

## **The Role of Community Policing In Illicit Brews Prevention In Gatundu South sub-County, Kiambu County, Kenya**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to establish the role of community policing in illicit brews prevention in Gatundu south sub-county, Kenya. Theories adopted in this study were social structure theory and the broken window theory. This research adopted a mixed methodology to accommodate collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. The researcher adopted descriptive research design. The target population of the study was 28,047 households and 19 experts. The study used Yamane (1967) formula to get the sample size of 437 households. Following data collection, the quantitative coded data was analyzed using SPSS and Microsoft excel and interpreted using descriptive statistics methods such as frequency tables and percentages while qualitative data was analyzed thematically where it was coded by assigning numbers congregated into themes and grouped to establish patterns. The study revealed that there were challenges facing CP programs whereby lack of adequate skills by police officers was the leading challenge. The study further revealed that the respondents had a negative perception towards the use of CP. Finally, it was revealed that the police-community relationship contributed in illicit brews prevention. Based on the findings, the study concluded that there are challenges facing CP, the community have a negative perception towards using CP in illicit brews prevention and finally, there is need to strengthen the relationship between the police and the community. The study recommends the national government and NGOs to make resources available and to enhance community sensitization programs on CP in illicit brews prevention.

**Key words:** Kenya, Kiambu. Community Policing, Illicit Brews, Gatundu South-Sub County, addiction

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### **Introduction and Background of the Study**

The world has been facing a challenge of illicit brews (Were, 2021). Alcohol has been used for centuries and has become part of daily life worldwide. Nevertheless, illicit brews production and consumption has become popular in most parts of the developing countries. According to Wakoli (2023), illicit brews has become a major threat to public health. In a country like the United States, methanol from illicit brews constitutes to methanol poisoning (Levy et al., 2015). Police officers and the community have been the key players in the fight against illicit brews through the support of community policing model. Many African states have developed mechanisms with the intention of eradicating these illicit brews. This is based on the traditions that alcohol is part of African culture and therefore the need to regulate its production, distribution and consumption is paramount. Availability of ingredients for making illicit brews makes it even more available and more lethal to public health (Carey et al., 2015).

Many East African countries have been facing these challenges of illicit brews whereby despite the tight laws targeting the illicit brews businesses, studies have shown they have made little or no impact on the availability of these illicit brews in the community. In the past, the alcohol industry was controlled by the use of customs but a gradual change from this was witnessed following the introduction of westernization by colonizers (Musungu and Kosgei, 2015). For instance, a country like Uganda has not illegalized chang'aa. This is despite the country having a bill passed by the parliament in 2019 which has not been put into practice 5 years down the line. Chang'aa whose content has proved to be lethal and life threatening is still legal in Uganda and is more consumed in the rural setups by people from low social-economics status with little or completely no regulations at all.

Kenya has a history of traditional brews and every community having unique names for them. The kikuyu community who reside mostly in central parts of Kenya where Gatundu south sub-county is calls them Muratina, communities from western parts of Kenya call them Busaa or Karubu and people in the coastal region call them Mnazi, (Musungu and Kosgei, 2015). Chang'aa is the most common illicit brew in central Kenya. It was initially used in traditional ceremonies such as dowry ceremonies, initiation ceremonies among others. Despite there being traditional brews, illicit brews are also produced in the same communities where it becomes difficult to control production and consumption of illicit brews.

Many regions in Kenya have been struggling to eradicate these illicit brews. A report by NACADA on Status of Illicit Brews and Alcohol in Kenya 14<sup>th</sup> edition indicated for instance Bungoma County to be number one in illicit brews production and consumption in western Kenya. The report also stated that massive seizure of illicit brews was witnessed in Narok, Kericho, Meru and Kisii. This displays the picture of the wide spread of illicit brews across the country.

In 2010, the new constitution of Kenya illegalized chang'aa. The introduction of county governments was expected to contribute massively in the preventing the prevalence of illicit brews. However, 13 years down the line, chang'aa is still available across most parts of the country with an example of Gatundu south in central region, Kenya. The prevalence of consumption of illicit brews has been experienced for several decades now (Kipchumba, 2018).

