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Evaluation of Community Intelligence and Interagency Synergies as a Proficient Strategy for Addressing Crime in South African Communities

Ezeji Chiji Longinus* (<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4732-0485>)

Postdoctoral Fellow, School of Public Management, Governance, and Public Policy, College of Business and Economics, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

* Correspondence: clezeji@uj.ac.za, clezeji@gmail.com

Abstract:

Community policing is a security policy framework adopted by state governments to address growing insecurity and crime challenges. However, its effectiveness is hindered by a lack of cooperation and positive relationships between security agencies, the community, and the police. This study aims to assess community intelligence and the role of the community in gathering information, identify the role of interagency collaborations and the problems confronting them in addressing crime, and incorporate community intelligence into the community policing model for effective crime detection and prevention. A mixed-methods approach was used, with face-to-face interviews and questionnaires administered to 55 participants, including high-ranking members of the South African Police Service and immigration, customs, border security, and private security sectors. The findings revealed that community intelligence, which includes information provided by community members, plays a crucial role in assisting law enforcement in crime detection, prevention, investigation, and prosecution. Interagency collaboration allows security agencies to tackle criminal incidents through their best efforts, promoting proactive measures and strategies. However, challenges, such as external

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influences, lack of resources, and unclear purposes, hinder effective collaboration. Incorporating community intelligence into the community policing model involves gathering information about factors hindering community development, utilizing crime intelligence analysts, collators, and street officers, and promoting information sharing between the police, security networks, and public and private sectors. The study recommends utilizing community and social intelligence to detect and uncover social interactions, group behaviors, and community dynamics and employing technology for crime mapping and analysis. Effective crime detection and prevention require information and intelligence sharing, with community intelligence playing a vital role in identifying and understanding criminal groups and behaviors.

评估社区情报和机构间协同作用作为解决南非社区犯罪的有效策略

摘要:

社区警务是各州政府为应对日益严重的不安全和犯罪挑战而采用的安全政策框架。然而，由于安全机构、社区和警察之间缺乏合作和积极的关系，其有效性受到阻碍。本研究旨在评估社区情报和社区在收集信息方面的作用，确定机构间合作的作用及其在解决犯罪方面面临的问题，并将社区情报纳入社区警务模式，以有效地侦查和预防犯罪。研究采用了混合方法，对 55 名参与者进行了面对面访谈和问卷调查，其中包括南非警察局和移民、海关、边境安全和私人安全部门的高级成员。研究结果显示，社区情报（包括社区成员提供的信息）在协助执法部门侦查、预防、调查和起诉犯罪方面发挥着至关重要的作用。机构间合作使安全机构能够尽最大努力应对犯罪事件，促进主动措施和战略。然而，外部影响、资源匮乏和目的不明确等挑战阻碍了有效的合作。将社区情报纳入社区警务模式包括收集有关阻碍社区发展的因素的信息、利用犯罪情报分析员、收集员和街头警察，以及促进警察、安全网络以及公共和私营部门之间的信息共享。该研究建议利用社区和社会情报来检测 and 发现社会互动、群体行为和社区动态，并使用技术进行犯罪地图绘制和分析。有效的犯罪侦查和预防需要信息和情报共享，社区情报在识别和了解犯罪集团和行为方面发挥着至关重要的作用

关键词: 评估、社区、跨机构合作、信息、情报、警务、南非

1. Introduction

The criminal justice system and other public security sectors have been overwhelmed by the increasing global population and the emergence of diverse criminal activities. These situations have prompted the redefinition and overhaul of the security architecture in various countries, including South Africa. The search for the best approach that would ensure effective security management, different from the traditional policing models that have failed to address the increasing security threats, is ongoing. In addition, numerous state governments have recognized that they can no longer maintain security exclusively in local jurisdictions. Therefore, they have expanded security operations to include the community, private and public organizations, and stakeholders such as NGOs, youth groups, women's organizations, and various security agencies to enhance community policing. Community

policing is a security policy framework adopted by state governments to tackle growing insecurity and crime challenges. It is a law enforcement philosophy that allows police officers to consistently work in the same area to build a stronger relationship with residents and workers in that area.

Many state governments have partnered with private security firms to improve citizens' safety and security. Establishing a positive relationship between the police and the public is crucial for effective security management in communities. This model has been used to address complex contemporary security challenges such as trans-border crime, terrorism, human trafficking, armed robbery, homicide, domestic violence, kidnappings, ritual killings, drug-related crime, and cybercrime. One of the main obstacles to the effectiveness of community policing is the lack of cooperation and a positive relationship between security

agencies, the community, and the police in combating crime and other community issues. Another challenge is the attitude of the community and police toward the partnership. Community members do not trust the police, some officers are not adequately trained, and there is a lack of facilities, proper training, poor infrastructure, logistics, and corruption, among other challenges facing community policing. In many cases, it is difficult to coordinate with other security agencies because of their specialized roles in society. Another significant barrier to community policing in some jurisdictions is the lack of intelligence-driven strategies (Alemika, 2014). The incorporation of social and community intelligence into community policing is crucial. Social and community intelligence is a field of study that analyzes the digital traces that people leave behind when interacting with technology to understand their behaviors, social interactions, and community dynamics. Through this analysis, activities on social media or Internet-enabled devices can be traced. The activities of cyber predators can also be analyzed using social and community intelligence. Community intelligence involves data, information, and analysis. These data consist of statistics and other numerical evidence; information such as reviews, evaluations, and case studies; and analysis that involves applying reasoning and critical thinking to inform hypotheses and proposed actions.

