Involvement of Shehia Leadership on Crime Prevention: A Case of an Urban District in Zanzibar

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Abstract: This study investigated on involvement of Shehia Leadership on Crime Prevention in an Urban District of Zanzibar. The study employed the quantitative approach where data was collected from 83 respondents out of the study population of 223,033 at different levels in the Urban District at Unguja Island. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data and descriptive statistics was applied to come up with the results' mean scores with the assistance of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The study established that Shehia leadership effectiveness was limited to assisting the marginalized and disadvantaged groups to get their rights, solving social challenges and preparing bylaws to be used on criminal prevention. Leaders did not take care to involve such government officers as teachers, social workers, doctors and police officers to join in various issues associated with crime prevention. The study recommended that Shehia leadership should go beyond assisting the marginalized and disadvantaged groups to get their rights, solving social challenges and preparing bylaws to be used on criminal prevention. Leaders should involve such government officers as teachers, social workers, doctors and police officers in dealing with various issues associated with crime prevention since such stakeholders have very important roles to perform toward crime prevention when involved.

Keywords: Crime Prevention; Shehia Leadership; community.

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Introduction

Crime prevention has been a topic of discussion among scholars. Academicians of different disciplines, such political scientists, lawyers, sociologists and other social scientists have been discussing the good ways of implementing crime prevention. Their main interest is how crime prevention can be a proper way of crime reduction which can lead to good welfare for community. Scholars such as Crawford and Evans (2017) and Schaefer and Mazerolle (2018) visualized crime prevention as activities intended to solve social challenges and particularly to reduce crime incidences in the communities. It is a mechanism that can be used to reduce the rate of crimes, preserve peace and bring harmony among community members.

Shehia Leadership, according to Mussa (2019), is a small unit of government administration at Zanzibar Island. Sheha as a leader administers a piece of land allocated to him to maintain welfare of the people living within the area. Shehia leadership comprises Sheha and his or her assistants for daily administration of the area. As a central unit of administration, Shehia leadership is a key stakeholder of crime prevention. He or she takes the responsibility of planning and implementing crime prevention activities in their respective areas. He or she has been given power by law to collect local resources, formulate community partnership and solve social challenges. The excise of power makes Shehia to prevent crime, decrease number of criminal activities, shape good image of Shehia and hence Sheha members feel safer (Mussa, 2019; Clancey and Metcalfe, 2020; Boddupalli and Rueben, 2021).

Crime prevention has a broad interpretation. Socially, it combats basic factors that make someone to engage in criminal activities. The factors include poverty, unemployment and lack of basic education (Harkness, 2017; Mussa, 2019). Environmentally it is associated with protection against specific high crimes (Lee, 2018). Situationally, it is concerned with creating hard-hitting for crime to occur especial high crimes (Harkness, 2017; Amante, Saraiva, & Marques, 2021). From these interpretations emerged three protuberant crime prevention approaches namely crime prevention through community policing, crime prevention through environmental design and situational crime prevention. As an approach, community policing involves solving social challenges, organizational transformation and community engagement (Mussa, 2019). Crime Prevention through Environmental Design deals with the security of specific areas such as shops, high way roads, schools, mosques and churches (Lee, 2018; Piroozfar, Farr, Aboagye-Nimo, & Osei-Berchie, 2019). Situational crime prevention deals with preventing and making difficult for high specific crime to occur (Harkness, 2017; Schaefer & Mazerolle, 2018; Freilich, Gruenewald, & Mandala, 2019).