In Gatundu South sub-county, CP was a strategy thought to have reduced the prevalence of illicit brews but to the contrary, this problem is still there. A report by Mututho (2014) stated that the problem of alcohol consumption has continued to magnify with a total of 13.6% being the percentage of alcohol consumers and 5.5 percent being Kenyans who have alcohol dependence symptoms which is an alarming state. A report by NACADA (2021) on Status of Alcohol Consumption in Kenya indicated Gatundu South sub-county the leading sub-county in alcohol consumption in Kiambu County.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Community policing is fundamental and a core component of illicit brews prevention mechanism. Kenya's unmet need for illicit brews prevention is currently at an alarming state with the rise in loss of lives, contacted diseases and wastage of resources by the government and other stakeholders.

Other than the threat on public health, illicit brews have contributed immensely on social-economic decadency in the communities. According to a report by National Police Service on Status of Crime in Kenya (2018), there is a notable increase in the amount of illicit brews in the country with a decrease in the cumulative arrests relating to illicit brews done every year.

Gatundu south has an existing history of illicit brew production and consumption. According to NACADA's Report on Drug and Substance Abuse, (2018), it was the leading sub-county in Kiambu County in consumption of illicit brews.

Many researches have been done to examine the contribution of community policing in crime prevention with excellent reports on its weakness, strengths and various recommendations for many years. There exists limited literature on the role of community policing in illicit brews prevention which is the gap the current study want to fill by examining the role of community policing in illicit brews prevention in Gatundu South sub-county, Kenya.

### **Objective of the Study**

The research focuses on investigating the role of community policing in illicit brews prevention in Gatundu south sub-county, Kenya. Firstly, it seeks to establish the challenges facing community policing in illicit brews prevention. Secondly, the study aims to determine the perception of the community towards community policing in Gatundu South sub-county. Thirdly, the study aims to establish the contribution of the community-police relationship to illicit brews prevention in Gatundu south sub-county, Kenya.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by three research questions including; what are the challenges facing community policing in illicit brews prevention, what is the perception of the community towards community policing as an illicit brews prevention strategy and finally what is the contribution of community- police relationship to illicit brews prevention in Gatundu south sub-county, Kenya.

## Literature Review

Community policing has been a strategy adopted by most developing countries to prevent crimes globally. This model of policing chooses a proactive policing over reactive policing. Outcome of poor illicit brews prevention measurers has been evidenced by the rise in cases of people who contact alcohol related diseases from time to time. Public health has been at risk since some of the lethal material wastes used in the production of illicit brews are carelessly dumped into the environment (Were, 2021). In South Africa, community policing has been identified to have little or no impact since its introduction (Yesefu, 2021). Among the challenges identified by the study to be contributing to making CP ineffective, the major ones were lack of police trust by the community and poor resourcing by the stakeholders. Leting (2017) identified resources to be the biggest challenge in the implementation of community policing in another separate study that examined nyumba kumi strategy which is part of community policing. The study suggested the need to adequately make resources available to the key stakeholders for example the police in order to make community policing effective.

Ali (2017) states that police officers doesn't have adequate skills in community policing which is as a result of inadequate training at the basic police training level. Another study by Mastrofski (2016) identified that developed countries such as USA didn't focus their police recruit training in community policing. Both studies identified the need for police training on community policing matters. The study however didn't focus on the challenges facing community policing in details a gap identified by the current study. Taylor, Fritsch and Caeti (2008) identified that most community policing researches focused on urban areas more than the rural setup. This eventually would make policy makers to put resources in the said areas forgetting rural set ups such as Gatundu South.

The perception of the community plays a major role in the implementation of the CP initiative (Marks, 2009). According to the study, there is need for both the police and the community to work in harmony. A study by Kiarie (2012) examined the perception of the community members towards community policing. The study identified that the police have no respect to the public making them not appreciate their role in CP and most of them didn't have any reason to support community policing.

