

**APPLICATION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES IN THE NATIONAL  
POLICE SERVICE: A CASE STUDY OF ONE POLICE DIVISION IN KENYA**

**BY**

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated all my family and all friends

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the application of Public Relations (PR) Strategies in the Police Service in Kenya. The problem that prompted this study was that of widespread public perception of the Service as corrupt, inconsiderate and brutal with very poor people relations. Yet, the National Police Service is also on record as having instituted a lot of reforms, especially since the promulgation of the Kenya Constitution 2010. Academically, it has not been established through research what the police officers know about PR and how they apply that knowledge. Therefore, the specific research questions the study sought to investigate were on the Public Relations (PR) strategies used by the officers within the police service in Kenya; the issues that determine the knowledge of PR and its use by the officers within the police service; The challenges the police encounter while implementing their PR strategies? and finally how key stakeholders perceive Public Relations practices by the officers in the police service. The study adopted the Qualitative Case study methodology and interviews were used for data generation from one police division in Kenya. Data were analysed thematically and relevant ethical concerns especially anonymity and confidentiality were upheld. The findings of this research show that client –information and media publicity are the main strategies used within the Kenya National police service; that the on-going reforms and capacity building are the among the key issues that determine the knowledge of PR and its application among the police service; key stakeholders overwhelmingly perceive the police as being very poor in PR. However, issues like the entrenched traditional approach to police training and the lack of capacity building are main hindrances to progress to the practice of Public Relations. Successful law enforcement is heavily dependent on the people’s willingness to report crimes, to call for help, to report suspicious activities and to serve as a witness or informant. The police need to be able to elicit such types of cooperation from citizens in order to effectively and efficiently control crime and secure people’s safety.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>AI:</b>    | Amnesty International                  |
| <b>APS:</b>   | Administration Police Service          |
| <b>CID:</b>   | Criminal Investigations Department     |
| <b>CoK:</b>   | Constitution of Kenya, 2010            |
| <b>CID:</b>   | Criminal Investigation Department.     |
| <b>CBP:</b>   | Community Based Policing               |
| <b>ECK:</b>   | Electoral Commission of Kenya          |
| <b>GoK:</b>   | Government of Kenya                    |
| <b>IPOA:</b>  | Independent Police Oversight Authority |
| <b>ICC:</b>   | International Criminal Court.          |
| <b>IG:</b>    | Inspector General                      |
| <b>KPF:</b>   | Kenya Police Force                     |
| <b>KPS:</b>   | Kenya Police Service                   |
| <b>NIS:</b>   | National Intelligence Service          |
| <b>NPS:</b>   | National Police Service                |
| <b>NPSA:</b>  | National Police Service Act            |
| <b>NPSC:</b>  | National Police Service Commission     |
| <b>NTFPR:</b> | National Task Force on Police Reforms  |
| <b>OCS:</b>   | Officer Commanding Station             |
| <b>OCPD:</b>  | Officer Commanding Police District     |
| <b>PR:</b>    | Public Relations                       |
| <b>PP0:</b>   | Provincial Police Officer.             |
| <b>PD:</b>    | Police Division                        |
| <b>UN:</b>    | United Nations                         |

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

- Police Service:** This term has been used extensively, meaning the National Police Service in context.
- Police Division:** Police administrative Unit comprising a number of Police stations- depending on the population of an area, and Patrol bases under the command of an Officer Commanding Police Division.
- Public Relations:** A planned process to influence public opinion, through sound character and proper performance based on mutual satisfactory two-way communication.
- Stakeholders:** Any group, individuals or organization that can place a claim on an Organization's attention or resources or is affected by the organization's decisions. In this case the police service.
- Perception:** The way you understand the true nature of something as a result of our interaction with it
- Public:** A group of people with ideas, interests, characteristics or aspirations that are of importance to the organization.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter will highlight the background of the study, statement of the problem, the research questions, and scope of the study. Focus will also be on the limitations, justification of the study, and finally the significance of the study.