Crime prevention at the Ward level has been executed differently in different countries. In the United Kingdom, for instance, crime prevention is initiated at the neighbourhood level to deal with specific social community challenges (Crawford & Evans, 2017) while in Australia, it was a plan to decrease farm victimization, anti-social behavior, farm theft and violence among the Australian community (Harkness, 2017; Ziller & Goodman, 2020). In New Zealand, crime prevention deals with youth groups to avoid them to enter at particular crime risks (Pavlich, 2019). Unlike in Europe, in Asian countries such as Japan, crime prevention at the Ward level was a plan to deal with minor crimes. Adachi Ward for instance, introduced "Beautiful Window Movement" in 2008 to stop minor crimes and disorders (Hino & Chronopoulos, 2021). Different to Japan, India practiced crime prevention to block cybercrime in Smart Cities of India (Chatterjee, Kar, Dwivedi, & Kizgin, 2018). China, on the other hand, used crime prevention to control high crime rates from immigration communities (Cheng Liu, & Wang, 2017).

In African countries, Nigeria for example, crime prevention was typically for crime reduction and fear of crime in urban neighborhood and at the area such as schools, churches, mosques, high building, and car parking areas (Ajayi & Atanda, 2020). In South Africa, crime prevention is mostly exercised at private houses, shopping malls, parks and business complex. The areas were secured by different mechanism such as high walls, burglar bars, electric fences, guard dogs and private security (Snyders & Landman, 2018). In Kenya, crime prevention was practiced in many parts of the country. It associated both police officers and civilians to solve social challenges facing communities in the areas. In areas like Kibera, Mukuru, Mathare and Korogocho, police officers made patrol and engaged youths in economic activities as part of community policing to reduce killing, burglaries and other dangerous crimes which were very critical in these areas (Ndikaru, 2021). In Rwanda, crime prevention was mainly excised at the districts of Musanze and Gahanga to raise youth awareness on dangers of crimes, reporting crimes information and making community night patrols (Habineza, 2019; Kamugisha, 2020).

In Tanzania, community policing was part of crime prevention excised jointly between police officers and the community to reduce crimes. This was part of Police holistic reform program implemented from 2006. This approach aimed to initiate strong and practicable partnership between the police, the community and other

security stakeholders to decrease crimes that were high at that particular time. Community policing initiatives like Neighborhood Watch, Security Groups, Safari Salama, Youth Groups and Rafiki Clubs, Ward/Shehia police officers, schools' friendship clubs and youth soccer against crime programs were introduced to support the community policing approach (Mussa, 2019).

Similarly, at the ward/Shehia level, one police officer was dispatched to each ward/Shehia to join with Ward executive officers/Sheha for crime prevention activities particularly to solve community challenges through Ward/Shehia security committees. Since Ward Executive Officers and Sheha were bounded by law (URT, 1982) to maintain peace in their areas, this exercise aimed to improve people's confidence, enhance partnership between police and public as well as building welfare of the community (Walwa, 2017; Sambaiga, 2018; Walwa, 2018; Killian and Pastory, 2018). The same authors argue that various community policing initiatives at Ward/Shehia level were not well managed and well-ordered by the local leaders. This means that, Ward/Shehia involvement in crime prevention is very low contrary to their obligations given by law (Mussa, 2019). There is still insufficient information about the involvement of Shehia leaders in crime prevention activities. Therefore, this study examined a puzzle regarding involvement of local government leaders in maintaining peace and security at the local levels hence fill the knowledge gap on that particular area. The study particularly intended to observe the extent to which Shehia community perceives Shehia leadership involving in crime prevention.

Literature Review

Involvement of local leadership in crime prevention, as a matter of facts, differ from one society to another due to different factors associated with the culture existing at a particular area, prevalent and kind of crime as well as environmental and economic factors (Mussa, 2019). Providing education and policy making are central parts of crime prevention. According to Walwa (2017), different local communities at the Ward level provide education to members of their respective areas so as to make them aware of crime situations in their areas. Education is also provided to empower the community to avoid community members from engaging in petty and serious crimes (Walwa, 2017; Mussa, 2019). In the same vein, policy making facilitates and influences the community to participate fully in crime prevention activities. Without policy, other crime prevention activities could not be sustainable. Jones (2019) studying South African contributions to LGBTI education issues had revealed that proper education is an effective mechanism in reduction of crimes. It makes people to understand the crime situation of their areas, kind of crimes, mode of operation and possible culprits. Similarly, Meyer and Auriacombe (2019) viewed that right education on crime prevention among different social groups resulted to policy making which makes the community to feel safer from crimes. Policy making special by law makes the community members to safeguard from crime and hence crime reduction in their particular area.