Gbenemene & Adishi (2017) identified community perception towards the police had made community policing ineffective in Nigeria. The study which was conducted in Nigeria where it is obvious there exists difference in police culture, police organization structure and community perception towards CP from what we have in Kenya is the regional gaps identified by the current study.

The issue of the perception of the community towards community policing cannot be emphasized enough. Mwaniki and Maroko (2020) conducted a study in Kirinyaga County with a focus on community policing and crime prevention strategies in the area. The study focused on analyzing the effectiveness of joint community police patrols, effectiveness of youth patrol groups and identifying the role played by the community courts process in crime prevention. The study suggested areas that needed further research and among them was community's attitude towards community policing a gap identified by the current study this study.

The need to understand the contribution of the community and police relationship in illicit brews is critical in modern policing and crime mitigation. A study by Masee and Mwendwa (2012) focused on the ties between the community and security agencies. The study identified

the need for encouraging good relationship between the police and the community since the whole ideology of community policing and crime reduction couldn't be achieved without considering the fact.

The relationship between the police and the community is critical for the success of community policing (Gitau, 2017). Where the relationship between the one is good, better results and great participation of the community can be anticipated. Onwudiwe (2009) identified that in Nigeria, the 'police culture' ignored the police-community relationships since there existed an ideology that only police got the skills on crime prevention matters. This culture completely compromised the crime prevention strategies like community policing and doomed police-community relationship. The study established that the community appreciated police work but the police weren't willing to share power on crime prevention with them.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The need to focus on social factors that makes people commit crime is necessary since there are norms in the community that tries to regulate conduct. The study used Social Structural Theory of Community Policing by Robert R. Friedman.

The Broken Window Theory that was developed by Wilson and Kelling in 1982 was also adopted in this study. Since its introduction, most studies on community policing have utilized it (Allender, 2004). The theory suggested that it is until the broken window is repaired that the crime associated with it will be managed.

#### **Conceptual Framework**

Conceptual framework makes research problem more **researchable hence explain how the** research problem would be explored (Adom et al., 2018). It displays. It displays how various variables interact with each other in the sense that each variable is affected by one another.

### **Independent variable**

- (i) Challenges facing community policing include; Resources, number of police officers, skills, accountability and police transfers.
- (ii) The perception of the community towards the use of community policing includes; Waste of time, corruption, opinion sharing, increased community policing forums
- (iii) Community-police relationship and its contribution to illicit brews prevention including; Information sharing, harmonious social environment, identification of illicit brews production dens, resource mobilization and involvement.