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

In the 2010 constitutional dispensation in Kenya, The National Police Service (NPS) is established under Article 243 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010. Legally, The Police Service is further governed by the National Police Service Act, 2011. The head of the police, the Inspector-General, is a position created by Article 245 of Kenya's constitution. (Kenya Law Reports, 2015) The Independent Policing Oversight Authority Act, 2011, created the Independent Policing Oversight Authority, a board of civilians charged with monitoring the police.

The function of the Police Service as it buds come from a history of structures that have grown through the years. The history of the Kenya Police Service is quite different from the British case yet it is almost modelled on those lines. The genesis of policing in Kenya dates back to the pre-independence times. After independence, the then constitution at that time, had provisions for the establishment of a neutral police service. However, that was just on paper because political leaders turned the police service into a political tool for suppressing and/or repressing political opponents, real or imagined (Kivoi and Mbae, 2013).

More than Fifty years later, Kenya is still struggling with reforming its National Police Service which is fettered in many challenges among them corruption within its ranks, accusations of extra-judicial killings, limited and/or lack of professionalism, poor housing, lack of modern crime combating equipment among numerous other challenges. According to (Kivoi and Mbae,2013) it is therefore not surprising, the Police Service has been polled as the most corrupt of Kenya's public institutions and been indicted for the abuse of human rights and the disregard of due process (Transparency International,2011).

As a result of the aforementioned police reform is a critical issue not only for community safety and economic development, but because there is intense popular demand for reduced crime and better police performance. In this regard, the constitution promulgated in 2010 made demands for structural and welfare reforms to be carried out in the National Police Service. This is informed by the fact that the culture of impunity in the police service has contributed to too many cases of insecurity, gross violation of human rights, mistrust by citizens and derailment of key achievements in democratic governance (Kivoi and Mbae, 2013).

Currently, in conformity with the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, the government of Kenya is in the midst of implementing ambitious reforms in the country as is enshrined in the constitution key among them, National Police Service reforms (Amnesty International, n.d.,Kivoi and Mbae, 2013). The constitution stipulates various police reforms which if fully implemented will revamp the Police Service and address cases of police welfare, impunity by rogue officers, inefficiency and gross human rights violations.

The Constitution of Kenya, 2010 now establishes the National Police Service Commission (NPSC) which is a big step towards reforming this critical public-sector institution charged with enforcing Rule of Law. It is worth noting that whereas some steps have been made in implementing police reforms; many critical reforms are yet to be made, key among them the vetting of senior officers, comprehensive life insurance for all police officers, provision of security kits to all officers and the construction of a forensic laboratory for the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) (Kivoi and Mbae, 2013).

In a report by the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC,2015) noted that ‘democratization is spreading into many parts of the world, and notably Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, societies are becoming increasingly concerned about and engaged with institutions of government and their compliance with democratic principles and human rights’. As societies aspire towards more genuine forms of democratic governance, there is growing interest and awareness of the role of the police as an institution in a democratic society based on the primacy of human rights. In democracies, the police, a ubiquitous, vital and influential institution guarantees public safety by detecting and preventing crime, keeping the peace and cooperating, as far as possible, with the public to maintain law and order. In order to effectively discharge these functions and support human rights and democratic order, the police must be governed by a vision and an unambiguous set of rules and regulations that promotes the notion of democratic policing.



Kenya, like other developing societies, is in a phase of transition to democracy. In the December 2002 polls, Kenyans overwhelmingly voted out the Kenya African National Union (KANU) party after close to four decades of misrule distinguished by repression, ethnic chauvinism, nepotism and corruption. Over 60 percent of the electorate chose instead to vote for the reformist National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) in support of its pledges to pursue extensive democratic reforms, improve governance and reconstruct the country's economy. For most Kenyans, there was intense optimism that the country's hopelessly corrupt police and justice systems would be radically reformed to enhance effectiveness, accountability, transparency, government-citizen cooperation, adherence to the rule of law and respect for human rights (Kivoi and Mbae, 2013).

