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## **Security Reporting System and Performance among Police Officers in Lamu County, Kenya**

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## Security Reporting System and Performance among Police Officers in Lamu County, Kenya

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### Abstract

Ineffectiveness in police performance has been a major problem among many policing organizations the world over. Inadequacies in the organizational structure can damage workers and their efficiency, which in turn affects the performance of the organization. This research determined the effect of security reporting system on performance of police officers in Kenya. The descriptive research design was adopted. Qualitative and quantitative techniques of data analysis were used. The findings indicated that coefficient of security reporting system had a positive and significant relationship with performance of police officers ( $r=.572$ ,  $P=.000$ ). This denoted that performance of police officers increases as the reporting system improves. The study concluded that reporting procedures are complicated, information received is not sufficient for decision making and there is no access to real-time information. It was recommended that the National Police Service should put up measures to streamline the reporting system and free it from complications. Also, modern equipment and technology to enhance reporting need to be installed.

**Keywords:** *Security Reporting System, Performance, Police Officers*

## **1.0 Introduction**

For the growth and development of the national economy, safety is a top priority. Before investing in a nation, investors consider its stability (Asghari, 2016). Any sovereign government considers the position of the police to be crucial in maintaining law and order (Varghese, 2010). As a result, the performance of police officers is crucial in gaining people's confidence in carrying out their everyday operations. The government of Kenya will depend heavily on the successful performance of police officers in protecting the public from threats to their safety in order to implement and succeed with the Vision 2030 Development Plan. Systemic reforms were identified by the National Task Force on Police Reforms in 2009 as a significant path for police officers to achieve efficiency, effectiveness, discipline and accountability.

Organizational transformation, according to Schilling and Steensma (2001), is a reaction to an ever-changing world in order to adopt a stronger, more flexible and well-suited organizational framework. Changes in the operating environment, according to Meyer (2008), should be taken into account when changing individual organizations to make them more sensitive. Policy Framework and Strategy for Reorganization of the National Police Service (2018) outlines the reorganization of the National Police Service and harmonization of structures by abolishing eleven designations and establishing four designations that enable the flow of information for action. A smooth flow of information should include an accurate reporting system.

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

Kabia (2013), Kivoi (2013), Chtalu (2014), Mutua (2014), Ojienda (2013), and Amnesty International (2013) have all found that police officers are still unreliable when it comes to results. Radical police reforms on command structure reorganization culminated in a partial breakdown of command and control in order to eliminate overlaps that results in duplication of roles. The configuration of the reporting system has an effect on the effective performance of employees (Anam, 2019). The flow of data through reporting networks is critical for effective organizational activity (Zbirenko & Andersson, 2014). Inadequacies in the organizational structure can harm employees and their productivity, which has a negative effect on the organization's efficiency.

Inefficiency in police performance has been a significant issue in many police forces around the world. People's perceptions of police efficacy are commonly described as an instrumental, results-oriented assessment (Tyler, 2006). The difference between the goal set and the actual outcome achieved is referred to as results. Since 2003, successive Kenyan governments have prioritized reforms to improve the efficiency of the police service. The governments have created a variety of task forces on police reform, each with a different mandate. For the 2002-2005, 2006-2009, 2009, and 2010 Police Reform Task Forces, administrative, operational, institutional and policy reforms were recommended. Reorganization alters the way an organisation operates (Finkelsen, 2016). The study therefore sought to determine the effect of security reporting system on performance of police officers in Kenya.

### **1.2 Objective of the Study**

The aim of the study was to determine the effect of security reporting system on performance of police officers: a case of Lamu County, Kenya.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

The McKinsey 7-S Framework is a dynamic application that plays an active role in structuring organizations. Organizational structures are used to gauge the existing performance and increase in productivity and as a result, a positive outcome is reached. The approaches make the organization structure consistent (Demir, & Kocaoglu, 2019). The McKinsey model outlines the seven independent elements of the organization namely Structure, Strategy, Skills, Staff, Systems, and Shared Values. The elements coordinate together to enhance performance in an organization. The elements are interconnected hence any change of one necessitates a change to others for the organization to function effectively (Jurevicius, 2013). The elements are classified as hard elements (strategy, structure and systems) and soft elements (style, skills, shared values and staff). Soft elements are influenced by the organization's culture and hard elements are influenced by management culture (Demir, & Kocaoglu, 2019). The model is useful in enabling organizational change and ascertaining how each area will change in the future. Ravanfar, (2015) outlines steps that could help in the application of the model as; identify areas that are not effectively aligned, determine the optimal organizational design desired where and what changes should be made, make the necessary changes and continuously review the 7s. The model is highly applicable in the National Police Service restructuring and can be used to identify which elements need realignment to improve performance, or to sustain alignment and performance during restructuring.

### **2.2 Empirical Review**

#### **2.2.1 Reporting system and performance of police officers**

Organizational structure establishes who is in control of different tasks, departmental areas, and the organization as a whole. The reporting system is created by authority boundaries and relationships among people in authority (Johnson, 2013). Employees' effective performance is influenced by the design of the reporting system (Anam, 2019). It defines how and where the organization authority flows, functions performed, and line of reporting. The structure of police organizations has a continuous line of authority that flows from upper to lower organizational levels clarifying who reports to whom.