### **Dependent Variable**

Illicit brews prevention

Intervening Variable

- (i) Policies
- (ii) Resources

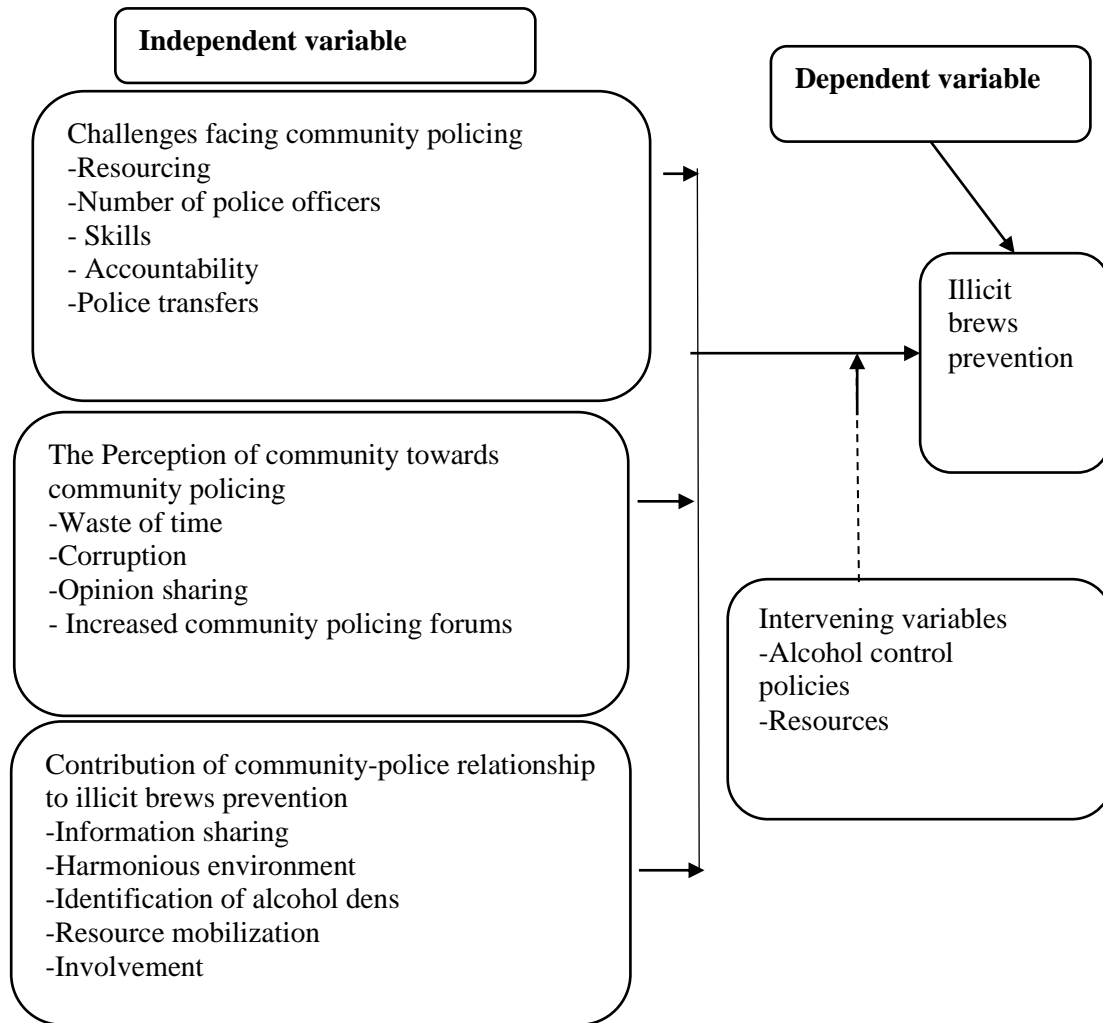


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

**Source: Researcher (2023)**

### Research Methodology

The researcher used a mixed method approach based on the type of data intended to be collected in this study. The study intended to use both qualitative and quantitative data. It remained the method of choice as it provided a good foundation for collecting both qualitative and quantitative data.

### Target Population

This study targeted 28,037 households in Gatundu south from all the 4 wards who benefits from community policing programs and who are affected by illicit brews. The target population was households within a 300 meters radius from police station or police divisions. The closeness of the households to the police anticipated the household members to have better chances of

benefiting from CP programs and that made the choice to use that radius a valid choice. The study also targeted one SCPCs, four ACCs, DCC and 12 community policing officials.

#### Sampling Procedure and Techniques

The sample population was determined using Yamane (1967) proposed formula from 28,037 households in Gatundu south sub-county. It would be basically expensive and cumbersome to get data from the entire population and therefore, the study used the below formula to get the sample population;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = Sample size; N=Population size; and e=Significance level

The researcher anticipated a possibility of non-compliance or withdrawal by some respondents. Based on the anticipation, the researcher made an adjustment and the formula below was used for that.

$$n^{**} = \frac{n}{1 - w}$$
 From the formula targeted 437 households from the area.

#### Sample Population

From the target population, it would be necessary to ensure fair distribution of data collection tools. This was achieved through using two main sampling methods namely; purposive sampling method and cluster sampling method.

**Table 3.1: Sample Population**

**Source: Researcher; (2023)**

Target group	Number	Sample size	Proportionate size to the population sample size	Sampling Technique
Households	28,037	437	95%	Cluster sampling
Experts	35	19	5%	Purposive sampling

**Source: Researcher (2023)**

The first step in cluster sampling method was to identify all households within the radius of 300 meters from Gatundu police station or the police division in the four wards. The second step involved the use of simple random sampling method and for the purposes of this study, the first household was selected randomly from there. Therefore, the study developed a table showing the number of respondents per ward.

