

Assessment Of The Factors Influencing Private Security Sector In Crime Mitigation In Nakuru City, Kenya

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Abstract The security sector is one of the key pillars of economic growth as outlined in vision 2030. Individuals and companies rely heavily on the private security for a wide range of functions. The overall purpose of the study is to assess the factors influencing private security sector on crime mitigation in Nakuru City. The objective of the study was; to explore the influence of private security firms' policies on crime mitigation in Nakuru City, Kenya. The study will be anchored on Situational Crime Prevention theory. Descriptive research design was adopted. The target population comprised of 26,060 employees from all the 28 security firms in Nakuru City. A sample size of 108 respondents was selected using multi-stage and stratified sampling techniques. Data from the employees was collected using questionnaires and interview schedules from managers. The researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 22 to measure the correlation analysis in order to highlight the influence of private security sector factors and crime mitigation in Nakuru City, Kenya. Descriptive statistics was used to analyse both qualitative and quantitative data. Frequency tables and graphs were used to present the data for easy comparison. The study's results indicated that private security firms' policies have significant influence on crime mitigation ($R^2=0.527$). The study concluded that the private security firms in Nakuru city prevailing regulatory framework and policy guidelines on the operation of private security providers are adequate and enabling to a greater extent. In light of these finding, the study makes a recommendation that the policy makers should develop national policies regulating private security companies and fostering collaboration with government security providers. These policies should uphold high standards of regulation and legislation.

Key words: Kenya, Security firms' policies, Crime mitigation, Nakuru city

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1. Introduction

The concept of private security was promoted in the United States and the United Kingdom in the 1980s, according to Ruteere & Pommerolle (2018). Fischer and Green (2017) argue that due to resource constraints, most governments are unable to provide adequate security for their populations. Therefore, private security corporations (PSC) are required to assist in crime prevention alongside public sector organizations. Residents' worries about safety and the understanding that the police force can't handle crime on their own are only two examples of the factors that necessitate action. As a result, there has been a rise in communication between locals, community groups, businesses, and the private security sector in an effort to reduce crime. In addition, many countries' public and private security players have benefited from increased collaboration and collaborations between private security corporations and other security authorities (Russell 2018).

According to Shaw (2018), numerous people and businesses have contracted the services of private security firms. These companies provide a variety of services, such as guard duty, money transfers, and armed responses to private investigations. According to him, there are around three times as many private security guards as police in South Africa. This suggests that citizens are more inclined to contact the private security guard than the police. (Shaw 2018). Private security developed in Botswana as a response to the country's security weaknesses, attracting investment from the global security industry as a result. Botswana's services could only be helped by safeguarding the private sector and investing in cutting-edge technology. According to Molomo et al. (2017), the country has established security groups to promote self-monitoring, discuss the rights of security businesses, follow industry norms, and facilitate the exchange of Ideas.

Nakuru County, like the rest of Kenya, has seen a dramatic rise in crime rates over the past few years. As a result of the aforementioned, PSCs have grown in number and prominence, contributing in direct and indirect ways to the maintenance of law enforcement's safety and security. As opposed to the free services provided by the government, private security in Kenya refers to the many forms of protection offered by individuals, businesses, and other entities to their clients (Safer World, 2018).

The police and private security firms in Kenya have been providing security in ways that are at odds with one another, as pointed out by Thuraira and Munanye (2019). The private security industry in Kenya is one of the country's most rapidly increasing service sectors, with a significant footprint in both the urban and rural areas. In Kenya, private security firms are quickly gaining recognition for the vital role they play in maintaining public safety. These firms are increasingly seen as a viable alternative to traditional methods of policing, as they can be relied on to foster an environment free of crime and conducive to the growth of the economy, the attraction of new investments, and the maintenance of a manageable crime rate.

2. Statement of the Problem

Kenya Police Report (2022) and the National Crime Research Centre (2022), Nakuru County was ranked as the fourth-worst area in Kenya for crime, with 3492 reported cases in 2020.