Community intelligence refers to the local information that can be gathered directly or indirectly. Assessing this information can provide valuable insights into improving the quality of life of community members and inform strategic and operational perspectives in local policing. In communities where community policing is implemented, those responsible for its implementation must ensure that community intelligence is integrated into the framework and given the opportunity to drive efforts toward crime prevention, reduction, detection, and enhancement of safety and security. Failure to do so could lead to division and conflict within society. A community is a local group of people with collective leadership, responsibility, consciousness, and aspirations. They interact between themselves in a geographically defined space and time, bonded by certain culture, attributes, norms, beliefs, and value systems. They live together and share common interests, religion, and nationality. A community may include more than one ethnic group with different ways of life. However, the social and economic challenges they encounter and collaboratively strive to address serve as the unifying factors that bind them together. In jurisdictions where community policing is adopted and implemented, it is important to operationalize the model to effectively prevent, reduce, detect, and investigate crime. There is a need for interagency collaboration that encourages effective sharing of information and intelligence. Community

policing must be intelligence-driven, meaning that intelligence should guide efforts to address crime-related issues within the community.

1.1. Aims and Objectives

- Assessing community intelligence and the role of the community in gathering information
- Identifying the role of interagency collaborations and problems confronting them in addressing crime
- Incorporating community intelligence into the community policing model for effective crime detection and prevention

1.2. Research Questions

- What are community intelligence, its tenets, approaches, and the community's role in gathering information?
- What are the roles of interagency collaborations and the problems confronting them in addressing crime?
- How can community intelligence be incorporated into the community policing model for effective crime detection and prevention?

1.3. Rationale for the Study

The criterion for selecting this research is its focus on a novel and pertinent topic that is relevant to South Africa. South Africa aims to transition from traditional community policing to intelligence-driven community policing, wherein community intelligence plays a pivotal role in integrating intelligence into community policing practices. Additionally, the research objectives are specific, concise, and, most importantly, observable or measurable. The purpose of this study is to highlight that information sharing between the community and police helps in the detection, identification of crime suspects, prevention, investigation, and prosecution of crime. Community intelligence and information sharing provide essential clues for bringing offenders to justice. Citizens' participation in information sharing assists the police in gathering data that can help identify lawbreakers. In addition, maintaining an effective relationship between law enforcement and the community is essential for facilitating information exchange and acquisition. This relationship is crucial for obtaining critical intelligence regarding suspects, their activities, and locations, with the objectives of crime prevention, offender deterrence, crime reduction, criminal apprehension, and crime investigation.

Interagency collaboration also enhances social order and benefits the legal system in administering criminal justice. The study addressed one of the major setbacks in community policing, which is the practice of selective and specialized law enforcement. Interagency collaboration facilitates the convergence of diverse security agencies to achieve a common objective: to enhance the safety and security of the nation. The study

reports that in some jurisdictions where community policing is practiced, including South Africa, specialized law enforcement is being implemented, causing divisions among officers. Each specialized unit focuses solely on its mandate and struggles to collaborate with other units to support the community policing model. In some areas, poor and minority groups distance themselves from the police due to this specialization, leading to favoritism among community members, particularly political and upper-class individuals. The elite and political classes often receive preferential treatment compared to poor and underprivileged members of the community.

This study seeks to promote active working relationships among multiple security agencies to improve process outcomes at a reduced cost and by encouraging interagency coordination in which two or more agencies work together to solve a problem or meet a need. In this regard, different security agencies, such as the South African Police Services, Customs, Immigration, South African Border Management Agency, and others, are encouraged to collaborate and synergize to address crime and promote the safety and security of South Africa.

2. Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

2.1. Community Intelligence

Community intelligence is conceptualized as localized information, both direct and indirect, that provides valuable insights to enhance the efficacy of law enforcement practices, crime prevention strategies, crime reduction initiatives, crime control measures, and overall quality of life for individuals and communities. This intelligence plays a crucial role in shaping both strategic and operational perspectives in policing local communities. Methods of collecting community intelligence include face-to-face meetings, technical and physical surveillance, interviews, searches, and liaison relationships. Information is gathered through open, covert, and electronic means. The goal is for community policing officers to understand crime-related issues, identify threats, risks, vulnerabilities, and trends, and take measures to enhance safety and security in a specific area. This effort also helps build trust and rapport with the community, which is essential for community members to actively address crime-related problems in their neighborhood. Community policing officers are responsible for not only enforcing the law but also supporting and supervising community-based initiatives aimed at addressing local problems (Jetten & Hornsey, 2010). Furthermore, intelligence is the result of the intelligence cycle, a process that begins with planning and directing. This leads to the setting of collection requirements based on threats in the form of questions and identified gaps in the existing knowledge.

The next step is the collection of intelligence based on known gaps, followed by synthesis and analysis of the collected intelligence. This results in the creation of intelligence products disseminated to policymakers and those responsible for taking actions based on that analysis. The final step is a feedback loop from customers to evaluate the utility of the product and facilitate another round of the cycle.

Crime intelligence includes tactical support for frontline areas of investigation and other operational areas to achieve enforcement objectives. Tactical intelligence applies analysis to crime control. Operational intelligence supports area and regional operational commanders in planning crime reduction activities and deploying resources to achieve operational objectives. Strategic intelligence aims to provide insights and understanding to contribute to broad strategic policies and resources. This relates to national or whole law enforcement perspectives and applies to the process of business planning and resource allocation.

Human intelligence is one's capacity for logic, understanding, self-awareness, learning, emotional knowledge, planning, creativity, and problem-solving. Artificial intelligence includes both the intelligence of machines and the branch of computer science that aims to create it. This is done through the study and design of intelligent or rational agents, where an intelligent agent is a system that perceives its environment and takes action to maximize its chances of success (Ratcliffe, 2016).