#### Construction of Research Instruments

Questionnaires and interviews were the primary data collection methods. Questionnaires was close ended and in English but the researcher intended to offer interpretation assistance to the respondents who would need it. The study also used interview method for the special population. For the purposes of confidentiality, the respondents were be highly encouraged not to write their names.

### Data Collection Methods and Procedures

The study used mixed methods in data collection for both qualitative and quantitative data.

#### Table 4.1: Reliability Analysis

Source: Researcher (2023)

Variables	Alpha Value
Challenges facing community policing	0.843
Attitude of the community towards community policing	0.836
Contribution of community-police relationship towards illicit brews prevention	0.841
<b>Average Value</b>	<b>0.840</b>

Source: Researcher (2023)

Primary data was collected from interviews and questionnaires while secondary data was collected from government documentaries, journals, books, articles and media sources.

#### Data Analysis Techniques and Procedures

The study produced both qualitative and quantitative data which was obtained from questionnaires and interviews. After the quantitative data collection exercise, the data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences and interpreted using descriptive statistical methods for instance percentages and frequency tables. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically through coding, assigning numbers, congregated into themes and finally grouped to establish the trends.

#### Presentation and Discussion of Findings

##### Reliability Analysis

**The researcher required a Cronbach's Alpha exceeding 0.7 and the table below shows an alpha value of 0.840.**

##### Response Rate

Out of 437 respondents who received the study tools, 389 returned them which constituted to 89% response rate. Muriithi et.al (2016) stated that a RR of 50% is adequate, 60% good and above and 70% is excellent for data analysis and reporting and therefore the RR in this study surpassed recommended level thus was sufficient enough.

#### 4.4 Data on Challenges facing Community Policing in Illicit Brews Prevention

Household respondents were asked to indicate challenges faced by community policing in illicit brews prevention in the area. For better establishment of their views, a questionnaire clearly written questionnaire with 5 categories of constructs perceived to be the challenges facing community policing was shared to them for opinion sharing. The results obtained were as follows; On the construct whether community policing programs were well resourced, majority of household respondents at 51% disapproved the construct, whereas a lesser figure at 48% approved the construct and 5% remained neutral on the matter. On the construct whether the area had enough police officers to cater for community policing and illicit brews matters, 40% supported the construct 31% opposed the construct while 29% remained neutral. On the view that the police officers have adequate skills in handling community policing matters, 62%

opposed the construct, 35% supported while 3% chose to remain neutral. On the statement whether the police officers were accountable in community policing and illicit brews prevention matters, 57% opposed the construct, 33% supported while only 10% remained neutral. On the need for reviewing police transfer policy for enabling adequate service delivery, 39% of household respondents opposed, 47% while 24% remained neutral.

**Table 4.2: Challenges facing Community Policing in Illicit Brews Prevention**

S/No	Construct	1	2	3	4	5
1	The community policing programs are well resourced	109 28%	79 20%	5 1%	79 21%	117 30%
2	There are enough police officers in our area to facilitate community policing and illicit brews prevention matters	70 18%	50 13%	112 29%	32 8%	125 32%
3	The police have adequate skills in handling matters community policing	70 18%	65 17%	11 3%	113 29%	130 32%
4	The police officers are accountable in community policing matters	110 28%	19 5%	40 10%	92 24%	128 33%
5	There is need to review police transfer for it affects community policing in illicit brews prevention	66 17%	117 30%	89 24%	70 17%	47 12%

Source: Researcher, (2023)

#### 4.5 The Perception of the Community Towards the use of Community Policing as an Illicit Brews Prevention Strategy

The researcher analyses the available data on the perception of household respondents towards the use of community policing as an illicit brews prevention strategy.

