, but subsequently they expanded to other regions of the nation (Ruteere & Pammelle 2003). From the study above, Patterson, (2007), The Lectric law

Library (2018), Daniel (2010) Ruteere, and Pammelle (2003), there are various discussions in relation to community policy policing, however, a significant question that arises, the studies explain a similar phenomenon in Kenya to be more specific in Meru County. Examine how intelligence gathering affect crime prevention in Meru, Kenya. Interrogate data profiling of criminals in relation to crime prevention in Meru County. Assess the effect of data processing in crime prevention in Meru County. Establish how information sharing affects prevention of crime in Meru County. Current study is an attempt to fill the gaps.

Statement of the Problem

Kenya's government, working with National Police Service (NPS) and Ministries of Interior and National Coordination has developed a number of community-based crime-fighting strategies over time. The *nyumba kumi* initiative, which aims to reduce crime through community policing, has increased desire of residents to live in an environment free from crime. Because of this, crime prevention programs have not been implemented as effectively as it could have, and as a result, police personnel and public have little regard for the initiatives. Lawbreakers are now subject to full weight of the law as a consequence of police department's gradual advancement toward reforms, which has weakened community standards and endeavors of law enforcement authorities (Maximino, 2015; McDonald, 2012; Guigon, 2012). A fundamental component of democratic policing, crime prevention is seen as a means of strengthening ties between state police and public, boosting state credibility, lowering crime rates, and, more lately, battling terrorism (Ronoh, 2021).

According to Hendricks (2013), information technology has enabled states to monitor, contain, and discipline the crime rate. Widespread adoption of these technologies is necessary to stop crimes by identifying them before they are committed. This will make things more secure. In light of information management's remarkable achievements across various domains, it is widely held that it will play a pivotal role in resolving Kenya's vexing issue of cyber security (Tanui and Barmao, 2016). Crime and suspicious human activity have always been a part of society, particularly in Meru County. According to KNBS (2021), law enforcement station has greatest percentage of individuals claimed to have perpetrated crimes in Meru, at 6.7%. Meru county has among highest incidences of crime in the nation. More than 25% of 81,272 crimes recorded in previous year were reported in three counties, according to the Economic Survey (2021). Highest number of offenses on the list was 6,686 in Nairobi, followed by 5,715 in Kiambu County and 5,032 in Meru County. With the majority of them either not being reported or being reported too late. Such cases go unresolved, and victims have few options for pursuing a case and obtaining justice. With the increase in unresolved criminal activities and complaints, an application for expediting the investigation process of criminal activities and complaints filed in Meru is required. It is critical to have a well-organized and widely accessible method for reporting criminal activities to the appropriate authorities and following up on reported cases.

Meru County stability has been threatened by the most serious threat to peace and development: crime. In order to promote growth and combat all of the vices that are created by crime, there is a pressing need to eliminate it. It is essential to understand the ways in which crime occurs in order to implement effective crime prevention strategies. As long as crime exists, it will continue to do so, and one approach is to identify the pattern in which it happens so that it may be prevented or countered more effectively. (Liu, 2008). There have been limited studies centered around crime prevention in Meru County and other countries in Kenya. There is a literature gap in determining how intelligence gathering, data profiling, data processsing and information sharing can prevent crime.

Afolabi and Nwoke (2016) established the effect of intelligence gathering in crime prevention and established a significant impact, however, the study was based in a Nigerian context. Adebisi and Olanrewaju (2021) in their study revealed that data profiling positively influences crime prevention but was also based in a Nigerian context. Aston, O'Neil, Hail and Wooff (2021) reported a positive influence of information sharing in crime prevention but was carried out in Europe.

In the light of the above background, the link between management of information and crime prevention has not been adequately addressed. There are several gaps in relation to the topic of study which is "information management in the context of community policing and crime prevention in Meru County Kenya, 2001-2021" In attempt to fill the gaps, the study will examine how intelligence gathering affect crime prevention in Meru, Kenya, Interrogate data profiling of criminals in relation to crime prevention in Meru County, assess effect of data processing in crime prevention in Meru County and establish how information sharing affect prevention of crimes in Meru County.

Objectives of the Study

The study will employ the following research objectives;

i. Examine how intelligence gathering affect crime prevention in Meru County, Kenya.
ii. To Interrogate data profiling of criminals in relation to crime prevention in Meru County

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section delves into literature as carried out by previous scholars on the subject of intelligence gathering, data profiling of criminals and how they affect crime prevention in general. This is meant to appreciate the works of different scholars while at the same time bringing out the gaps in research that would inform the current study. The section starts with a detail presentation of theories guiding the study, empirical literature together with a conceptual framework.