In 2003, the Kenya Police, in conjunction with civil society organizations led by Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC), the private sector and the international community, started work on an ambitious police reform plan aimed at infusing the principles described above in the police's ethos, organizational culture and operations. The five-year Kenya Police Strategic Plan (2003- 2007) and now 2014-2018 is now underway in its implementation and organizations like the KHRC and the Kenya Human Rights Commission, The National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR, 2003, 2015) are monitoring and evaluating the steps being taken in the reform process in order to support the transformation of the Kenya Police into a genuinely rights-compliant, people-oriented and accountable institution. The police division which was studied is a prototype of other police divisions nationwide, however the name I chose to hold back due to issues that pertain to the nature of the work of the service.

The National Police Service Commission Act establishes a civilian board to oversee recruitment and appointments of police officers, review standards and qualifications, and receive complaints from the public and refer them to the Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA) and other government entities for remedy. Commissioners were appointed in October 2012 after several delays which raised concerns about whether sufficient political will existed to implement the reform package (Amnesty International, 2013).

The creation of the legislative framework for police reforms, followed by the establishment of the three core institutions - IPOA, NPSC and the IGP - are important milestones towards a reformed police service. By establishing these offices, responsibility for security has moved from the Presidency and is now spread across several institutions affording the police more autonomy from the executive and other sources of potential political interference (Amnesty International, 2013).

However, a study by Saferworld on police reforms established that despite the fact that changes have taken place, the police have not been able to reduce crime across the country. Hence, the impact of police reforms is yet to be seen. The report finds that 69% of the public is not aware of the new accountability mechanisms that have been put in place and 47% said that they do not trust the police to deal with cases of police misconduct. According to the report, police abuse of power and corruption remains high, as 64% of the police officers interviewed said that they know another officer who has been involved in corruption in the last ten years (Saferworld, 2015).

There are other developments that may serve to accelerate police reforms. The opening of space for public discussion on policing and police accountability has created a momentum for reforms and people have become bolder in calling for public inquests, making numerous calls for accountable policing in the media (Amnesty International, 2013). However, there continues to be major obstacles to police reform in Kenya. Crime rates are still very high, there is widespread corruption, and policing approaches and actors are often politicized (Saferworld, 2008). The resultant poor performance in the police sector sticks out strongly and is distinct from any other poor performance in any other sector because lives, especially of those at their most productive stage, are lost (Maguire et al., 2007).

As part of their service delivery, the major issues that police face when measuring their performance is that they work in an entirely different environment than most public-sector agencies and that it is the government that sets the objectives which they expect police to achieve (Loveday, 1995).

According to (Holmes and Goodman, 2010), performance measures of police service delivery are generally done through the collection of both objective and subjective data. Objective data provide researchers with specific measures of police performance including response times, local crime statistics, minority employment statistics, etc. (Brown and Coulter, 1983, Kelly and Swindell 2002a). These data are useful in answering quantitative and benchmarking questions and are usually described as output measures (Folz, 2004). For example, how does one department perform when compared

to a department in a similar city with regards to response time? How effective is a department in lowering crime rates within a locale?

Subjective data deal with individual, perceptual measures of satisfaction and expectations. While subjective data can yield useful information from a departmental perspective, it is most often used to evaluate citizen satisfaction and answer questions from the citizen perspective (Holmes and Goodman, 2010).

This study explored the application of PR within the Police Service against the context of reforms explained above.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Widespread public perception of the Police Service is that of a corrupt, inconsiderate and brutal force with very poor people relations. Yet, the National police service is also on record as having instituted a lot of reforms, especially since the promulgation of the Kenya Constitution 2010. Academically, it has not been established through research what the police officers know about PR and how they apply that knowledge.

There is a wide perception that the Police in Kenya are ineffective and corrupt, and do commit several inhuman acts with impunity. There is a public perception that police often are complicit in criminal activity. The public feel that the Police often recruit unqualified candidates who have political connections or who pay bribes, which contribute to poorly conducted investigations. Opinions also exist that Police incompetence and complicity in criminal activity contributes to an increase in crime, especially in Nairobi, where crime rose 40 percent in 2011, according to police reports. (Kivoi, 2013)

Public outcry for transformation in the police sector in particular have been driven by the ills in the police force whose nefarious reputation has eroded public trust. Those feelings continue to persist but the on-going reforms have brought some hope that the Police force` will transform into a Police service` that is accountable, professional, transparent and possessing a human rights sensitive approach; as well as the operational capacity to deliver on its obligations to the Kenyan public (Ndungu, 2011).