2.2. Interagency Cooperation and Mechanisms

Interagency collaboration promotes active working relationships among multiple security agencies to improve process outcomes at a reduced cost. The network theory emphasizes developing relationships and sharing resources, whereas the collaboration theory emphasizes the importance of agencies having a shared vision and taking responsibility for it. Interagency coordination is a process in which two or more agencies work together to solve problems or meet needs. These partnerships can be formed between all levels of the public and private sector agencies. Accountability creates a safe space where professionals can hold each other accountable. Feedback provides constructive criticism when outcomes deviate from expectations while also acknowledging and validating effective practices. Trust entails willingness to place confidence in others and fostering reciprocal trust through transparency and integrity. Interagency cooperation exists when two or more organizations that share a problem area agree to address the issue by establishing a formal contract that provides resources and adjusts internal and/or external procedures to support the new arrangements. In effectively structured political systems, the responsibilities of authorities intersect,

necessitating a preexisting level of cooperation. Therefore, the development and implementation of public policy frequently necessitate multilateral cooperation to transcend traditional boundaries or jurisdictions (Osborne, 2006). Divergent organizational objectives and operational protocols can impede policy implementation, necessitating a more formalized collaborative approach. Inter-agency cooperation becomes imperative when a single agency lacks the capacity to adequately address policy objectives such as safety and security. Thus, stakeholders such as local constituencies, clients, street-level bureaucrats, industry managers, local senior public officials, legislators at the state and federal levels, police, immigration, customs, and other law enforcement and criminal justice clusters, must work together to achieve successful policy implementation (Tyler, 2004).

The implementation of policy objectives established by formal policymakers necessitates interagency cooperation among large and diverse governmental organizations. Effective execution of these objectives requires a collaborative approach, wherein participating agencies coordinate their efforts, delineate their respective roles, allocate resources appropriately, and define specific tasks to be undertaken. This concerted effort is crucial for achieving the intended policy outcomes through seamless collaboration, coordination, and cooperation among the involved government entities (Ratcliffe, 2016). Federal agencies working to implement policies nationwide face significant challenges when creating collaborative initiatives. In the practical application of interagency cooperation processes, the terms "cooperation," "collaboration," and "coordination" are often used interchangeably (Wiley & Esbensen, 2016). Policy implementation involves identifying agencies willing to collaborate and discuss issues collectively to find solutions. It is also assumed that an established network will have a coordinating body or coordinator to ensure that agencies work together cooperatively to implement policies (Ratcliffe, 2016).

2.3. Community Policing and Its Challenges

The philosophy of community policing is based on a strategy that requires police departments to implement theory. Officers are not only limited to vehicle patrols or police radios but are encouraged to engage in foot patrols where they have direct face-to-face contact with community members. This personal interaction allows officers daily contact with individuals within their jurisdictions. The duties of community policing officers include developing new strategies to address a wide range of community concerns (Wiley & Esbensen, 2016). Grabosky (2009) suggests that the dominant paradigm in policing today is community policing, which emphasizes consultation between the police and community members. It aims to enhance responsiveness

to security needs, promote collective problem-solving, determine the most effective strategies for meeting these needs, and mobilize the public to ensure that these actions are taken. Community policing is a philosophy that permeates the entire organization, empowering the community to work together with law enforcement to address issues of crime, fear of crime, disorder, and other societal problems (Stolz & Mclean, 2009). This approach involves collaboration, stakeholder involvement, and active participation in tackling societal safety and security issues.

Stakeholders in community policing include traditional leaders, youth and women organizations, cooperative entities, private and public sectors, residents, police officers, businesses, schools, churches, and mosques. Stolz and Mclean (2009) emphasized that community policing is rooted in a community-based philosophy that focuses on creative problem-solving, building trust, expanding the role of officers, promoting community involvement in safety and security efforts, fostering a proactive approach, providing assistance where needed, enhancing traditional policing methods strategically, involving community members, and encouraging community ownership of safety and security while personalizing police services. This study demonstrates that community policing has implemented strategies such as police and community partnerships, police and community information sharing, and police involvement in community affairs. Another key strategy is the police-community partnership program, which involves the public as a serious partner in policing the community. Partnerships allow the establishment of citizen advisory committees that facilitate communication between the police and the public. The committee members are typically well-respected individuals in society who are charismatic and have the community's best interests at heart.

During the program, the police have the opportunity to meet with local residents to address various challenges and crime-related issues in their neighborhood to develop comprehensive strategies to combat crime (Ren et al., 2004). Most respondents agreed that communities should be adequately represented during meetings. Representatives of citizen advisory committees from different communities include traditional leaders, members of their councils, town union, opinion, youth, and women leaders. These members regularly meet with the police to discuss welfare, crime-related issues, and police-community relationships and work together to develop strategies to combat crime. In many cases, committee members include security agencies working in the same area that pool their resources with the police to fight crime and criminals. When there is synergy between the police, law enforcement agencies, and the public, crime prevention, detection, reduction, and investigation are improved, leading to a decrease in victimization and

crime complaints, ensuring the safety and security of the environment, and enhancing community-police relations. The establishment of a police-community partnership program is aimed at maintaining a democratic social order, which is crucial for effective community policing. In this context, the police are expected to be fair and accountable to the community when enforcing the law. Collaboration between law enforcement agencies and community members serves to mitigate potential exploitation of the populace by police forces, instead emphasizing the provision of protective services and fostering mutual efforts toward the shared objective of crime reduction.