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These crimes are primarily committed by individuals residing within the county. The incidence of serious crimes in Nakuru County surpasses the national average crime index significantly. Robbery is particularly prevalent in Nakuru County, accounting for 47.2 percent of reported crimes, compared to the national average of 13 percent, which is 33.8 percent higher than the national crime index. Similarly, the murder rate in the county stands at 25.3 percent, exceeding the national average of 15.3 percent, while burglary and housebreaking in the county are recorded at 44.2 percent compared to the national average of 42 percent, according to the National Crime Research Centre (2012). This data clearly indicates that Nakuru County is susceptible to a high incidence of serious crimes. It is this state of affairs that formed the basis for the study.

There has been an increase in the number of crime incidents committed, this has a serious negative effect to the residents which is a reason enough for necessary and immediate action to be taken. Despite having one of their core functions as detection and prevention of crime, the government through the National police service has not been able to fully prevent crime. Therefore, private security companies have responded by providing private security services, with the aim of helping the affected residents to improve their own security. However, with the coming in of private security firms' security has not improved, crimes such as robberies, and burglaries, has continued to thrive. In the light of the above background, there are several questions which needs to be answered, conversely the current study seeks to answer these questions; what influence does private firm have on security policies, human capital and the level of security adoption have in crime mitigation in Nakuru City?

3. Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to examine the influence of private security firms' policies on crime mitigation in Nakuru City, Kenya.

4. Literature Review

The majority of a security guard's shift is spent either standing or walking around their beats, or at the front desk and answering phones. Delivering money and valuables to financial institutions, ATMs, and stores is another responsibility of an armored car driver. In a report published in April 2007, Ritchie et al. (2007) detailed the findings of a fact-finding team assembled by UNI Property Services to investigate labor conditions at Secure Force Security in Malawi, Mozambique, and South Africa. Much of it has to do with things like overtime and vacation pay, as well as actions that have left many workers living pay check to pay check.

The group came to the conclusion that Secure Force Security should make it a policy to comply with all applicable laws wherever its activities take place, to pay its employees a wage that allows them to support themselves and their families, and to respect their right to form unions if they so want. Additionally, it was determined that signing a global agreement with UNI Global Union committing to paying a living wage - adequate to feed his/her family - would be the best approach for Secure Force Security to prove it is trustworthy. Its other goals were to guarantee employees' rights to organize unions and secure social security benefits. The study's authors advised the 2012 London Olympic and 2010 South Africa World Cup organizers to hold off on considering the corporation as a contractor until it pledges to alter its ways and enhance its global track record (Ritchie et al., 2007).

According to Mkutu and Sabala (2017), the growth of PSCs over the past two decades is a direct result of the security vacuum caused by the Kenyan state's incapacity to provide

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appropriate security for its citizens. The bombing of the US Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1998 served as a wake-up call to the proper authorities, making it clear that security measures at all levels needed to be increased immediately (Mkutu& Sabala ,2017). Kenya's current police to population ratio of 1:850 (Kenya Police Records, 2019) shows the clear need for increased police presence, given that the United Nations recommends a ratio of 1:450. The recent terrorist attack on the Westgate Shopping Mall in the affluent Westlands area of Nairobi on September 21, 2013 only served to remind a country that has too few police officers.

The need for PSCs to supplement government policing cannot be overstated in light of the 67 deaths, 175 injuries, and 40 confirmed missing. Both of these tragedies have shed light on the challenging working conditions in the private security profession. The Westgate event made clear that the guards and other security officers are always the first to go missing. There has been a rise in the number of guards killed while on duty, according to reports from the Kenya Police, the Kenya Security Industry Authority (KSIA), and the Kenya National Private Security Workers Union (KNPSWU). The guards, who were unprepared and unarmed, took the full force of the criminals' violence (Russell ,2018).The conceptual framework below shows the relationship between security firm policies and crime mitigation in Nakuru city, Kenya.