Good governance and improving living standard are also part of local government involvement in crime prevention. Kraipornsak (2020) and Meyer and Auriacombe (2019) viewed Good governance, among other aspects, as associated with the improvement of the quality of living conditions of local citizens and hence generate reduction of crime rates. Good governance also is much supportive for marginalized and disadvantaged communities to acquire their basic rights and avoid from being victim of unexpected eventualities such as crimes. Meyer and Auriacombe (2019) on the other hand viewed good governance at the local government as a mechanism that community local leaders use to solve community challenges like unmaintainable use of natural resources, shortage of housing and infrastructure, the pervasiveness of poverty, rapid urbanization and occurrence of crimes.

Similar to that reality, good governance is very closely related with sustainable development. It is associated with waste disposal, housing, unemployment, sanitation, electricity, and construction as well as upkeep of roads. This kind of good governance conveys not only community satisfaction but also takes big roles in cutback of crimes in respected area. In this way, the construction of roads, placing electricity at the locality, having enough water not only lead to growth of community affluence but also reduce crime associated to burglary, violence, theft and crime related to gender and children violation (Helliwell, Huang, Grover & Wang, 2018; and Meyer & Auriacombe, 2019; Mussa, 2019).

Myeong, Kim and Ahn (2020) in their study about smart city strategies—technology push or culture pull in South Korea asserted that local government has the role to improve technology in their respective local areas as part of their involvement on crime prevention. The building of smart city with all requirements for human beings welfare is crucial part in reduction of crime. Local government is duty bound to apply technology as part of crime prevention. The challenges such as traffic congestion, environmental mismanagement and disaster can be taken care of through technology. Mardiansjah (2018) on the study about smart governance for smart city viewed that local government has to use technology to build the smart city in order to get higher quality of life, improve government efficiency and make residence to work with the government. The use of technology enables the local community to resolve and reduce crimes very easily. It also empowers local government officers to select proper way of helping and solving social community challenges.

In a similar situation, Loeffler and Bovaird (2018) insisted that in crime prevention, citizens should be involved in public decision making and public services. Community decision making should be taken as a main aspect of crime prevention and crime reduction. It should be also taken as a way that empowers community to understand kinds of crime, levels of crime, situations of crime in their areas, modes of operands and the ways different crimes can be solved.

Research Methodology

This study employed the quantitative approach where data was collected from 83 respondents out of the study population of 223,033 at different levels in an Urban District at Unguja Island. Simple random sampling and stratified sampling techniques were used to get representation of sampled respondents. Structured questionnaire was employed to collect information and descriptive statistics was applied to show frequencies, percentages and mean scores with the assistance of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28.

The following scale of mean score interpretation was used: 3.5-4.00= strongly agree, 2.50-3.49=agree, 1.50-2.49=disagree and 1.00-1.49=strongly disagree. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured in harmony with ethical standards prior to data collection in that respondents did not indicate their names in the questionnaires. Furthermore, data collection permit was obtained from relevant authorities in Zanzibar.

Table: 1 Community perceptions on Shehia Leadership Involvements in crime prevention

SN	Item	Mean	Std. Dev	Interpretation
1	Shehia leadership engaged other government officers in crime prevention according to their capacity	2.18	1.225	Strongly disagree
2	Shehia leadership helped marginalized and disadvantage groups against crime in the area	2.21	1.273	Disagree
3	Shehia leadership educate Shehia community about crime prevention	2.32	1.253	Disagree
4	Shehia leadership engaged political leaders in crime prevention activities in their areas	2.38	1.251	Disagree
5	Shehia leadership engaged Shehia members in decision making on the issues of crime prevention	2.47	1.246	Disagree
6	Shehia leadership assisted marginalized and disadvantage groups to get their rights	2.53	1.307	Agree
7	Shehia leadership assists Shehia members to solve social challenges such as poverty, crime, and lack of house	2.60	1.313	Agree
8	Shehia leadership prepare by laws to be used on crime prevention	2.86	1.170	Agree