Theoretical Framework

Social Disorganization Theory

Theory of social disorganization serves as foundation for the planned study. Shaw and McKay (1942) created this theory. It is predicated on the idea that disorderly communities lead to crime because social norms become less formal and criminal cultures take hold. They are ineffective as a group in preventing crime and disturbance. Shaw and McKay found that the home locations of minors submitted to Chicago courts were examined using geographical maps, and that city's crime rates were not evenly distributed over time or area. Rather, crime was more likely to be localized in specific parts of the city and, more significantly, to be relatively constant throughout various areas despite ongoing shifts in the populations residing there. For instance, irrespective of racial or ethnic group residing in a community with a high incidence of crime at any given time, number of crimes continued to be comparatively elevated. As these earlier crime-prone categories shifted to lower-crime regions of the city, the level of illicit activity reduced in accordance with fewer crimes characteristic of those areas. Shaw and McKay came to the conclusion that crime was probably a product of neighborhood dynamics rather than always a reflection of the people living there as a result of these observations.

Nevertheless, in the 1980s, social disorganization theory was “rediscovered”. Scholars including Bursik (1986, 1988), Sampson and Groves (1989), and Wilson (1990, 1996) conducted research that contributed to the revival, partial reformulation, and expansion of the social disorganization tradition. This has answered some concerns directed towards the idea (Bursik, 1988). For instance, studies have looked into the "reciprocal effects" of social disorganization (Bursik, 1986) and the possible effects that a community's level of social disorganization may have on nearby communities (Heitgerd & Bursik, 1987).

Furthermore, the theory was reinterpreted to encompass constructs other than macro-level elements initially delineated by Shaw and McKay (e.g., poor economic standing, residence movement, and ethnic diversity). Its theoretical utility has increased with the addition of new notions. Specifically, current studies have specifically looked for "mediating mechanisms" or "intervening mechanisms" that could operate between crime rates and conventional social disorganization factors. Researchers have identified several intervening factors, such as how societal disorder affects disruption in families and group effectiveness rates, which in turn have a direct impact on crime rates (Sampson & Groves, 1989; Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, (1999).

Human Relations Theory

Human Relations Theory was initially introduced by Elton Mayo as well as his associates which are Roethlisberger, Follett and Dixon during their research at Hawthorne Plant of Western Electric at Chicago, United states during the 1920s and 1930s. Human relations theory basically laid emphasis on four (4) key forms which are organizations being viewed as social systems, workers being human beings as well with

their humanity characteristics, the germane role of informal elements as it relates to the output of an organization and organizations having their own social ethics rather than individual ethics.

The principle of human relations theory as explained by Ajayi and Ayodele (2011) aims at the classicist causing more issues at various work places instead of providing solutions to the lingering issues on ground. This occurs as a result of the fact that the classicist neglected the recognition of human beings as major keys of the input, ways and preferences of things as crucial elements of all human relations (Monreno, 1953). The inclusion of human relations theory in organizational administrations have proven useful as an element in positioning informal organization and formal organizations side by side for enhanced productivity and effectiveness of an organization. The foundation of human relations theory has however been proven immaterial.

Empirical Literature

Crime Prevention

Crime prevention is accomplished through application of four distinct strategies: criminal justice, situational, social, and developmental methods. Goal of prevention of developmental crime is to address the underlying causes of criminal conduct, which is why it is commonly referred to as early intervention. resulting in a decrease in probability of a network and individual elements and an increase in protective factors, which helps prevent crime later in life. Pre-faculty governments, programs for parents, academic enhancing campaigns, and improvements in faculty procedural alterations are among the most notable instances of developmental crime prevention (Kapur, 2019). In order for people to support and engage with one another in prevention of crime, social method helps to strengthen neighborhoods. Communities with strong ties to one another and where members respect one another's differences are far less likely to engage in criminal activity. A person can also take pleasure in fewer crimes and violent acts when they have a strong social network. Increasing social capital or interpersonal interactions can help people become more resilient to crime. Because operational social crime prevention may involve numerous unique elements, it is difficult to achieve. Building communities, giving welfare services, and expanding network support companies all contribute to improving network experience and preventing crime (UNODC, 2010).

Situational strategy, which Kapur (2019) claims involves limiting the times when crimes can occur, is an effective way to prevent crime. There are several ways to prevent crime, such as raising the stakes for being found out, lowering the incentives for disparaging and upsetting others, and stepping up efforts to help and support others. A few simple steps toward preventing situational crimes include installing latches and notifications, increasing light-based research, and making residences more difficult to enter, damage, or hide from. The houses and homes should be constructed such that they cannot be demolished, and at some point, throughout the night, one should keep the doors and windows of the house closed. Criminal justice system's strategy for crime

