

## Strategies used for Crime Prevention in Urban District, Zanzibar

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**Abstract:** The study sought to establish strategies used for crime prevention in Urban District, Zanzibar using the descriptive study design. Data was collected from 83 respondents using a questionnaire. Data was analyzed through descriptive statistics. The study concludes that the Urban District utilized improvement of information literacy level to community members, placement of central camera televisions at frequently visited areas, supporting community patrol officers with amounts of money to buy patrol equipment, private security guards for crime prevention and provision of certificates to recognize community members' participation as crime prevention strategies. However, the study area did not use cleaning, festivals and sports, volunteering to patrol at crime spot area and mobile telephones for members to guard each other as crime prevention strategies. It is therefore recommended that the study area should make use of such strategies as conducting cleaning, festivals and sports, volunteering to patrol at crime spot area and mobile telephones for guarding each other to supplement the currently used strategies so as to strengthen the security in the study area.

**Keywords:** Crime prevention; Shehia program; community policing.

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### Introduction

Shehia as a local government administrative unit in Zanzibar is duty bound to prepare crime prevention programs in order to solve social challenges and diminish crime incidences. Shehia leadership and police are jointly supposed to work together to make sure that communities in their areas are safe and free from crime and fear of crime (Mussa, 2019). Substance of Shehia crime prevention programs have always been a subject of debate among scholars such as sociologist, psychology, social workers, economists, lawyers, planner, criminology and penology. The interests of debate centered on the local government crime prevention program capabilities on reducing crime in respective areas (Crawford & Evans, 2017; Schaefer & Mazerolle, 2018; Herber, 2018). Scholars such as Schaefer and Mazerolle, 2018; Mussa, 2019 and Boddupalli and Rueben, 2021) believed that local government administrative units take giant crime prevention responsibility since they have the duty to

plan and implement crime prevention activities in their respective areas. This responsibility was due to legal power given to control and mobilize local resources, planning of resources collected and utilization of community resources (Mussa, 2019; Clancey & Metcalfe, 2020).

Local government crime prevention programs are based on social, environmental and situational factors (Harkness, 2017). Mussa (2019) ascertained poverty, unemployment and lack of education as main social factors that encourage someone to involve in criminal activities. Environmental factors have to do with protection of some areas with particular high crimes after social and situational approaches failed due to intricacy of crimes and complexity of the area that needs protection (Lee, 2018; van Uhm & Nijman, 2020). Whereas, situational factors meant to make harder for crime to occur where police, community and central

government efforts are needed to materialize the purpose (Harkness, 2017; Amante et al. 2021).

Lee (2018), Mussa (2019), Herber (2018), Piroozfar et al. (2019) contended that community policing, crime prevention through environmental design and situational crime prevention are three crime prevention strategies excised throughout the world. Community policing deals with solving social challenges, organizational transformation and community engagement (Mussa, 2019).

Crime prevention through environmental design crime prevention strategy is meant to identify, analyze and make difficult for criminals to commit offences (Piroozfar *et al.*, 2019) while, situational crime prevention strategy demands joint operation by academics, police and practitioners. All these strategies are meant to understand the criminal thinking and to minimize chances for crimes. This strategy is taken as a lasting way of circumventing crime (Lee, 2018; Schaefer & Mazerolle, 2018; Herber, 2018; Freilich et al., 2019).

Crime prevention programs always differ from one country to the other. United Kingdom for example, uses neighbourhood watch program to solve crimes. Different mechanisms such as block leaders, community policing officers and closed -circuit television at streets, commercial areas and schools are common (Crawford & Evans, 2017). In Australia, local governments practiced crime prevention program to condense farm harassment and circumvent anti-social behavior among immigrants. Through this program, different crimes especially immigrant violence was reduced among the Australian community (Harkness, 2017; Ziller & Goodman, 2020).

In addition, New Zealand, Police in collaboration with other crime prevention stakeholders initiated what is called school-based programs. The program encompassed educators, counsellors, gatekeepers and other key stakeholders to acquire crime information from youth. This strategy was meant to avoid youth from engaging in specific crime risks (Pavlich, 2019). In Japan, like in other Asian countries, local governments have long history with crime prevention programs. "Beautiful Window Movement" program at Adachi ward is a good example which intended to counteract minor crimes and disorders in the area. Police and ward community were working together to minimize crime and fear of crime and rise up a sense of security among communities (Hino & Chronopoulos,

2021). Unlike Japan, where crime prevention programs were well presented, in India, crime prevention was used to stop cybercrime in Smart Cities. Considerable efforts were taken by community leaders to prevent cybercrimes but due to low awareness among communities, the program did not fully materialize (Chatterjee et al. 2018).