**Table 4.3: General Community's Perception on Community Policing as an Illicit Brews Prevention Strategy**

Perception	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	93	23.91%
Agree	97	24.94%
Disagree	104	26.73%
Strongly disagree	95	24.42%
Total	389	100

Source: Researcher (2023)

According to the results above, 23.91% strongly agreed to the constructs, 24.94% agreed, 26.73% disagreed and 24.42% strongly disagreed which indicated that majority of household respondents had a negative perception towards using community policing.

#### 4.6 The Contribution of Community Police Relationship to Illicit Brews Prevention

The researcher wanted to establish the contribution of the community-police relationship to illicit brews prevention and the results were as follows; on the issue on information sharing, 65%

supported, 30% didn't support while 5% remained neutral. On the issue of whether crime can be reduced through harmoniously living together, 88% supported, 12% remained neutral. On the issue of using community policing to identify illicit brews dens, 35% didn't support, 10% remained neutral while only 55% supported. On the issue of resource mobilization, 55% supported while 45% didn't support. Finally, on the issue of whether community policing can make the community more involved in community policing matters and illicit brews reduction, 66% supported, 14% remained neutral while only 20% didn't support the construct.

Table 4.4: The Contribution of Community- Police Relationship to Illicit Brews Prevention

Source: Researcher (2023)

### **Discussion of Findings**

This section summarizes the results and generates conclusions and recommendations guided by objectives of the study. The raw findings of the study are as follows:

1. Community policing programs are facing resource challenges ranging from poor police skills, unaccountability issues, lack of enough police officers and police transfers.
2. The community have a negative perception towards using community policing strategy towards illicit brews prevention
3. Illicit brews can be revealed through increasing community forum activities.
4. Community-police relationship contributes to illicit brews prevention whereby illicit brews can be prevented if the police and the community live harmoniously.

### **Summary of Findings**

The findings shows that the implementation of community policing in Gatundu South sub-county is faced with numerous challenges which are impeding the realization of the program's defined goal of prevention of illicit brews in the community. Staffs shortage, lack of adequate skills through training, police officers unaccountability and police transfers were the challenges identified by this study to be facing community policing in Gatundu South Sub-county. With a focus on the challenges, police officers don't have sufficient skills to handle community policing matters. Police are unaccountable as evidenced by 57%.

The study can further conclude that the community have a negative perception towards the use of community policing as an illicit brews prevention strategy and they have an extreme negative perception towards using community policing to fight illicit brews. The community perceives that there is need to leave the police officers to do their job. However, the study can conclude that a percentage of the community members have a positive perception towards using community policing in reducing illicit brews cases whereby the respondents indicated that when there are more community policing activities, illicit brews cases can reduce.

The study can however conclude that the relationship between the police and the community contributes in illicit brews prevention. It is important to maintain a good environment between the police and the community as it will affect the outcome of illicit brews prevention either negatively or positively.

S/no	Construct	1	2	3
1	The community-police relationship contributes positively towards information sharing relating to illicit brews	118 30%	19 5%	252 65%
2	Crime can be reduced when the community and the police live harmoniously	342 88%	47 12%	0
3	Community police relationship can help identification of illicit brews dens.	136 35%	39 10%	214 55%
4	Community-police relationship can help in resource mobilization towards community policing and illicit brews prevention programs	136 45%	0	213 55%
5	Community-police relationship can make the community be more involved in community policing matters and reduction of illicit brews.	78 20%	55 14%	256 66%

**Source: Researcher (2023)**

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

The government should make resources more available to the police officers and community members in order to ensure community policing activities are run smoothly. The government and NGOs should provide an in-service training for police officers on community policing matters to equip them with more skills on community policing matters.

The government and NGOs should embark on public sensitization on communities' social dynamics through perception change in order to eliminate mistrust and confidentiality that might contribute negatively towards community policing. More community policing programs

**Citation:** Wachirah, F & Gacheru, E. (2024). The Role of Community Policing In illicit Brews Prevention In Gatundu South Sub-County, Kiambu County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 8(1), 59 – 71.

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**Citation:** Wachirah, F & Gacheru, E. (2024). The Role of Community Policing In illicit Brews Prevention In Gatundu South Sub-County, Kiambu County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 8(1), 59 – 71.

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