prevention is most widely recognized and is associated with the criminal justice system. Studies typically provide ideas and recommendations, stating that certain actions are only marginally effective. When used in conjunction with the opposing styles, these measurements demonstrate the highest caliber of skills. The concept of "crook justice" refers to the application of severe penalties to individuals who have committed extremely heinous crimes (Clancey, 2017). There is a growing recognition that there are more effective ways to reduce crime. This form of crime prevention works in tandem with other models to enable you to implement the strategies in a practical way. Ronoah (2021) examined how Mombasa County's crime management was affected by crime prevention. An exploratory research design was employed to conduct the investigation. Sample size of 69 male and female persons over ages of 18 was selected via stratified random sampling among 692 police officers and members of *Nyumba kumi* families in Mombasa County, the focus of the inquiry. First-hand information was gathered through open-ended, structured questionnaires. In order to identify needs and top concerns, the study states that citizen surveys were used to reorient community policing operations. Additionally, applicants who were qualified for community policing endeavors were targeted for hiring and selection procedures, and staff evaluations were conducted to reinforce community policing and problem-solving skills.

The investigation's conclusions also showed that there existed trust between security guards and public, which made it simpler to report crimes, that the community participated in regular forums to discuss crime-related issues, and that police and community members worked together to identify and report crimes. The study also found that property crime, public-private conflict, citizen reports at police station, and public perception of police work were all positively impacted by crime prevention and management.

Intelligence Gathering and Crime Prevention

Many different ways have been used to apply the term "crime prevention" in relation to the topic of crime: it's been used in reference to both activities (such as the implementation of crime prevention programmers and/or strategies) and results (including lower crime rates in communities and/or lower rates of antagonizing by individuals). Researchers have investigated the role of formal and informal social methods of control in crime prevention, with an emphasis on the influence (via mechanisms including connection, dedication, and engagement) of parents, friends, school, work, community, and the role of guilt and beliefs. (Byrne & Marx, 2011)

Miller, Redlich and Kelly (2018) stated that including in India, most nations, have police departments responsible for catching criminals, but certain law enforcement organizations are tasked with catching specific sorts of theft. Chinese government has enforceable privacy safeguards in place. Thus, Chinese government has absolutely history of gathering vast quantities of personal information on its residents, and it is aggressively researching technological advances, including such big data analytics and

cloud technology platforms, to more effectively aggregate and mine private details which lead to a reduction in crime. (Hatrick, 2019)

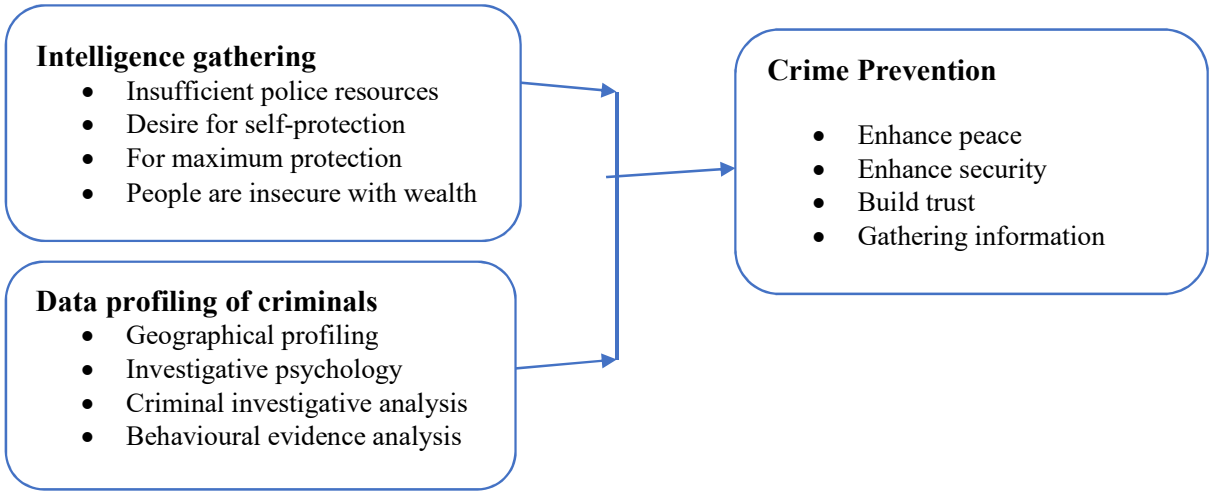
In Nigeria Rural communities have grown known for a wide range of criminal activity. The Nigerian Police Force has had difficulty detecting and preventing inadequate transportation and communication facilities, which contribute to crime in rural Nigeria. Community policing has been established in Nigerian rural communities as a response to the rise in criminal activity in their area. (Arisukwu, *et al*., 2020).