Robins and Coulter (2012) indicated that the concept of authority, responsibility, accountability, unity of command, and delegation enables a continuous flow of authority. According to Zbirenko and Andersson (2014) flow of information through reporting channels is crucial for effective and efficient organizational functions as a channel of influence, mechanism of influence change, and a critical dimension of an organization. Reporting lines establish activities and roles of performers within the organization for internal coordination, stability, and efficiency. Those at the top bear the greatest decision-making responsibility; those with the least are at the bottom with a clear reporting system (Barahemah, 2015). Hierarchy can help offer some real-time control of the organizing typical approach of steering its activities, at the level of both actions and perception. Good intra-organizational reporting systems including feedback mechanisms are provided by hierarchical structures (Jacobides, 2007). Drawn lines signify reporting relationships or patterns of prescribed communication (Recardody & Heather, 2012). Organizational structure is a vital tool in guaranteeing coordination as it determines reporting relationships in its system (Manar, 2014).

## **3.0 Methodology**

The study applied the descriptive research design. The target population comprised of 1200 police officers deployed within Lamu County. A total of 120 respondents were selected as

the sample size. This represented 10% of the target population. Simple random sampling method was used to select the respondents. Data was collected using questionnaires. Both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data analysis were employed. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze quantitative data, while thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data.

## 4.0 Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which the following parameters of the reporting system affect the performance of police officers under national police service.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on the Reporting System**

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reporting procedures are complicated.	97	3.61	.995
Sometimes the information received is not sufficient for decision making.	97	3.98	.878
Access to real-time information is limited.	97	3.79	.999
There is slow action on information received.	97	3.77	1.186
Sometimes the Feedback is slow.	97	3.79	.889
Sometimes the feedback is not actionable.	97	3.79	.889
There is an inadequate supply of modern equipment.	97	3.97	1.015
The necessary technology is unavailable.	97	3.75	1.155
There is slow incident investigation and mitigation.	97	3.91	.958
Sometimes my immediate supervisor fails to give me information on important issues related to my work.	97	3.69	1.245
Valid N (listwise)	97		

Results in Table 1 show a mean of 3.61 and a standard deviation of .995 on if reporting procedures were complicated. This indicates that most respondents agreed that reporting procedures in the reporting system are complicated. The complications concerning reporting procedures encompass numerous factors based on the nature of the crime, the person reporting, and the context of what is being reported. A study conducted by Gerstenfeld (2011) on the police reporting systems of several crimes was in a large metropolitan police department with various crimes task force, established that officers did not rely on the perpetrators' criminal alone to determine whether the crime was ill-motivated, contrary to the fears of some first amendment scholars. Instead, the two most important factors were; whether the victim and offender are different groups and whether bias, rather than some other emotion, appeared to have motivated crime. From this kind of findings, it is evident that reporting procedures are still a challenge that cuts across the globe even in some developed countries like the United States.

The findings on whether sometimes the information received were not sufficient for decision making reported a mean of 3.98 and a standard deviation of .878. This suggests that the majority of respondents agreed that sometimes they received information that was not sufficient for decision making. Inadequate information is a key factor that affects most police officers in the reporting system. It is important to take into account with the protocols observed in policing service, chances are high that information communicated may lack sufficient details to make decisions. In the reporting system, it is important to have an operational plan that enables administrators to assert some degree of operational control



(Holden, 1994). Holden further states that once a program is implemented, managers must not only make specific duty assignments, they must also ensure they are carried out as specified in the reporting system. Only operation plans provide enough detail to control specific assignments operationally in the reporting system. Otherwise, officers and units would not clearly understand what is expected of them. Many police programs fail because there is a lack of program specificity or control activities. Police managers cannot assume that people or their juniors are doing what they are supposed to do; they must follow up on activities.

The findings on the study on whether access to real-time information was limited found a mean of 3.79 and a standard deviation of .999. This indicates that most respondents agreed that they did not get full access to real-time information. Real-time information offers police with the intelligence desirable to swiftly and securely respond to incidents (Britt, 2016). By integrating current information and historical records police officers can develop more effective procedures and responses. Further, real-time information advances customer service, increases operational efficiency and helps in motivating employees.

The findings on whether there was slow action on information received reported a mean of 3.77 and a standard deviation of 1.186. This suggests that majority of respondents agreed it was slow to act on the information received. Information in policing is used for “predictive policing,” the application of statistical models to anticipate increased dangers of crime, followed by interventions to avert those crimes from taking place (Gibbs, 2015). Policing is traditionally reactive: police officers respond to calls for service. Information received by police must be acted on to prevent crime from happening or escalation of an ongoing one. Non-action on information by police officers can result in death, injury or loss of property.