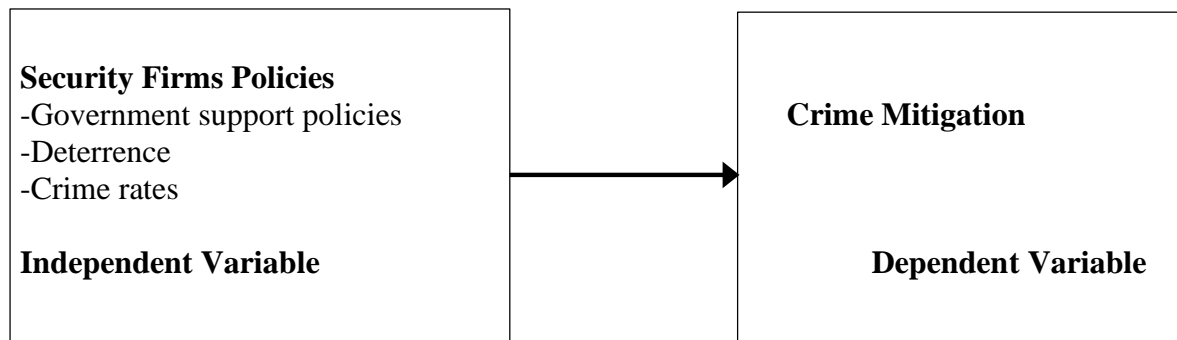


Fig 1: Model of Conceptual Framework

Source: Field Data 2022

The effectiveness of crime mitigation is significantly influenced by the private security policy in place. When the policy is inadequate, it results in a diminished ability to mitigate crime. Government support plays a crucial role in enhancing and coordinating the organization's overall operations to ensure that service delivery meets the standards required for effective crime mitigation. Additionally, regulations, whether stemming from corporate laws or industrial guidelines and ethical codes, exert a substantial influence on the private firms' ability to provide services that contribute to crime prevention. This is further amplified by the quality of security management strategies adopted and implemented by the company to align their security plans with the goal of achieving effective crime mitigation.

5. Research Methodology

This study adopted descriptive research design. The design's strength is in the ability to investigate, outline, investigate, and analyse connections between the responses. The plan will allow the researcher to collect reliable data on the role of PSFs in reducing crime in Nakuru City. This design choice works well for the research. The target population for the study was 26,060 employees from 28 private security firms operating in Nakuru city which

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were registered under KSIA and PSIA. The study adopted the Nassiuma (2000) method in determining the sample size of 108 employees from the 28 private security firms in Nakuru city. The researcher applied multi-stage sampling techniques to arrive at the sample. First, the security firm was sampled using stratified sampling technique by dividing them categorically into two that is firms under KSIA and PSIA. The respondents were sampled purposively from the three departments of interest for the study which will comprise of the management, operations as well as the general guards’ department.

Both primary and secondary data was used for the study. Primary data was collected using questionnaires with close ended questions, which enhances uniformity, covering all the objectives. Data collected through the questionnaire from the respondents, was analysed using SPSS and summarised using descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics such as correlation coefficients were used to test the correlation (non-causal relationship) between variables while regression analysis was used to test causal relationship.

The regression model was as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + e$$

Where: Y it = Crime Mitigation

X₁= Security Policies

β₀ is the intercept and β₁, is the coefficient

e = error term

6. Findings

This section outlines the descriptive and inferential findings of the study.

6.1 Descriptive Findings of the Study

The study sought to find the influence of private security sector policies on crime mitigation.. The findings are presented on Table 1

Table 1: Aspects of Private security sector policies

	Mean	Std. Dev.
The prevailing regulatory framework and policy guidelines on the operation of private security providers are adequate and enabling	3.78	1.554
Having the basic equipment stipulated in the law governing private security firms helps in crime mitigation	3.86	1.538
Clearly laid down private security policy enhance crime mitigation	3.82	1.521
Security management policy that involves public and private agents may lead to crime reduction/ mitigation	3.96	1.409
The current law governing private security firms has helped you mitigation of crime	4.04	1.331