In Kenya, a variety of crime prevention measures have been implemented that focus on various stages of prevention (basic to tertiary), as well as the importance of individual, parochial, and public acts to prevent crimes. (Wainana, Karomo, Kyalo, & Mutai, 2020)

In Rwanda there is a clear distinction between those who operate under the authority of the public governments and those who act in accordance with the authority of the central authorities. As a consequence, a very effective system of local reported crime is created, with exceptionally clear institutional boundaries. It's the first-time factual data gathered over the course of 18 months has been used to provide a comprehensive picture of the role of local police in Rwanda. (Nsengimana, 2017)

Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables **Dependent Variables**



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, descriptive research design was suitable as it offers the chance for a thorough examination of several particular details that are frequently missed by other approaches. The research was conducted primarily in larger Meru County, located on chilly tropical highlands east of Mount Kenya and Nyambene Ridges. The region was recently divided into counties of Tharaka-Nithi and Meru (Ministry of Agriculture Maara Office, 2017). This study was carried out majorly in Meru County Kenya. The researcher targeted key informants who includes 60 security personnel from NPS within Meru County. It also comprised of 40 village elders and 40 community policing members bring to a total population of 140. This research utilized purposive sampling

method to select respondents for the questionnaire which comprised of 60 key informants which included security personnel from NPS within Meru County. Purposive sampling technique enabled the researcher to use discretion especially due to the limited number of sources that can contribute to the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Additionally; stratified random sampling was used to select village elders and community policing members for the interview session. Stratified random sampling availed the opportunity to divide a target population into smaller groups based on shared characteristics (Ott&Longnecker, 2015). The Taro (1967) stratified random sampling method was used to arrive at a sample of 80. Using purposive and stratified random sampling technique, the sample size comprised of 60 key informants which included security personnel from NPS within Meru County, and 80 village elders and community policing members bringing to a total of 140 sample size.

The study collected primary data using a semi structured questionnaire and interview guide. Collected data was edited and cleaned to remove any misleading or incomplete data. Data was coded after it had been edited. Quantitative data was then entered into SPSS platform in which descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis were conducted. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis which involved categorizing and summarizing data.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The study distributed 140 collection tools out of which 107 were filled and returned gibing a response rate of 76.4%. This indicates a high participation level in the study on information management in the scenario of community policing and crime prevention in Meru County, Kenya. Such a relatively high response rate increases the generalizability and credibility of the research results since the sampled data adequately represents the target population.

Knowledge of the gender makeup of the respondents was required for understanding their representation and viewpoints in a sample population. From the collected data, 65.4% of the respondents were male, 34.6% were female, thus displaying significant male domination in terms of participation. The imbalance could therefore be attributed to the traditional gender roles in Meru County, whereby men are more likely to participate in formal community policing structures and security-related activities and public discourse surrounding crime prevention. Gender-based stereotypes could limit women's participation in activities like intelligence sharing or public meetings on security, leading to their underrepresentation in such surveys.

Data on age distribution indicated that the majority of respondents fall within the age brackets of 41–50 years (38.3%) and 51 years and above (39.3%), while very few are aged 20–30 years (12.1%) and 31–40 years (10.3%). This demographic observation points to these individuals' being older as perhaps the more exposed to community

policing and crime prevention programs in Meru County. The outcome could be that the older members of the community are in leadership positions, have known local authorities for longer, and have a better sense of civic responsibility. The other reason why the youth may not be interested could be that there has been a brain drain, with the youth going to urban centers for education and employment, or perhaps they are not aware and not participating in any structured community security mechanism.

Data on highest level of education indicated that a heavy concentration of the respondents on diploma level with 73.8% of the sample, while secondary education accounted for 17.8%, degree holders made up of 6.5%, and primary education 1.9%. The educational level distribution of respondents indicates that most of those involved or knowledgeable about the community policing and crime prevention initiatives may hold middle-level formal education, with potential positive or negative influence on the conduct of information management practices. The high frequency of diploma holders could be attributed to the recruitment and training mechanisms in local policing and community-based organizations that tend to favor vocational and technical qualifications more than academic qualifications. Thus, the educational profile could result in less sophisticated and flexible information management systems that would have embraced advanced analytical tools and strategic approaches requiring postgraduate training.

Intelligence Gathering

Intelligence gathering in crime prevention constitutes a systematic process of collecting, evaluating, and analyzing information to identify, anticipate, and mitigate criminal threats effectively. This process relies on advanced data collection technologies, collaboration among multiple law enforcement agencies, and community engagement to produce actionable intelligence that supports proactive policing strategies such as intelligence-led policing. The outcomes of the respondents in view of this are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Intelligence Gathering

Statement	Percentage					Mean	Std. Dev.
	SD	D	N	A	SA		
There are effective measures in place to enhance intelligence gathering in crime prevention.	3.7	6.5	7.5	49.5	32.7	4.0093	1.00466
Measures employed by police enhanced crime prevention	1.9	3.7	12.1	55.1	27.1	4.0187	.84654
Strategies employed by police reduced crimes in Meru county	1.9	10.3	8.4	56.1	23.4	3.8879	.94497
There Is strong cooperation between the residents and police in Meru county	4.7	4.7	4.7	49.5	36.4	4.0841	1.01052