Results and Discussion

This section provides results in Table 1 and discussion of the study questions. The study sought to establish the extent to which Shehia community perceived Shehia leadership involvement in crime prevention. The results indicate that Shehia communities had different perceptions on Shehia leadership involvements in relation to crime prevention as demonstrated in Table1. Respondents strongly disagreed with the first item that Shehia leadership engaged other

government officers in crime prevention according to their capacity.

Thy also disagreed with the next four items in the table that Shehia leadership helped marginalized and disadvantage groups against crime in the area, that Shehia leadership educated the Shehia community about crime prevention, that Shehia leadership engaged political leaders in crime prevention and that Shehia leadership engaged members in decision making on issues of crime prevention. The findings suggest that Shehia community perceived that leaders did not take care to involve such government officers as teachers, social workers, doctors and police officers to join in various issues associated with crime prevention despite the fact that government officers as crime prevention stakeholders have very important roles to perform on crime prevention activities. Police officers, for example, can be useful in recruiting community patrol groups. Other officers can perform other various roles according to their capacities.

The action of Shehia leadership to engage government officers in crime prevention makes these officers not only able to apply their capacity in solving social community challenges but also feel part of the community. The study of Walwa (2017) revealed that disengagement of different crime prevention stakeholders had seriously affected crime prevention in Changanyikeni, Dar es Salaam. Particularly, lack of critical involvement of government officers resulted to increased crime rates in the local neighborhood areas of Changanikeni and surrounded localities.

The table 1 further indicates that respondents agreed with the last three items that Shehia leadership assisted marginalized and disadvantage group to get their rights, that Shehia leadership assists Shehia members to solve social challenges such as poverty, crime and lack of house and that Shehia leadership prepared by laws to be used on crime prevention. This suggests that respondents positively perceived that Shehia leadership effectiveness is limited to only assisting the marginalized and disadvantaged groups to get their rights, solving social challenges and preparing laws to be used on criminal prevention. These results are commendable since Shehia leaders have a duty to make sure that the needs of the marginalized are met to improve their social welfare. Similar results were reported in a study by Mussa (2019) in Zanzibar where the community leaders jointly with people in diaspora helped the needy children with such item as clothing and education. The study of Meyer and Auriacombe (2019) revealed that solving social challenges has a significant relationship with sustainable development. Taking care of social needs not only creates community satisfaction but also plays great deal in reduction of crimes.

The engagement of leaders in formulation bylaws is also worthy recognition as the more by laws are prepared, the higher the possibility to decrease crimes since the bylaws dictate how people should behave in the community to maintain peace and harmony. Furthermore, it is by laws which empower Shehia leadership to take actions against those who engage in criminal cases. This is supported by the results of a study by Matsukawa and Tatsuki (2018) in Japan which revealed that by laws brought positive result in crime prevention.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Basing on the study findings, it is concluded that Shehia communities had different perceptions on Shehia leadership involvements in crime prevention. Shehia leadership effectiveness was limited to assisting the marginalized and disadvantaged groups to get their rights, solving social challenges and preparing bylaws to be used on criminal prevention. Leaders did not take care to involve such government officers as teachers, social workers, doctors and police officers to join in various issues associated with crime prevention despite the fact that government officers as crime prevention stakeholders have very important roles to perform on crime prevention activities.

Based on the conclusions, it is recommended that Shehia leadership should go beyond assisting the marginalized and disadvantaged groups to get their rights, solving social challenges and preparing bylaws to be used on criminal prevention. Particularly, leaders should involve such government officers as teachers, social workers, doctors and police officers in dealing with various issues associated with crime prevention since such stakeholders have very important roles to perform toward crime prevention when involved.

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