Police often stop and arrest citizens to extort bribes; those who cannot pay are jailed on trumped-up charges (e.g., preparation to commit a felony) and beaten. Transparency International's 2012 Bribery Index concluded that police were extremely corrupt. The study noted that more than 60 percent of respondents reported being forced to pay bribes to the police. Press and civil society groups reported that police continued to resort to illegal confinement, extortion, physical abuse, and fabrication of charges to accomplish law enforcement objectives as well as to facilitate illegal activities. Police also reportedly accepted bribes to fabricate charges against individuals as a means of settling personal vendettas. Police often failed to enter detainees into police custody records, making it difficult to locate them.

Public Relations within police service still remains widely misunderstood both by the police as well as the citizens. This has gone a long way to fuel misconceptions and mislead stereotypes mutually between the police and citizens. The expectations of the Kenya citizens however are still high as they expect better services from the force as well as better treatment in the long run. The image of the police is fast changing for the better among the people but the question is still being we there yet?

For long the police brutality has gone to the extreme and putting the citizens whom they should protect in a rather awkward situation. (KNCHR, 2009).

Corruption within the criminal justice system, contributes to a general climate of lawlessness, and serves to undermine the legitimacy and effectiveness of the fight against crime. The public lacks confidence in KPF's competence and integrity. The public's perceptions are in many respects justifiable and result in low reporting levels of crime. The public complains about police inaction and giving excuses for doing nothing in the face of crime and victimization. They also complain of police brutality, torture, assault, rape, trigger happiness, illegitimate arrest, harassment, incivility, disregard for human rights, corruption and extortion, among other things (KNHCR, 2009).

This study therefore sought to establish if there is any knowledge of Public Relations efforts in the KPS, this is against a background of accusation that may not be substantiated per se, but the situation as it is now is only rife with confusion and misunderstanding. I used the below research questions to try and reach an answer:

### **1.3 Research Questions**

Key questions that guide this study are:

1. What are the Public Relations (PR) strategies used by the officers within the police service in Kenya?
2. The issues that determine the knowledge of PR and its use by the officers within the police service?
3. Do the police encounter challenges while implementing their PR strategies?

4. How do key stakeholders perceive Public Relations practices by the officers in the police service?

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The key objectives of carrying this study were that by the end of the study, the findings would help in:

1. Understanding the Public Relations (PR) strategies used by the officers within the police service in Kenya?
2. Determining the issues that determine the knowledge of PR and its use by the officers within the police service?
3. Understanding the challenges do the police encounter while implementing their PR strategies?
4. To decipher how key stakeholders perceive Public Relations practices by the officers in the police service?

#### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

In this study, I mainly focused on the knowledge of PR within the Police service. However specifically in reference to the research questions raised above, the study limited itself to answering the following questions:

The first research question explored what the police officers' knowledge of PR? This was quite important to decipher if the officers know anything at all about the essence of good community relations. Then I further sought to know the specific ways through which the said responded knew about PR, this specifically in reference to how the capacity of the

officers is built towards community service. The specific means through which this information was passed to the officer was interrogated and finally I sought to know if there is any further follow up at all.

The second question sought to establish the public relations strategies that are used by the officers. Do they have a guideline on how to engage with the public? I sought to know if information on PR is shared within all ranks or only to the senior police officers. I also sought to know if there is any formal procedure of follow up within the force to see if they are adhered to within the formal system. It was finally very important to find out if there is any feedback that is sought from the public to feel how they decipher public versus police relations.

The third question sought the issues that determine the knowledge of PR and its use by the officers within the Police service. Do they use it for public good? Is PR within the police an inculcated and properly institutionalized practice or they merely use it because they know that someone is watching them? Do they use it as a matter of personal conscience or do they use it because it is a requirement of the law?