The findings on whether sometimes the feedback was slow revealed a mean of 3.79 and a standard deviation of .889. This suggests that the majority of respondents agreed that the speed at which feedback is received was slow. Giving or receiving feedback is an indispensable component of the long-term accomplishment of any organization (Robinson, 2019). Performance feedback is vital to aiding employees to recognize expectations, make corrections, and get the instruction essential to improve and be successful (Leonard, 2018). Positive or negative feedback is significant since it helps in the disruption of bad habits, emphasizes positive performance and empowers teams to work more effectively towards the objectives. Slow feedback can result in the escalation of minor problems to major ones that may require more resources to solve.

The study on whether sometimes the feedback was not actionable reported a mean of 3.79 and a standard deviation of .889. This indicates that most respondents agreed that sometimes the feedback received was not actionable. Effective feedback not only delivers guidance to aid an employee perform responsibilities appropriately, but it also clarifies expectations, builds an individual’s self-confidence, and raises trust between an employee and supervisor (O’Quinn, 2019). Giving, receiving and executing actionable feedback that leads to learning and noticeable outcomes is necessary to the performance.

The findings on if there was an inadequate supply of modern equipment revealed a mean of 3.97 and a standard deviation of 1.015. This indicates that the majority of respondents agreed that they were inadequately supplied with modern equipment. Tengpongsthorn (2016) study found that enough equipment was a factor facilitating an increase in work performance and that the imbalance of manpower and scarcity of modern equipment were factors that were obstacles to work performance. Police officers use a variety of equipment when on the service call. The amount of equipment used depends on the context in which they are responding. The availability of equipment befitting every situation is vital for efficient

performance. The majority of respondents indicated there is a need to automate the policing services for effective performance.

One respondent stated that;

*Modern technology should be the national police service to facilitate the police officers to increase the speed and scale of processing the large amounts of information received.*

Findings by Hartzog (2016) posit that failure to responsibly automate law enforcement risks creating systems that undermine law and democracy.

The findings on whether necessary technology was unavailable reported a mean of 3.75 and a standard deviation of 1.155. This suggests that many respondents agreed that there was lack of necessary technology in the reporting system. The results from Anna (2015) study, states that there is a positive significant relationship between management tools and techniques utilization and organizational performance. Technology empowers police officers to detect and unravel criminal activities happening at a given time. It discourages police officers from being reactive and supports pro-activeness. Some of the modern technology like drones helps police officers get an aerial view of a scene safely, global positioning systems (GPS) helps police officers trace criminals more easily, gunshot technology detects gunfire and offers police officers prompt access to shooting location maps, as well as information on the number of shooters present and how many shots were fired while surveillance cameras provide police officers with valuable insight by capturing happenings in a certain area. Modern technology is significant in aiding in-depth and precise reporting during an investigation.

The findings on whether there were slow incident investigation and mitigation found a mean of 3.91 and a standard deviation of .958. This indicates that the majority of respondents agreed that incident investigation and mitigation was performed at a slow pace. Reverence for law and order from members of the public is a result of a fair and effective criminal justice system under which crime investigation is established. Effective incident investigation determines not only what transpired, but also finds how and why the incident occurred. Investigations are an effort to thwart a similar or perhaps more disastrous sequence of happenings. Cunningham (2020) states that police and law enforcement organizations encounter various challenges when it comes to building, pursuing and clearing cases. Cunningham further outlines the fundamental factors that slow investigation as; caseload, case screening and intake, cross-unit collaboration, community involvement, checklist investigation process, and case review.

The findings on whether sometimes immediate supervisors fail to give information on important issues related to respondent's work established a mean of 3.69 and a standard deviation of 1.245. This suggests that most respondents agreed that there were times when the immediate supervisors failed in availing information on important issues relating to work. Sharing of information can significantly increase police officers' capability to detect, prevent, and respond to crime-related incidents. According to Griffiths and Birdi (2016), effective sharing of information both within and between police organizations is arguably becoming gradually important for the attainment of objectives. Research by Abrahamson and Goodman-Delahaunty (2014) established that individual unwillingness is one of the impediments to information sharing.

## 4.2 Correlation between Reporting System and Performance of Police Officers

The study carried out a correlation analysis to determine the association between the reporting system and the performance of police officers. The findings were presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Correlation between Reporting System and the Performance of Police Officers**

		Performance of police officers	Reporting system
Performance of police officers	Pearson Correlation	1	.572**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	97	97
Reporting system	Pearson Correlation	.572**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	97	97

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

**Source: Research Data, 2020**

Results in Table 2 show the correlation between the reporting system and performance of police officers. This test was conducted at a 1% significant level. From the table, the findings revealed a positive Pearson's correlation coefficient of .572,  $p < .01$ . This implies that the performance of police officers increases as the reporting system improves. A single unit change in the reporting system results in a .572 increase in the performance of police officers.

## 5.0 Conclusion

On reporting system and performance of police officers reporting procedures are complicated, information received is not sufficient for decision making and there is no access to real-time information. The speed at which information received is acted upon is slow. The speed at which feedback is received is slow and sometimes not actionable. Modern equipment and technology necessary for the police service are not adequately supplied. The pace at which incidents are investigated and mitigated is slow. There are times when the immediate supervisors fail in availing information on important issues relating to work.

## 6.0 Recommendations

The National Police Service should put up measures to streamline the reporting system and free it from complications. Also, modern equipment and technology to enhance reporting should be installed.

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