Police activities and operations of criminals in Meru county	2.8	5.6	5.6	50.5	35.5	4.1028	.94104
Intelligence gathering by police has reduced crimes in Meru county.	2.8	2.8	8.4	57.9	28.0	4.0561	.85596
Information gathering is the only way to reduce crimes in Meru county.	2.8	2.8	4.7	59.8	29.9	4.1121	.83922
I am satisfied with how intelligence gathering is being conducted in Meru county.	1.9	0.9	3.7	66.4	27.1	4.1589	.70242
After information gathering police warn criminals before arresting them	1.9	3.7	0.9	62.6	30.8	4.1682	.78291
Police do not have a right to arrest criminals	1.9	1.9	2.8	67.3	26.2	4.1402	.71965
Information given to police is mainly given by members of the pubic	1.9	4.7	10.3	57.9	25.2	4.0000	.84675
Community members freely report criminals to police.	1.9	2.8	12.1	64.5	18.7	3.9533	.76950
Average Mean						**4.0576**	**0.85534**

Source: Field Survey (2025)

Table 1 demonstrated the mean and standard deviation of intelligence gathering. Regarding the statement that effective measures are in place to enhance intelligence gathering in crime prevention attained a high mean of 4.0093 with a standard deviation of 1.00466. This means that there was wide agreement among respondents that mechanisms exist to strengthen intelligence efforts, though their opinions varied somewhat. The assertion that measures employed by the police enhanced crime prevention yielded a mean of 4.0187 and a relatively low standard deviation of 0.84654. This means that, across Meru County, there is strong consensus that present police practice is effective in preventing crime. For the declaration that strategies employed by police reduced crimes in Meru County, the mean was 3.8879 and the standard deviation was 0.94497. This shows moderate to strong agreement on the crime-reduction impact of police strategies, albeit with a slightly wider spread in opinions.

The argument that there is strong cooperation between the residents and police in Meru County" received a mean of 4.0841 and a standard deviation of 1.01052. This highlights a solid endorsement of collaborative relations in intelligence work, though responses varied more significantly. For the report that police actions and activities in monitoring criminal activity in Meru County, a mean of 4.1028 was reported, with a standard deviation of 0.94104. Respondents generally agreed that police are adequately engaged in monitoring criminal activity, with fairly moderate variability in their views. The proclamation that intelligence-gathering by police has reduced crimes in Meru County recorded a mean of 4.0561 and a standard deviation of 0.85596. This affirms the

perceived effectiveness of intelligence efforts in curbing criminal behavior, with relatively consistent responses.

For the account that information gathering is the only way to reduce crimes in Meru County, the mean stood at 4.1121 and the standard deviation at 0.83922. This indicates a strong agreement with the centrality of intelligence in crime prevention, with responses very closely clustered around the mean. The assertion that I am satisfied with how intelligence-gathering is being done in Meru County rated a mean of 4.1589 and a low standard deviation of 0.70242. This suggests a high as well as a consistent level of satisfaction with intelligence processes among the respondents. Respondents agreed strongly to the statement that after the information-gathering police warns criminals before arresting them mean of 4.1682 and standard deviation of 0.78291; indicating near unanimity on procedural fairness as part of intelligence practice.

The declaration that police do not have a right to arrest criminals had a mean of 4.1402 and a standard deviation of 0.71965. This result, framed ambiguously, likely reflects respondents' understanding that police do have the right to arrest based on gathered intelligence, shown by strong but not universal agreement. The item that information given to police is mainly given by members of the public obtained a mean score of 4.0000, with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.84675. This illustrates the level of agreement regarding community involvement as being pertinent to intelligence efforts. The outcome regarding the statement that community members report criminals to police without fear recorded a mean of 3.9533 and a standard deviation of 0.76950. This reflects general confidence among respondents that community members are open to cooperating with law enforcement.

The average mean response of 4.0576 together with a relatively low average standard deviation of 0.85534 indicates that the respondents seemed to uniformly view intelligence gathering in Meru County as a strong and effective collaborative strategy toward crime prevention. These outcomes align with the outcomes from Afolabi *et al* (2016) who identified that intelligence gathering impacts crime prevention significantly. It's the first-time factual data gathered over the course of 18 months has been used to provide a comprehensive picture of the role of local police in Rwanda. (Nsengimana, 2017).

The key informants noted that collecting intelligence is vital for crime prevention because it allows police to proactively prevent, monitor, and intervene before criminal activities get out of control. It has proven to be a significant contributor to crime reduction in Meru County through early actions against criminal networks and targeted operations. With confidence built between the police and the public, appropriate information is collected, compiled, analyzed, and processed, resulting in better decision-making, increased efficiency in deploying police resources, and more reporting of suspicious activities by residents. This would improve trust and cooperation between police and the public. Consequently, crimes are quickly combated,

sometimes even avoided altogether, increasing the safety and security of the area. The outcome conforms to the findings of Bryne and Marx (2011) who argued that the most effective form of questioning for obtaining true confession from defendants and reducing false confessions was a combination of interview and interrogation tactics.