African countries also practice crime prevention programs to prevent different kind of crimes. In Nigeria, for instance, closed-circuit television, electric fencing wires, high walls, private security guards and security dogs were highly used to reduce crimes and fear of crime in different locations such as urban neighborhood, high way roads, parking areas, big shops, churches and other areas which accumulate a big number of people (Ajayi & Atanda, 2020). South African apartheid history created fear of crime and sense of insecurity between black Africans and white Africans. Crime is high in the country compare to other areas in the region. In this situation people used different security mechanism to protect themselves and their properties. Private houses, shopping malls, parks and business complex are secured by high walls, burglar bars, electric fences, guard dogs and private security as crime prevention measures (Snyders & Landman, 2018).

Unlike Nigeria and South Africa where physical security mechanisms are mostly used, East African counties experienced other kinds of crime prevention approaches. In Kenya, for example, where killing, burglary and other related crimes are high, other mechanism such as police patrol and youth engagement were commonly used to reduce crime cases (Ndikaru, 2021). The same strategy was used in Rwanda to raise awareness among the youth and urban neighborhood citizens who were supposed to report crimes information to police authority and also participate in community night patrols (Habineza, 2019; Kamugisha, 2020).

In study area, community policing is the main mechanism initiated by police in order to prevent crimes and reduce fear of crimes. The ignition of community policing was the result of the police holistic reform program in 2006. The main purpose of community policing was to build a strong partnership between the police and the community following the increase of crime rates, community lack of police trust, and increase of corruption among police officers. Community policing as an approach is backed up by a number of mechanisms like neighborhood watch, security groups, safari

salama, youth groups and rafiki clubs. Others include Ward/Shehia police officers, schools' friendship clubs and youth soccer against crime programs (Mussa, 2019). Ward/Shehia police officers are a key initiative in community policing approach. In this initiative police force sent one police officer in each Ward/Shehia to work together with Ward/Shehia secretary officers. Both, police officers and ward/Shehia secretary officers were supposed to discuss and find solutions to community social challenges. The solving of community social challenges was meant to create strong partnership and promote confidence between Police and public (Walwa, 2017; Sambaiga, 2018; Walwa, 2018; Killian & Pastory, 2018). Nevertheless, most of crime prevention approaches in study area and community policing initiatives, in particular, at Ward/Shehia level, are not well accepted by the Ward/Shehia community and therefore survive and last for a very short of time (Walwa, 2017; Walwa, 2018; Sambaiga, 2018; Killian and Pastory, 2018).

## Literature Review

Literatures reports numerous crime prevention programs throughout the world. Economic factors, geographical conditions, country ecosystem, kind of crimes, norms and culture make implementation differences in crime prevention from one country to the other (Mussa, 2019). In Iran, where Islamic religion is very strong, religious building and infrastructure were protected by the environmental design mechanism. This mechanism was very useful to protect religious buildings from terrorism and other serious crimes. Most of buildings and religious infrastructures were installed with central circuit television to show what is going on around the areas. The approach was very useful in controlling human movement in and out the building areas (Arabi et al., 2020).

In assessing the impact of climate change in cities and their adaptive capacity, Leal et al. (2019) came up with a different view that crime prevention through environmental design is less appropriate in most of African and less developing countries due to high population and absence of community awareness and favorable infrastructure. Most of the cities and town in under developed countries are not compatible with the environmental design as a way of crime prevention. Studying community policing as a mechanism for crime prevention in Tanzania, Mussa (2019) established that participation of community is a key crime

prevention approach in the country. Through community policing, crime prevention stakeholders prevented crimes and reduced fear of crime. Herber (2018) studied crime prevention in Japan and argued that community and police efforts should be connected to reduce crime and fear of crime.

The study of Adachi Ward (2019) in Japan recommended the installation of surveillance equipment as a crime prevention approach at ward level. Installation of central circuit television, for example, assisted the police and community leadership to have direct information on what is going on around jurisdictions. In Adachi Ward, for instance, 1160 central circuit televisions were installed in residential areas, shops, packing sites, elementary schools, bus stands and local business areas.

Mussa (2019) and Cabinet Secretariat (2018) argued that patrol is an effective mechanism to reduce crime and fear of crime. Patrol officers can be entrusted member of the community, retired police or army officers, teachers, members of associations or other crime prevention stakeholders. Piroozfar *et al.* (2019) argued that community members' recognition is the strongest approach for crime prevention. In this approach, residents in the neighborhoods are given certificates to recognize their participation and involvement in crime prevention efforts.

According to Hino (2018) and Hino and Chronopoulos (2021), flowering streets has been an effective approach for crime prevention in Japan and other Asian countries. In this approach, neighborhood communities are given tags to connect in flowerpots and then place them in conspicuous areas such as in front of their houses. The tags mark crime prevention activities performed in that particular neighborhood. Community members such as nursery schools and kindergarten teachers and business people are involved in this approach. The idea behind is to make crime prevention awareness and improve territorial bound among community members. Concerning Lagos Metropolitan Parks, Ajayi and Atanda (2020) asserted that park decoration and placing day lighting posts is an effective crime prevention approach as lack of strong gates, enough light, cameras and physical guards gives room for criminals to commit evil intentions.