Another important strategy is sharing police and community information, which helps identify crime suspects. Information sharing provides essential clues for bringing offenders to justice. Citizens' participation in information sharing assists the police in gathering data that can help identify lawbreakers. Maintaining a good relationship between the police and community is crucial for effective information gathering and dissemination. The exchange of information between law enforcement agencies and communities provides critical intelligence regarding suspects, their activities, and locations, with the objectives of crime prevention, offender deterrence, crime reduction, apprehension of criminals, and criminal investigation. The involvement of law enforcement in community affairs serves as a crucial strategy that enables them to present themselves as both private citizens and agents of social control. This approach portrays law enforcement officers as societal servants who enforce law and order and ensure public adherence to governmental policies. Collaboration between the community and police in maintaining social order benefits the legal system in administering criminal justice. Police involvement in community issues demonstrates that they are instrumental in building an inclusive and organized society and effectively managing rebellion and unrest (Evans & Kebbell, 2011).

Every social system or subsystem faces various challenges that hinder its operational and management performance, and community policing is no exception. Most respondents concurred that community policing faces numerous challenges, including corruption, bribery, discriminatory law enforcement, negative public perception of law enforcement agencies, diminished public trust and confidence, insufficient personnel, inadequate community relations, godfatherism, and a lack of strategic direction. Bribery and corruption are particularly prevalent in some jurisdictions in which the model has been implemented. In some cases, police officers and management have been implicated in various illegal activities such as bribery and corruption, aiding criminal activities, obstructing justice, police brutality, extrajudicial killings, and unethical behaviors. These actions have

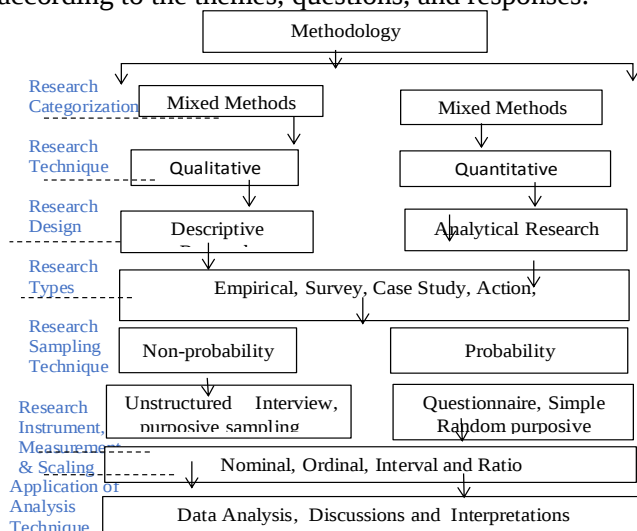
damaged the support, trust, and cooperation needed between the police and community for effective community policing. One major setback in community policing is the practice of selective and specialized law enforcement. In some places where community policing is practiced, specialized law enforcement is carried out, causing divisions among officers. Each specialized unit focuses solely on its mandate and struggles to collaborate with other units to support the community policing model. In some areas, poor and minority groups distance themselves from the police due to this specialization, leading to favoritism among community members, particularly political and upper-class individuals. The elite and political classes often receive preferential treatment compared to poor and underprivileged members of the community. The study also shows that community policing in some areas is negatively impacted by unholy alliances, where police and other stakeholders hide money obtained through illegal activities, contributing to a negative perception of the police by the community.

Negative perceptions of law enforcement within the community influence police officers' occupational performance. When the police use coercion to maintain social control, the community may become hostile toward them. To protect themselves, the police sometimes resort to repressive tactics or violence to uphold societal norms. Additionally, resistance from police managers responsible for implementing the community policing model has impeded progress. These managers resist change, question the model's effectiveness, and hesitate to adopt and implement it. Lack of trust and confidence in the police has also hindered community policing efforts. Public confidence in law enforcement has diminished due to instances of brutality, corruption, coercion, and inadequate communication. These actions have led to a negative perception of the police among the public, creating a disconnection between law enforcement and the community. This strained relationship has adverse consequences for the community, impeding effective crime resolution and collaborative efforts with law enforcement agencies. Most respondents concurred that numerous regions implementing community policing encounter challenges such as inadequate funding, corruption, insufficient personnel, partisanship, ethnic bias, lack of accountability, deficiencies in laws and procedures, and a dearth of public confidence. Furthermore, they observed that a limited understanding of community policing principles, unlawful arrests, non-adherence to criminal procedures, and police misconduct have impeded community policing initiatives. Corruption, favoritism, malpractice, complicity, lack of training, and a lack of a clear vision have contributed to ineffective community policing. Other significant challenges identified in the study include politicization of the police, lack of resources,

understaffing, poor infrastructure, inadequate forensic capabilities, insufficient training, human rights violations, lack of oversight, and limited funding for crime prevention and investigation. The diminished motivation of law enforcement personnel, attributable to public distrust, negative societal perceptions, inadequate compensation leading to corruption, and insufficient independent oversight, has impeded effective policing initiatives. Insufficient funding also restricts the completion of police operations.

3. Methodology

This study used a mixed-methods approach. Face-to-face interviews and questionnaires were used for data collection. Fifty-five participants were selected for data collection. The profile of respondents included high-ranking members of the South African Police Service officials from the crime prevention and detection unit, officers from South African immigration, customs, border security, and officers from the private security sector. The participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their expertise, experience, and knowledge of the subject matter. The respondents completed the questionnaire, and those who were interviewed were selected due to their extensive knowledge of the research topic. This study also involved reviewing papers and articles published in international and local journals. Data were analyzed by identifying patterns and themes and categorizing them according to the collected data. During quantitative data analysis, the researcher examined raw data to identify correlations between variables, thereby elucidating patterns and trends pertinent to the relevant respondents. The steps in analyzing the interview questions comprised transcribing audio recordings, familiarizing oneself with the content, and developing a coding framework. The interview data were coded according to the themes, questions, and responses.