Data Profiling

Data profiling is a critical process in data management that involves examining, analyzing, and summarizing datasets to assess their quality, structure, and content. It supports the validation and enhancement of intelligence databases, facilitating more precise decision-making and effective resource allocation. The respondents' responses in view of this are disclosed in Table 2.

Table 2: Data Profiling

Statement	Percentage					Mean	Std. Dev.
	SD	D	N	A	SA		
Data profiling of criminals is aligned to police mandates	1.9	1.9	0.9	61.7	33.6	4.2336	.73433
Data profiling of criminals has effective strategies to reduce crimes in Meru county	1.9	2.8	3.7	53.3	38.3	4.2336	.80774
Monitoring of criminal suspects by police is effective in crime prevention	1.9	0.9	0.9	58.9	37.4	4.2897	.71387
Investigating criminal conduct and actions by police enhances crime prevention	1.9	1.9	3.7	64.5	28.0	4.1495	.73720
Police strategic plan of data profiling of criminals address criminal misconduct and actions	1.9	2.8	2.8	55.1	37.4	4.2336	.79597
Inspection of suspected criminals' premises by police reduces criminals	18.7	14.0	6.5	48.6	12.1	3.2150	1.35304
Handling of complaints against criminals by police enhances discipline among the community members	1.9	0	1.9	67.3	29.0	4.2150	.65916
I am satisfied with the activities of police uses to reduce crimes	3.7	4.7	8.4	65.4	17.8	3.8879	.88304
There is a good working relation between the community members ad police in crime prevention	3.7	3.7	6.5	56.1	30.8	4.0654	.92421
Documents inspection by police helps to improve discipline	11..2	29.9	17.8	33.6	7.5	2.9626	1.18102

Police reports to the public helps reduce crimes	1.9	0	0.9	59.8	37.4	4.3084	.67867
Average Mean						**3.9813**	**0.86075**

Source: Field Survey (2025)

As contained in Table 2, The acceptance of the statement that data profiling of criminals is aligned to police mandates is said to have high agreement among respondents: 4.2336 with a standard deviation of 0.73433, thus, indicating that criminal profiling is effective in reducing crimes in Meru County. The assertion that data profiling of criminals has effective strategies to reduce crimes in Meru County yielded a mean of 4.2336 and a standard deviation of 0.80774. Perceptions generally view data profiling efforts as well structured and effective in dealing with criminal activities within the county. For the statement that monitoring of criminal suspects by police is effective in crime prevention, a mean of 4.2897 and a standard deviation of 0.71387 were yielded. This point towards a strong level of agreement among respondents declaring that surveillance of suspects significantly contributes to the prevention of crime.

The claim that investigating criminal conduct and actions by police enhances crime prevention had a mean of 4.1495 and a standard deviation of 0.73720. It was, however, the general view of respondents that investigation procedures could act as one of the most important tools against crime and public safety. According to the statement that police strategic plan of data profiling of criminals address criminal misconduct and actions, mean score was 4.2336 with a standard deviation of 0.79597; thus endorsed highly as to the police's strategic profiling role as one of addressing and alleviating criminal conduct. With regard to the statement that inspection of suspected criminals' premises by police reduces criminals; the mean was 3.2150 with a standard deviation of 1.35304. This suggests more moderate agreement with a lot of disagreement on whether police inspections would be justified or effective.

The statement that handling of complaints against criminals by police enhances discipline among the community members had a mean of 4.2150 and a standard deviation of 0.65916. Respondents strongly and consistently believed that responding to complaints about criminals positively fosters social discipline and deters misconduct. The assertion that I am satisfied with the activities of police uses to reduce crimes recorded a mean of 3.8879 and a standard deviation of 0.88304. This suggests that there is, on the whole, a good opinion about police interventions, but with a moderate spread. The declaration that there is a good working relation between the community members and police in crime prevention scored a mean of 4.0654 and a standard deviation of 0.92421, indicating a firm level of consensus that the collaboration of police with the public is well established and advantageous for crime prevention.

For the proclamation that documents inspection by police helps to improve discipline, the mean score was 2.9626 with a standard deviation of 1.18102. That reflects a fairly neutral to slightly disagreeing position among respondents while considerable variations existed regarding the useful nature of document checks as a disciplinary

measure. The declaration that police reports to the public help reduce crimes", received the highest score of 4.3084 with a standard deviation of 0.67867, indicating very strong and consistent agreement on the effectiveness of crime reduction through transparency and communication by police reporting. With an overall average mean of 3.9813, it indicates that study subjects are generally of the opinion that data profiling is a very good and effective crime prevention intervention in Meru County, except for the source practices of physical inspections and document checks that pose some reservations. The findings are in agreement with Adebisi *et al.* (2021) who found that the analysis on criminal investigation should be efficiently inserted into the system of justice and earns recognition as well.