Finally, the fourth question was directed to non-uniformed officials within the government as well as other crucial and indeed key stakeholders perceive Public Relations practices by the officers in the police service. Have they ever interacted with a police officer/Public Relations Officer? And if they see any efforts by the KPS to entrench PR in police



In terms of the contextual scope, since the study focused on perception that pertains to professionalism, public relations and management of public expectation and confidence. I decided that the study be conducted within a police district in a Nakuru East Sub county of Nakuru County in Kenya. The study area was accessible and practical. At this point I would like to clarify that I was able to establish that a police district is an administrative unit of the Kenya Police Service headed by an officer Commanding Police District (OCPD) who oversees the day to day running on of various stations manned by an Officer Commanding Station (OCS.) this was however accordingly restructured and renamed to a sub county (Kenya Police Act, 2014)

On the methodological scope, this study adopted the case study method and was limited to only 35 respondents. Open ended questionnaires were administered to respondents from the police officers to the public and key stakeholders, however for more detailed information on the methodology refer to chapter three.

### **1.6 Limitations of the Study**

Limited resources and nature of police work, also the bottleneck of not interviewing a large sample of respondents within the KPS. However, it was encouraging that the Kenya Police were more receptive than I had anticipated, only that most of the time, like in most government offices, I could only sneak in a few minutes with the police.

On the content, I generated from the research; the findings the research design were a limitation in and of themselves. This is because since the sample was drawn from a predestined population, that is, one police district as well as the few key stakeholders.

The sample was however representative of other police stations as well as of the county but limited by virtue of the sampling technique.

In terms of methodology, during data generation, some of the participants in this department may be unwilling to freely give information concerning the Service. This was -as anticipated- due to the nature of the disciplined forces not to divulge information for their own good as well of the nation as a whole, I also got to appreciate that a fair share of civil servants gets to sign to and adhere to the official secrets act of 1969 (revised, 2015). I however countered this limitation by making a strong commitment about ensuring my respondents anonymity as well as leveraging as a matter of convenient sampling by approaching participants through my links and networks in the police service; I was then able to develop some trust.

Finally, on the contextual scope of the study, due to the secretive nature of the police and their busy schedule, the access to information from the Police was bound to be a challenge. I was able to get a sitting with the official police spokesperson who assured me of no intimidation or victimization should I come up with independent information based on my research for academic purposes. However, I encountered instances where I was treated with Suspicion and attempts of intimidation both by the police and the public, which I discuss in detail in chapter 4 and 5. I can however mention at this stage that this is attributable to the prevailing perception from both the police and the public to anyone perceived to be talking for the police.

## 1.6 Justification of the Study

After reviewing other literature on police and Public perception and Public relations, I can say that at the moment there are limited studies on PR within the Police service generally and in Kenya in particular. However, I was able to find out that (Bertha *et al.*, 2011) acknowledge that one problem is that Kenya, like most African countries, suffers a lack of balance in police-citizen ratios. This adds on the problems that the service is already facing. Whereas the United Nations recommends a ratio of 1:450, Kenya has a ratio of 1:1150 (Kimani, 2009) in sharp contrast to Europe average of 1:350 although there are relatively speaking more police in Kenya than elsewhere in East Africa. This ratio further compounds the fact that Public Relations within the KPS is still a new phenomenon in Kenya evidenced by the fact that the public relations desks were only formally instituted in the year 2012 (Daily Nation, June, 2013).

It is thus clear that there is a gap of knowledge of PR strategies within the force as well as the practice of the same. There is a need for the police to improve their capacity building and training of officers to interact better with the public. This also in full knowledge that quite thin research on the knowledge of PR within the ranks of the police service, the field has been for a long time looked at as lacking the status of a profession because people with no knowledge in public relations just come and practice (Hainsworth, 1993; Ferguson, 1987).