A schema of the research methodology designed by the author
Figure 1. Research flowchart (The authors)

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Assessment of Community Intelligence and the Role of the Community in Gathering Information

Seventy-five percent of respondents pointed out that community intelligence included information provided by community members to support policing agencies in preventing and reducing crime, harm, and disorder in the local area. It was posited that the sources of community intelligence collection encompassed personal interactions with human sources, technical and physical surveillance methodologies, satellite-based observation, interviews, searches, and liaison relationships. The acknowledgment was made that information could be procured through overt, covert, and electronic means.

Respondent 22 pointed out that another approach adopted by community intelligence in obtaining information resonates with some analysts who prefer to use informal networks through contacts built over time as a way to circumvent the formality and systematic nature of strict agreements. According to the above Respondent 22, these networks include contacts established through professional contacts, community members, conferences, joint operations, and contacting former colleagues who now occupy positions at other agencies.

Seventy-five percent of respondents agreed that some intelligence officials relied on community intelligence. It was posited that intelligence officers perceived information obtained from trusted personal contacts as more reliable and current. Forty percent of the respondents indicated that the majority of intelligence officers lack confidence in community-sourced intelligence; they exhibit preference for information gathering methods such as electronic sources, social media, and electronic surveillance, which are predominantly utilized in the police intelligence domain. These respondents contend that the primary challenge with informal intelligence networks lies in the substantial time investment required for analysts to establish the necessary connections and trust, which is contingent upon the interpersonal skills possessed by the analyst. Sixty percent of the respondents agreed that community intelligence sources of information included technology that has facilitated DNA analysis, social network mapping, telephone call analysis, tracking electronic financial transactions, plotting the movement of people through the airline system, video surveillance tied to facial recognition, vehicle license plate readers, and gunshot auto-detection systems.

According to Respondent 27, "technology has changed the understanding of the criminal environment. Most police departments have embraced information sources such as the internet and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WeChat,

YouTube, and WhatsApp, and solicit members of society to report crime and any form of criminality through these platforms."

Fifty-five percent of the respondents agreed that the Information Coordinators' Program improved patrol intelligence. They pointed out that, at the police station, each patrol shift has an information coordinator supervisor, which enhances accountability. The Information Coordinators' Program has facilitated the enhancement of internal communication and information dissemination, effectively concentrating on specific offenders, and impeding criminal activity through the utilization of multiple information sources from various units within the department.

The study revealed that community intelligence adopts the use of partnerships as a means of improving target identification and gaining a better perspective on the relationship between local crime problems and trends at the regional and national levels. The reason for information sharing and closer relationships between local and regional organizations is to address deficiencies, prevent attacks, and ensure safety and security.

Respondent 6 states, "Community intelligence enhances police operations. Information coordinators are trained in a variety of databases, cell phone technologies, informant management, and legal issues related to intelligence data. The information coordinators were trained on what to look out for on the street and how to assist fellow officers in gaining information to be forwarded back to the criminal intelligence and analysis unit."

Fifty-five percent of the respondents indicated that community members participated in enhancing local security by establishing vigilance groups and equipping them to collaborate with law enforcement agencies to control and prevent criminal activities in their vicinity, thereby safeguarding the lives and property of civilians from potential offenders.

Respondent 20 stated, "The involvement of the community in gathering and passing intelligence hinges on the fact that community members understand their crime problems and localities better than outsiders from their communities. They know the activities of every individual within the community and they know when a strange movement is made."

Sixty percent of the respondents agreed that intelligence gathering is a law enforcement arsenal for countering criminal activities in the community. They concurred that intelligence can be used to contain crime, assist in policy formulation and implementation, and monitor the execution of government projects and programs.

Respondent 8 pointed out that community members get involved in intelligence gathering through the observation of suspected actions of criminals in their localities and reporting them to security agents for an

optimal response by police and security officials.

Respondent 15 agreed with Grabosky (2009), who asserted that crime detection, prevention, and investigation are more effective when community members are involved, as community members can easily identify strangers and criminals in their community and report them to the police, thereby deterring potential criminals and criminal behavior.

4.1.1. Result Interpretation

The research findings indicate that community intelligence encompasses a range of information sources utilized by law enforcement agencies to combat crime, mitigate harm, and maintain order within local jurisdictions. This intelligence framework incorporates data provided by community members, which proves instrumental in the detection, prevention, investigation, and prosecution of criminal activities. Furthermore, the study identifies additional avenues for gathering community intelligence, including direct interactions with human informants, implementation of technical and physical surveillance methods, utilization of satellite monitoring, conducting interviews and searches, and fostering liaison relationships. These diverse intelligence-gathering techniques represent a valuable arsenal for police and law enforcement entities in their efforts to address criminal activities within South African communities. Moreover, the research highlights the significance of informal networks established through personal contacts as an additional source of community intelligence. Most respondents agreed that information obtained from trusted personal contacts is more reliable and current due to the quality and reliability of the information, given that it was gathered by trusted agents or personnel.

The research findings indicate that a significant proportion of intelligence officers exhibit preference for information-gathering methods such as electronic sources, social media platforms, and electronic surveillance techniques, which are commonly employed in police intelligence operations. Conversely, these officers demonstrate a lack of confidence in intelligence derived from community sources. However, presently, community intelligence serves a crucial function in crime resolution by facilitating the detection of criminal activities and the apprehension of suspects. Community intelligence sources of information include technology that has facilitated DNA analysis, social network mapping, telephone call analysis, tracking electronic financial transactions, plotting the movement of people through the airline system, video surveillance tied to facial recognition, vehicle license plate readers, and gunshot auto-detection systems. These innovative technologies enhance rapid crime detection, prevention, and investigation. Social and intelligence information sources encompass digital platforms such as the internet and social media networks, including Facebook,

Twitter, Instagram, WeChat, YouTube, and WhatsApp, which facilitate the reporting of criminal activities and other forms of illicit behavior by members of society through these channels. Law enforcement agencies monitor these platforms to acquire intelligence regarding organized criminal networks engaged in various illicit activities, including cybercrime, social media-related offenses, credit card fraud, cyberbullying, stalking, online intimidation, online banking fraud, pornography, sexting, and human trafficking.