The views of the key informants noted that data profiling plays an important role in crime prevention in Meru County by helping law enforcement agencies identify, monitor, and analyze patterns of crime in a systematic way that enhances focused and proactive policing. The accurate profiling of individuals and groups based on history of offenses, behavior patterns, and geographical data gives police better chances to predict possible criminal acts and preempt crimes. Therefore, this strategy enhances the effectiveness of resource allocation and greatly improves public safety outcomes, as high-risk individuals was closely monitored. Respondents expressed that data profiling helps narrow down investigative focus, reduce recurrence of crimes, and increase accountability; thus, solidifying its importance as a modern policing tool in Meru County. The alignment with the findings, Naudts (2019) established that criminal profiling knowledge is used to detect the smuggling habits of smugglers and catch them, thereby prohibiting narcotics from entering a nation.

Crime Prevention

Crime prevention encompasses a range of strategies and policies aimed at reducing the incidence of criminal activities by addressing their root causes and mitigating risk factors. Effective crime prevention requires a multidisciplinary approach, integrating law enforcement, community engagement, social services, and urban planning to create environments less conducive to criminal behaviour. Outcome from the respondents are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: Crime Prevention

Statement	Percentage					Mean	Std. Dev.
	SD	D	N	A	SA		
Intelligence gathering has help in crime prevention	8.4	26.2	27.1	29.0	9.3	3.0467	1.12756
Data profiling has enhanced the security situation in Meru County	5.6	27.1	35.5	28.0	3.7	2.9720	.96601
Information management in the context of community policing has enhance trust in Meru County	1.9	7.5	25.2	51.4	14.0	3.6822	.87522
Information management in the context of community policing has brought about increased peace and unity	5.6	7.5	38.3	42.1	6.5	3.3645	.92545
Information management in the context of community policing has enhanced the security situation in Meru County	2.8	11.2	26.2	43.0	16.8	3.5981	.98919
Data processing has helped in the gathering of information aimed at improving the security situation in Meru County	1.9	5.6	25.2	46.7	20.6	3.7850	.90103
Average Mean						**3.4080**	**0.96408**

Source: Field Survey (2025)

Analysis of crime prevention perception responses provided in Table 3 observed that of specific interest, data processing has helped in the gathering of information for improving the security situation in Meru County, which had the highest mean of 3.7850, with relatively minimal variation in the form of a standard deviation of 0.90103, representing a strong consensus of opinion on the critical role of processing in improving security outcomes. Similarly, the statements that information management in the context of community policing has increased confidence in Meru County and information management in the context of community policing has improved the security situation in Meru County had mean scores of 3.6822 and 3.5981, respectively, reflecting near-consensus opinion of the beneficial impacts of information management on security and confidence. Conversely, the items that pertained to intelligence gathering and profiling showed considerably lower average means of 3.0467 and 2.9720, respectively, with high standard deviations of 1.12756 and 0.96601. This indicates greater variability in the respondents' expectations on the effectiveness of the strategies in crime prevention. Specifically, the relatively low mean with high variability in data profiling is a clear indicator of doubtfulness or diverse experiences with its effectiveness in providing improved security for Meru County. Generally, the overall mean of 3.4080, with a standard deviation of 0.96408, is a general but moderate

agreement of the beneficial impact of management of information in community policing, but specifically, indicates that items like the processing of data and dissemination of information are viewed positively and favourably in preventing crime in the study area. The findings align with Mwaniki (2016) and Ronoah (2021) who recognized that joint police-community patrols, as well as the participation of vigilante groups and community courts, have all contributed to crime prevention.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is the core of examining the relationship between information management and crime prevention in Meru County, Kenya. By using correlation analysis, the researcher is able to determine not just the strength of the relationship but also the directional impact of information management on crime prevention. The findings from this statistical technique are as shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis Results

		Crime Prevention	Intelligence Gathering	Data Profiling
Crime Prevention	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
Intelligence Gathering	Pearson Correlation	-.075	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.442		
Data Profiling	Pearson Correlation	-.107	.787**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.272	.000	

Source: Field Survey (2025)