This study sought to inform the police and public interaction as a means of improving policing in the nation as a whole. This, I earnest hope, will also inform the ongoing police

reforms which will bring about structural, institutional, legal and policy changes realization especially as far as PR is concerned.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The results of this study are of great relevance to Policy makers as well as constitutionally mandated commissions to run police reforms like the Independent Police Oversight Authority (IPOA), National Police Service Commission (NPS) and the public at large. Through this study the Police-both within my scope of study and nationwide- to be able to better fathom Public Relations as whole and its place in the KPS and to improve on their efficacy now since they will know the expectations of their stakeholders as well as that of the law. The stakeholder will also understand the role of the KPS in relation to public relation as a matter of service. The field has been for a long time looked at as deficient.

### **1.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that there is a great need to pay attention to Public Relations in the KPS. PR within the Police in Kenya is still misunderstood, a situation that can claw back on the benefits of police reforms which started in earnest to improve service delivery within the Police Service. The chapter also looked at the scope, Limitation, and justification of the study. The next chapter looks at various literature that has been written both in public relations generally and on the study topic in particular.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter reviews previous literature available on key issues that pertain to Public Relations, the Police Service and Policing globally. The aim of this chapter is to establish a gap in knowledge, familiarizing myself with the topic, operationalizing the terms used in this study and see what the current major issues in public relations research are. The chapter also situates the study in the field of communication studies and explains how it relates to public relations. It also gives a review of literature on public relations and its roles. The last part of this chapter looks at issues arising from literature review i.e., gives a summary of the issues that have been discovered from the literature review and highlights the gap in literature that the study sought to address.

#### **2.1 Situating the Study within the Field of Communication Studies**

This study is situated within the field of Communication studies, Communication studies is here defined by Bruce Smith, Harold Laswell, and Ralph D. Casey who provided a good and simple answer to the question, “What is Communication study?” They state that communication study is an academic field whose primary focus is “who says what, through what channels (media) of communication, to whom, [and] what will be the results. So, in my interpretation we can conclude in a nutshell that these types of communication are key to the running of organizations but what matters most is proper management of the communication process and communication systems. (Bendix, 1945).

Communication has several functions which are relevant to the police service, some of the functions of communication in public institutions according to (Richmond and McCroskey, 2009) include informative functions, where you pass information to other people so as to keep them abreast of what is happening. The other one is a management function, where information is used for the smooth running of the organization. (Kapanga, 2011) adds another function which persuasive function is, where the organization uses communication to convince other people that what they are doing is beneficial to stakeholders.

Next, the study will expound on PR; in this research, intention was to give specific emphasis to Public Relations (PR) within the field of communication studies. As a branch of communication studies pertains to an inquest into how humans share, encode, and decode what they know, what they need, and what they expect from each. Communication is deeply rooted in human behaviors and societies. It is difficult to think of social or behavioral events from which communication is absent. Indeed, communication applies to shared behaviors and properties of any collection of things, whether they are human or not. (Lattimore *et al*, 2007)

According to the Wikipedia online encyclopaedia "communication" (from the Latin "communicare") literally means "to put in common", "to share". The term originally meant sharing of tangible things; food, land, goods, and property. Today, it is often applied to knowledge and information processed by living things or computers.

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media\\_\(communication\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media_(communication)))

We might also say that communication consists of transmitting information. In fact, many scholars of communication take this as a working definition and use Laswell's maxim ("who says what to whom") as a means of circumscribing the field of communication. Others stress the importance of clearly characterizing the historical, economic and social context. The field of communication theory can benefit from a conceptualization of communication that is widely shared.

### **2.1.1 Public Relations Strategies**

To specifically define Public Relations, various scholars' definitions were reviewed to deduce a definition. According to (Cutlip *et al*,2006:4) is the management function which evaluates attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or an organization with the public interest, and plans and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance.

(Harlow,1976) defines Public Relations as the distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics; involves the management of problems or defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interests; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilize change, serving an early warning system to help anticipate trend; and uses research and sound and ethical communication as its principal tools.

Public Relations we can also say that is a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and co-operation between an organization and its publics; involves the management of problems

or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinion; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilize change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and ethical communication techniques as its principal tools (Wilcox *et al.* 2003: 7)

Public Relations according to (Seitel, 2007:4) is a planned process to influence public opinion, through sound character and proper performance based on mutual satisfactory two-way communication.