Community intelligence adopted the use of partnerships as a means of improving target identification and gaining a better perspective on the relationship between local crime problems and trends at the regional and national levels. This partnership includes security networks and interagency information sharing, which is vital for securing information that is useful for the protection of national infrastructure. Community members engage in enhancing security by establishing vigilance groups and equipping them to collaborate with law enforcement agencies to control and prevent criminal activities in their respective areas, thereby safeguarding the lives and property of civilians from potential offenders. The role of localized agencies and vigilantes is crucial in providing safety and security to communities, but their activities must be regulated and monitored according to constitutional provisions.

The most effective way for community members to secure community intelligence is gathering information through the observation of suspected actions of criminals in their localities and reporting them to security agents for an optimal response by police and security officials. The intelligence provided to law enforcement facilitates the arrest and prosecution of suspects. Given that one is a member of a particular community and knows the people in the community, community members can easily identify strangers and criminals in their community and report them to the police, thereby deterring potential criminals and criminal behavior.

4.2. Role of Interagency Collaboration and Its Challenges in Addressing Crime

Seventy percent of the respondents indicated that the necessity of addressing crime led to interagency collaboration, facilitating synergy between various security agencies in South Africa. They concurred that interagency collaboration enables security agencies to collectively address criminal incidents with optimal efficacy. Furthermore, they asserted that interagency collaboration promotes the implementation of proactive measures and strategies in operational and attitudinal approaches toward combating crime and criminal activities.

Sixty percent of the respondents highlighted a myriad of resources that could be considered operational mechanisms for cooperation, such as

agency initiative/energy, monetary resources, adequate staff, equipment, technology, organizational skills that flow between connected firms in a network, and resource adequacy.

External influences, both systematic and random, can compel agencies to collaborate on shared issues, as noted by Respondent 10. Furthermore, the availability of resources plays a crucial role in facilitating agency cooperation. The collaborative process may stagnate without the necessary initiative, energy, financial support, or sufficient personnel dedicated to joint endeavors.

Seventy percent of the respondents pointed out that the best way to reduce the risk of failure in service delivery by collaborators is to clarify the purpose of cooperation and enable staff to work together in developing goals, purposes, and targets they were mandated to implement. They agreed that effective problem-solving in security agencies and networks, particularly when faced with ill-defined challenges or those incongruent with organizational structures, demands augmented information dissemination via electronic channels. This enhanced distribution of information is crucial for optimizing joint operations across these entities. Interagency collaborators are expected to be innovative and develop problem-solving skills.

Sixty-five percent of respondents concurred that the primary objective of interagency collaborations is to provide safety, security, prevent and detect crime, investigate and resolve criminal activities, and promote social and psychological perceptions of security among citizens. They concurred that this can be achieved through collaboration between the South African police and the South African customs authorities. These entities are responsible for controlling all cargo and goods entering, exiting, or transiting through the national territory; protecting and securing international trade, combating infringements of intellectual property rights, addressing illegal commercial activities, preventing the import of counterfeit and substandard goods, interdicting the trafficking of illicit drugs, curtailing illegal trade in arms and ammunition, preventing the importation of pornographic materials, combating money laundering, and mitigating illegal trade in cultural artifacts and heritage items. In addition, the Customs Department plays an important role in securing international trade.

Respondent 9 stated, "The adoption of a multi-agency approach to crime prevention, detection, and investigation is crucial; the approach assists in the dissemination of intelligence between security networks and those tasked with border management in tackling cross-border crime, illegal immigration, drug/human trafficking, organized crime, smuggling, and terrorism."

4.2.1. Result Interpretation

The study revealed that interagency collaboration allows security agencies to come together to tackle criminal incidents with their best efforts. In this regard, interagency collaboration promotes the use of proactive measures and strategies in operational and attitudinal approaches toward combating crime and criminal activities. Collaboration facilitates the coordination of efforts among security networks and agencies, the criminal justice system, and law enforcement entities to engage in crime detection, prevention, investigation, prosecution, and the enhancement of overall national security.

To facilitate effective synergies between diverse security agencies, consolidated resources are essential as operational mechanisms for cooperation. These resources include adequate financial support, proactive initiatives, sufficient personnel, equipment, technology, and organizational competencies that can be shared among interconnected entities within a network. The absence of these resources may adversely impact interagency operations and collaborations. Consequently, it is imperative to provide these resources to ensure productive collaboration and operational efficacy.

External influences pose significant challenges to interagency cooperation. These extrinsic factors, whether systematic or arbitrary, can compel agencies to collaborate on common issues. Organizations aiming to foster partnerships must remain vigilant and implement protective measures to shield their collaborative efforts, synergies, and operations from external interference. Another crucial aspect affecting inter-organizational cooperation is the allocation of resources to support joint initiatives. The absence of motivation, funding, or sufficient personnel for cooperative endeavors can hinder progress. To minimize the risk of failure in service delivery among collaborating entities, it is essential to clearly define the purpose of cooperation and enable staff to collectively establish the mandated goals, objectives, and targets. The aims of interagency collaboration must be explicitly articulated, leaving no room for ambiguity. It is imperative to precisely delineate the target, mandate, and role of each stakeholder. Collaborative efforts that fail to elucidate their purpose, aims, objectives, roles, missions, and mandates are unlikely to achieve their intended outcomes.