Walwa (2017), Walwa (2018), Sambaiga (2018), Killian and Pastory (2018) and Mussa (2019)

established that the study area had commonly practiced different crime prevention approaches like neighborhood watch, youth crime and sports, patrol community groups and Ward/Shehia community policing officers. The approaches differed from one area to another due to economic capacity, community awareness, the level of understanding, culture, norms and environment settings. In addition, patrol community groups were known as ulinzi shirikishi. Their intention was to create safer areas and reduce fear of crime (Walwa, 2017; Killian and Pastory, 2018; Mussa, 2019).

## Research Methodology

This study used descriptive study design where the quantitative approach was applied to collect data from the Urban District in Unguja Island. The study had 83 respondents out of the study population of 223,033 through simple random sampling and stratified sampling techniques. A structured

questionnaire was used to collect data from the field. With the assistance of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28, descriptive statistics was utilized to analyze data. Pilot test was applied to validate the questionnaire and the reliability test yielded the Cronbach' Alpha of above 0.6. The following scale of mean score interpretation was used: 3.50-4.00= strongly agree, 2.50-3.49=agree, 1.50-2.49=disagree and 1.00-1.49=strongly disagree. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed in concordance with ethical standards before to data collection and respondents' names were not exposed.

## Results and Discussion

This section provides results about subsistence of Shehia programs. The study objective was to establish the degree to which Shehia community accepted and performed crime prevention programs as seen in table 1.

**Table: 1 Sustenance of Shehia's crime prevention programs**

SN	Item	Mean	Std. Dev	Interpretation
1	Shehia community conducts cleaning, festivals, patrol sessions and sports as part of crime prevention.	2.27	1.136	Disagree
2	Shehia community members volunteer to patrol at crime spot area.	2.32	1.294	Disagree
3	Shehia community uses mobile telephones guarding each other.	2.47	1.136	Disagree
4	Shehia community improves information literacy level as crime prevention in ward area.	2.50	1.297	Agree
5	Shehia leadership puts central camera television at frequent visited areas as crime prevention strategy.	2.72	1.308	Agree
6	Member of Shehia support community patrol officers' amount of money to buy patrol equipment.	3.26	1.050	Agree
7	Shehia leadership uses private security guards for crime prevention.	3.31	1.023	Agree
8	Members of Shehia are given certificate to recognize their participation in crime prevention.	3.42	1.013	Agree

Results from Table 1 indicate that some of potential strategies like conducting cleaning, festivals and sports as well as volunteering to patrol at crime spot area and the use of mobile telephones for guarding each other were not used. These strategies have been effectively used in Japan, Kenya and Rwanda. The study of Adachi Ward (2019) in Japan justified that running cleaning, festivals and sports were highly effective to reduce crime rates and fear of crimes among members of the community. The same situation had been justified by Walwa (2017) in Dar es Salaam that, voluntary community patrol was helpful to reduce crimes at neighborhoods. From these results, therefore, the strategies should

be useful to reduce crimes and fear of crimes at the study area.

Respondents agreed with the rest of items in the table. For instance, they agreed that Shehia community improves information literacy level as a crime prevention strategy. These findings justified that the population of study area have a knowledge of many issues around their neighborhoods. Table 1 further indicates that Shehia leadership puts central camera televisions at frequently visited areas. In the study area, the government had installed central camera televisions. It was a special program to reduce crimes against tourists and citizens of the area. The study further established that members of

Shehia supported community patrol officers with amounts of money to buy patrol equipment. This finding is in harmony with that of Walwa (2017) which revealed that each citizen of Changanikeni neighborhood contributed some amount to help buy necessary items for patrol groups.

Respondents further agreed that Shehia leadership used private security guards as a crime prevention strategy. Private security guards, in the study area had a long history. They were introduced shortly after Zanzibar revolution and it was known as volunteers. Finally, the study revealed that members of Shehia were given certificates to recognize their participation in crime prevention. Those who were given certificates were recognized as champions of crime prevention in their neighborhoods. Piroozfar *et al.* (2019) had a similar observation that community members should be recognized and given certificates for recognition.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on study findings, it is concluded that some of potential strategies like conducting cleaning, festivals and sports, volunteering to patrol at crime spot area and mobile telephones for members to guard each other were not used despite the fact that these strategies were useful in some other countries.

It is also concluded that the study area utilized a number of approaches as crime prevention strategies. Approaches used include improvement of information literacy level to community members, placement of central camera televisions at frequently visited areas, supporting community patrol officers with amounts of money to buy patrol equipment, using private security guards for crime prevention and provision of certificates to recognize community members' participation in crime prevention.

Based on the conclusions, it is recommended that like in other countries, the study area should make use of such strategies as conducting cleaning, festivals and sports, volunteering to patrol at crime spot area and mobile telephones for guarding each other to supplement the currently used strategies so as to strengthen the security in the study area.

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