Source: Field Data 2022

The results from the table revealed that the respondents indicated that the current law governing private security firms has helped the firms and hence improves on crime mitigation to a very great extent as shown by a mean of 4.04. The respondents further indicated that: security management policy that involve public and private agents leads to

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crime mitigation as illustrated by a mean of 3.96 having the basic equipment stipulated in the law governing private security firms helps in crime mitigation as shown by a mean of 3.86; further the studies found out that clearly laid down private security policy enhance crime mitigation as shown by a mean of 3.82 and the prevailing regulatory framework and policy guidelines on the operation of private security providers are adequate and enabling as shown by a mean of 3.78 all lead to crime mitigation to a great extent. This conforms to Russell (2018) who asserts that private security companies require a comprehensive crime prevention policy that can adapt to changing criminal trends.

Private security firms, can improve a number of policies by strengthening their collaboration with police and other critical partners in the security industry. Ronald Clarke's theory of situational crime prevention from 1997, which aims to deter criminals from committing crimes by making it more difficult for them to carry them out due to the increased risks and costs involved. According to Clarke (2017), situational crime prevention is a major theory in the fields of criminology, criminal justice, and security studies. It supports implementing adjustments to the organization policies in an effort to lessen the incentives for criminal behaviour.

Table 2 Aspects of Crime Mitigation

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Increased efficiency	3.87	1.360
Reduced crime rates	3.95	1.404
Improved service quality	3.97	1.385
Increased clearance rates	3.75	1.434
Increase in deterrence of crimes	3.89	1.410
Reduction in repeat crime rates	4.13	1.340

The findings show that there was a reduction in repeat of crimes as shown by a mean of 4.13 thus influencing crime mitigation to a very great extent. The respondents also indicated that there was improved service quality as shown by a mean of 3.97, reduced crime rates as shown by a mean of 3.95, increase as shown by a mean of 3.89, increased efficiency as shown by a mean of 3.87 and increased clearance rates as shown by a mean of 3.75 thus influencing crime mitigation to a great extent. This is in line with Wakefield A. (2013) who argues that the rising demand and expansion of private security in many businesses has led to an increasing reliance on private security as part of the overall policy goals. He goes on to say that private security services are widely recognized as important allies in the fight against crime and its detection.

6.2 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was performed to determine the effects of the three predictor variables on crime mitigation in Nakuru city. The results were as shown in Table 3

Table 3 : Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.765a	0.582	0.536	0.634

a. Predictors: (Constant), Security Firms policies

Source: Field Data 2022

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The model had a coefficient of determination (R^2) = 0.582, indicating that 58.2% of the variation in crime mitigation was explained by the independent variable in the model leaving 41.8% of the variations to be explained by variables not in the model. Model therefore provided a strong fit. Adjusted R^2 indicates the true behaviour of R^2 that varies in accordance with the changes in independent variables.

Table 4 ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.982	1	4.7455	83.254	.000b
	Residual	5.334	95	0.057		
	Total	24.316	96			

- a. Dependent Variable: Crime mitigation
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Security firms’ policies

Source: Field Data 2022

Table 5: Regression Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.137	.502		1.032	.008
Techno-structural Interventions	.527	.094	.546	6.238	.000

- a. Dependent Variable: Crime mitigation
- Source: Field Data 2022

The Y- Intercept (Constant, $\beta_0 = 0.137$), predict the crime mitigation in Nakuru city when the independent variable is zero, implying that the private security sector variable which is security firm policies crime mitigation in Nakuru city will be 0.137. From the analysis, security firms’ policies were found to have significant relationship with crime mitigation in Nakuru city ($\beta = 0.527$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that a unit increase security firm policies results to crime mitigation by 0.527.

7. Conclusion

The study concludes that the private security firm policies also positively influence crime mitigation in the city. Stringent policies are significant in enhancing and putting a clear comprehension of association between the public and private security sectors. The study also concludes that security policies influences effectiveness of provision of private security in crime mitigation.

8. Recommendations

The study recommends the firms should develop policies that regulate private security companies that can build a rapport with the government security providers as well. The policies should be formulated to uphold the high standards of regulations and legislation.

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