Table 4 depicts that intelligence gathering and crime prevention have a weak and negative correlation ($r = -0.075$, $p = 0.442$) that is not statistically significant. This, in turn, indicates that the methodology currently being applied for intelligence gathering in Meru County is not expected to have positive impacts on crime prevention. The findings are inconsistent with Afolabi *et al* (2016) and Bryne and Marx (2011) who identified significant relationship. Moreover, the analysis reports a weak but not statistically significant negative correlation between data profiling and crime prevention ($r = -0.107$, $p = 0.272$), suggesting that efforts in this direction may not have preventive impacts in Meru County. The findings are contrast with Adebisi *et al.* (2021) and Naults (2019) who noted significant relationship. In direct comparison, there is a strong positive correlation of data processing with crime prevention to a high level of statistical significance ($r = 0.669$, $p < 0.001$). This result supports that the capacity for processing, analyzing, and managing crime-based data dramatically increases the effectiveness of crime prevention in Meru County. The outcomes align with that of Singh et al (2018) and Hassani et al (2016) who uncovered a significant relationship. In addition, information sharing shows the highest positive correlation with crime prevention ($r = 0.750$, $p < 0.001$), indicating a high level of statistical significance. This result emphasizes the need for two-way exchange of information by respondents, law enforcement agencies, and stakeholders as a critical aspect of crime prevention in Meru

County. The outcomes align with Aston *et al* (2021) and Lee (2019) who acknowledged significant connection between these factors.

Regression Results

Regression analysis is useful in examining the relationships between different variables and determining the impact of certain elements of information management on crime prevention in Meru County, Kenya. Regression analysis enables the examination of the impacts that are exerted by information management on the reduction of crime. The outcomes of this analysis are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.764[a]	.584	.567	.43465

Source: Field Survey (2025)

Table 5 presents a high positive correlation between intelligence gathering, data profiling, processing of the data, and dissemination of the data in relation to preventing crime in the context of community policing in Meru County, with a multiple correlation coefficient of 0.764. The R Square value is 0.584, meaning that around 58.4% of the variation in crime prevention is explained by the interaction of intelligence gathering and data profiling. In addition, Adjusted R Square of 0.567, in accounting for the number of predictors in comparison with the complexity of the model, further increases the reliability and explanatory power of the model. The findings relating to the combined effect of the variables on the dependent variable are shown in the analysis of variance in Table 6.

Table 6: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	27.021	2	13.51	71.48	.000[b]
	Residual	19.270	102	.189		
	Total	46.291	106			

Source: Field Survey (2025)

Table 6 shows results that attest to the adequacy of the model in explaining the function of information management in crime prevention in the context of community policing in Meru County, Kenya. The F-statistic is noted as 71.48, with a p-value of .000, indicating the model's significance at the 5% level. This result supports the hypothesis that a combination of predictor variables, i.e., intelligence gathering and profiling of the data, together explain the variation in crime prevention outcomes with higher reliability compared to chance alone. The survey therefore proceeded to examine individual coefficients of the predictors, premised on the hypothesis that the variables in combination explain the variation in the dependent variable, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.408	.442		.923	.358
Intelligence Gathering	-.035	.101	-.036	-.347	.729
Data Profiling	-.004	.133	-.003	-.026	.979

Source: Field Survey (2025)

Table 7 shows that intelligence gathering (β = -0.036, p = .729) and data profiling (β = -0.003, p = .979) both have weak and nonsignificant coefficients, meaning that all else being equal, intelligence gathering and data profiling have little impact on crime prevention in the study region. This means that an increase in intelligence gathering by one unit and in data profiling by one unit would be associated with decreases of 0.036 units and 0.003 units of crime prevention in Meru County, Kenya.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The study explored the function of information management in the context of community policing and its effectiveness in reducing crime in Meru County, Kenya. Particularly, the findings show that intelligence gathering in the context of community policing in Meru County does not have any significant impact on outcomes linked with crime prevention. This result emphasizes the need for all-round reforms that enhance the effectiveness, accuracy, and implementation of intelligence for the enhancement of proactive policing.

The research findings are that the impact of profiling on crime prevention aspects of community policing programs in Meru County is minimal. This is a reflection of the inherent limitation of profiling methods, and therefore, the need to design new, improved, ethical, and context-based profiling systems that are capable of informing focused crime prevention strategies.

Recommendations

Several recommendations are made based on the findings of the carried-out survey. Since intelligence gathering contributes relatively insignificantly in crime deterrence, policymakers are recommended to undertake holistic reforms aimed at improving the intelligence function of community policing. Reforms should include programs aimed at institutionalizing structured methods of organized intelligence gathering, broadening programs for the analysis of intelligence for law-enforcement officers, and streamlining the inclusion of community-based intelligence in traditional policing efforts. In addition, resource investments in the use of real-time feedback verification of intelligence was critical in maximizing the impact of gathered intelligence in proactively preventing criminal enterprise.

Given the inbuilt limitations of current data profiling methods, there is a need for law enforcement organizations to adopt cutting-edge, evidence-based profiling practices founded on ethical principles and finely tuned for situational contexts. This calls for the creation of strict protocols for protecting human rights and for minimizing prejudice, complemented by the use of modern analysis tools capable of managing complex socio-demographic data. In addition, there is a need to create programs for upgrading officers' skills in applying profiling in predictive policing while, in parallel, promoting community engagement in order to improve transparency and legitimacy.

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