The efficacy of joint security agency and network operations hinges on the augmentation of information dissemination via electronic channels. This enhancement is particularly crucial when addressing complex, ill-defined challenges that do not align with the established organizational problem-solving paradigms. Interagency collaborators are expected to be innovative and develop problem-solving skills. Innovation and critical thinking are key to modern

security. Technology should be employed by the collaborators if they want to win the fight against crime in South African communities. The study revealed that the central objective of interagency collaborations is to provide safety, security, prevent and detect crime, investigate and resolve crime, and promote the social and psychological feeling of security for citizens. This objective can only be achieved through synergy between the South African police, South African customs, immigration, South African Border Management Agency, and other security agencies working in different provinces, cities, and communities of South Africa. These collaborations encourage a multi-agency approach to crime prevention, detection, and investigation to enhance information and intelligence sharing and the dissemination of intelligence between security networks.

4.3. Incorporating Community Intelligence into the Community Policing Model for Effective Crime Detection and Prevention

Seventy percent of the respondents pointed out that community intelligence gathered information about the factors that hindered proper community development. This information is used to assist the government and criminal justice system in implementing a comprehensive strategy to address threats, risks, vulnerabilities, and negative factors that impede community progress. Additionally, it aims to enhance crime prevention, safety, and security and improve various community sectors such as education, employment, infrastructure, healthcare, and social harmony.

According to Respondent 27, intelligence officers play a crucial role in the changing environment of crime detection and prevention. Crime intelligence analysts hold knowledge, ideas, and information, whereas collators gather information on unknown criminals. Street officers collect information and implement the targeted enforcement. This model aims to help the crime intelligence industry articulate processes and ideas to identify relationships between players with different roles in preventing and reducing crime.

Fifty-five percent of the respondents pointed out that community intelligence played a significant role in community development. They believed that the concept of community development is based on the idea that changing the physical or social organization of a community impacts the behavior of the people who reside there. In societies with high levels of social exclusion or lack of social cohesion, the risk of involvement in crime, violence, or mistreatment is higher. There is a need to secure mutual cooperation and partnership between the criminal justice system and the community to enhance the participation of the community in obtaining information and reporting crime.

The study maintained that community intelligence promotes the improvement of information sharing between the police community, security networks, and the public and private sectors. Respondent 21 concurred with Macvean (2008) that the community intelligence approach posits that enhanced communication and information sharing improves targeting, consequently leading to more objective resource allocation decisions. Information sharing enhances the interpretation of the criminal environment. Collaboration outside the police domain is a viable mechanism for achieving crime prevention and reduction goals.

Sixty percent of the respondents agreed that community intelligence promotes the development of problem-oriented policing and greater collaboration with industries, crime prevention partners, and other sectors as a long-term crime prevention strategy. They pointed out that the approach assists intelligence coordinators who provide field-level support for patrol divisions and facilitate communication and information sharing between the patrol, investigations, and criminal intelligence and analysis units.

Respondent 9 pointed out that the essential functions of intelligence coordinators include gathering street-level crime information for the criminal intelligence and analysis unit, presenting intelligence products to patrol personnel, providing technical assistance and support for each squad and team, attending tactical intelligence meetings, and investigation briefings.

The research asserted that, for a community to coexist harmoniously, there exists a necessity for its members to maintain cohesion and address the challenges they encounter collectively. In this regard, community members should be ready to report crimes and take action against anything that threatens the safety and security of the area. Community members are expected to engage in information sharing, which is crucial for obtaining intelligence to assist in solving crime-related problems.

4.3.1. Result Interpretation

Community intelligence facilitates the acquisition of information regarding factors that impede appropriate community development. The significance of community intelligence and information derived from the community cannot be overstated. When made available, this information is used by the government, interagency network agencies, and criminal justice system to implement a comprehensive strategy to address threats, risks, vulnerabilities, and negative factors that impede community progress.

The significance of crime intelligence analysts is acknowledged within the domain of community intelligence. Crime analysts hold knowledge, ideas, and information, whereas collators gather information on unknown criminals. Street officers collect information and implement the targeted enforcement. This model

aims to help the crime intelligence industry articulate processes and ideas to identify relationships between players with different roles in preventing and reducing crime.

Community intelligence plays an important role in community development. It is crucial to note that the concept of community development is based on the idea that changing the physical or social organization of a community impacts the behavior of the people who reside there. In societies with high levels of social exclusion or lack of social cohesion, the risk of involvement in crime, violence, or mistreatment is higher. Therefore, mutual cooperation and partnership between the criminal justice system and community are necessary to encourage the community to obtain information and report crimes.

Community intelligence promotes information sharing between the police community, security networks, and the public and private sectors. Information sharing improves targeting, resulting in more objective resource allocation decisions and enhancing the interpretation of the criminal environment. Information and intelligence sharing assists intelligence coordinators who provide field-level support for the patrol division and facilitate communication and information sharing between the patrol, investigations, and criminal intelligence and analysis units. The essential functions of intelligence coordinators include gathering street-level crime information for the criminal intelligence and analysis unit, presenting intelligence products to patrol personnel, providing technical assistance and support for each squad and team, attending tactical intelligence meetings, and investigation briefings.

The coexistence of communities entails that members be in harmony and take charge of the security and crime challenges they face. Community members should actively participate in reporting crimes, identifying criminals in their areas, taking action against anything that threatens the safety and security of their communities, and engaging in information sharing, which is crucial to obtaining intelligence that will assist in solving crime-related problems.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, fighting crimes is a global challenge, with crimes committed daily. Perpetrators constantly develop new and sophisticated techniques to carry out high-profile crimes, both locally and internationally. Therefore, it is crucial to implement intelligence-driven policing to encourage community members to participate in gathering intelligence. There is a need for intelligence sharing between security networks and interagency collaborators. Synergy between security agencies in addressing crime involves incorporating intelligence, which is the result of collecting, collating, evaluating, analyzing, integrating, and interpreting the

gathered information. Intelligence operations provide governmental entities and the criminal justice system with essential information to advance national interests and address criminal activities. It has been observed that in some communities, there is a disconnect between the public and those reporting crimes and providing information to security forces. Some community members have reported being undermined by unscrupulous security personnel who chose to disregard the security intelligence voluntarily provided by the community. It is essential for all community members to cooperate with security agencies to provide security intelligence to combat crimes. The South African government must adopt technologies that have become essential tools in the global fight against crime to stay ahead of criminals and minimize their impact.

Community intelligence plays a vital role in providing criminal intelligence, which is the information received on known or suspected persons involved in criminal activity or data resulting from the analysis of criminal data collected on persons suspected of being involved in criminal activities. Due to growing global crime and unprecedented attacks such as terrorism, insurgency, proliferation of arms and ammunition, organized crime, drug trafficking, dealing with contraband goods, and transnational crime, these new threats are no longer traditional but have evolved into asymmetrical threats that have not been encountered in the past. To address crime-related issues, the intelligence community and professionals must recognize that achieving objectives in a rapidly evolving, multinational, information-driven world necessitates a comprehensive understanding of adversaries' confidential information, current situational awareness, and the ability to predict future developments. Community intelligence shared by interagency collaborators is necessary to combat these heinous crimes.

There is a need to make use of community, strategic, and tactical intelligence to tackle crime problems in South Africa. Intelligence officers and personnel need to make use of intelligence timeously, ensuring that it is used on a need-to-know basis to address threats directed against individuals, the public, and national infrastructure. Crime intelligence encourages early detection of crime tendencies; this can assist the police and law enforcement in developing strategies to cope with the possible threats of crime before it escalates. Community intelligence and crime intelligence play a significant role in the detection and prevention of organized crime. By making statistics available and drawing conclusions between certain apparently independent crimes, the causal link can be ascertained, thus enhancing effective detection and prevention of crime. The effective use of community and crime intelligence systems enhances the effective use of scarce resources by analyzing crime tendencies. Certain

patterns may occur, thus assisting in identifying crime hot spots that will help police management in placing the correct number of police officers in a given area for a specific time frame. This leads to an effective distribution of resources.

6. Limitations of the Study

One slight challenge faced during this study was related to accessing respondents because of their busy schedules. To address this, the researcher waited for some of the respondents after work and conducted interviews within their office premises. Despite these challenges, the researcher ensured that they did not hinder the success of this study.

7. Recommendations

Effective crime detection and prevention require the sharing of information and intelligence. Community intelligence is a strategy used to gather local information directly or indirectly, which is then assessed to detect or predict crime trends, enabling law enforcement to take swift action to prevent crimes. It can also enhance the quality of life of community members and provide strategic and operational perspectives for local policing.

Community intelligence promotes crime prevention methods to reduce the likelihood of crime and its impact on individuals and society. Various stakeholders, including individuals, communities, corporations, and non-governmental organizations, use tactics to address social and environmental issues for crime prevention.

Community intelligence is utilized to identify, modify, and manage environmental factors that contribute to crime. It also improves urban design and planning and informs strategic management to develop strategies for safe environments. It supports developmental crime prevention by intervening early in individuals' development to prevent criminal behavior.

Interagency cooperation plays a crucial role in enhancing safety and security. However, for an agency to be effective, various capacity issues must be considered when attempting to establish interagency cooperation, such as implementation logistics, capacity challenges, funding sources to initiate and sustain a cooperative structure, technology communication and management, information mechanisms, and the level of professionalism among personnel within the network. These mechanisms are essential for effective interagency goal achievement.

The challenges of interagency collaboration include communication gaps, role confusion, resource constraints, and conflicting goals. Therefore, improving interagency collaboration requires addressing factors such as funding and staff support. When shared, these resources strengthen collaborative efforts. Jointly funded programs or those in which staff work across agencies epitomize true interagency collaboration.

Effective communication is crucial for successful interagency collaboration. By working together, agencies can improve their communication skills and develop a shared understanding of the project goals and objectives. Areas that can be enhanced by positive working relationships among agencies include seamless frontline operations, structured scalability, and agency-specific enhancements. The key principles of interagency work include accountability, which creates a safe space in which professionals can hold each other to account. There is a need for constructive feedback when things do not go according to plan, but also a need to recognize and affirm when something is working well. The willingness of interagency collaborators to trust each other and be open and honest is crucial.

Through the analysis of digital traces left by individuals interacting with cyber-physical environments, law enforcement entities can leverage community and social intelligence techniques to discern and illuminate social interactions, collective behaviors, and community dynamics. These digital footprints primarily come from three information sources: the internet and web applications, static infrastructure, mobile devices, and wearable sensors.

Community intelligence informs police intelligence capabilities in the detection of crime using electronic devices. Electronic sources such as social media and electronic surveillance can be utilized in the police intelligence domain to track criminals. Community intelligence can facilitate law enforcement's utilization of technology for crime mapping, telephone call analysis, tracking of electronic financial transactions, monitoring of individual movement through airline systems, video surveillance integrated with facial recognition, vehicle license plate readers, and gunshot detection systems.

Moving forward, community intelligence enhances criminal intelligence analysis by supporting police and other law enforcement agencies in proactively responding to crime. This enables them to identify and understand criminal groups operating in their areas. By comprehending the behaviors of criminals, law enforcement can evaluate current crime trends, predict potential criminal activities, and prevent criminal behavior. Intelligence provides the necessary knowledge to make informed decisions and select appropriate targets for investigation.

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Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement

The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the author on request.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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