Public Relations posits (Lattimore, 2007:4) is a leadership and management function that helps achieve organizational objectives, define philosophy, and facilitate organizational change. Public Relations practitioners communicate with all relevant internal and external publics to develop positive relationships in order to develop positive relationships and to create consistency between organizational goals and societal expectations.

Through Public Relations thus practitioners develop, execute, and evaluate organizational programs that promote the exchange of influence and understanding among organizational programs that promote the exchange of influence and understanding among an organization's constituent parts and publics.

Today the generally accepted definition of Public Relations still eludes practitioners; one of the most ambitious searches for a universal definition was commissioned in 1975 by the foundation of Public Relations Research and Education. Sixty-Five Public Relations



leaders participated in the study, which analysed 472 different definitions and offered the following 88-word sentence.

Public Relations is a distinctive management functions which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communications, understanding, acceptance, and cooperation between an organization and its publics, involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on an responsive to public opinion; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilize change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and sound and ethical communication techniques as its principal tools (Harlow1976).

### **2.1.2 PR within the National Police Service**

After looking at various definitions of public Relations which is a branch of communication studies now let's move closer home. Public relations within the National Police service. The role of Public relations in a public institution like the police can be looked at in a different way. In this study, I borrow a lot from (Prout, 2002) who comes up with some roles of the police that cut across all public institutions. The first one is to “formulate public relations policy” (p730). With this role, public relations is responsible for formulating and recommending public relations policies or giving its view point in making organizational decisions. In other words, it is responsible for developing the organization's posture.

The second role is that it is responsible for organization's publicity – It develops and issues announcements to the media, responds to inquiries from the press and places

promotional messages in the media. According to (Lattimore *et al*, 2007) Looking at public relations within the government brings us to other terms namely Public Affairs, a term used as a synonym for public relations. Government relations is also another term used in the same breath as public relations but in reference to PR (p.298).

Before we look at the Kenyan Case let's look at the overall situation in Africa: According to (Downie ,2013) the police are the most crucial institution of the state. Without security governments cannot build their economies, unfortunately, many Africans have negative perceptions of the police. In many countries the police are ineffective, unprofessional, corrupt and even predatory. Their primary interest is in protecting the government in power rather than the public. They are often sources of insecurity rather than providers of security- people to avoid, not to seek out, in the event of trouble. In short, the police are one of the most dysfunctional, underperforming institutions in Sub Saharan African and the Kenyan Police are no exception to this damning statistic.

Police corruption and unprofessionalism erode people's faith in the criminal justice systems, in the long term it can erode citizen's confidence in the state as whole and as such is the Kenyan case. To improve public perception, the Police have a daunting task ahead. According to the U.S Department of Justice report (June,2003) Police can improve public opinion by increasing their informal contacts with citizens, police can increase residents' approval of their job performance by participating in community meetings, increasing officers' visibility in neighbourhoods, and talking with citizens. Such informal contacts had a positive impact on job approval ratings even when other factors associated

with lower approval ratings— such as residents’ perceptions that their neighbourhoods are crime ridden, dangerous, and disorderly—were present.

Informal contacts with police also lessened the negative impact of residents’ formal contacts with police (such as being arrested or questioned by police). Residents with both types of contact reported higher approval ratings than residents with only formal contact. (Maxson, 2003).

In Kenya Community Policing is one of the most recent efforts by the police to extend government relations to the populace in an effort for better security. In Kenya, police reform is a critical issue not only for community safety and economic development, but because there is intense popular demand for reduced crime and better police performance. Since 2008, Saferworld, in collaboration with its local partner Peace Net, has developed and implemented a CBP Programme in Kenya. The Programme aims to improve relations between the police and communities, and to enable them to work together to find solutions to community safety concerns. This has been achieved through the creation of inter-agency partnerships, community involvement and collaboration with key stakeholders, including the Office of the President, the Kenya Police and the Administration Police. The CBP approach has been tested and developed in two pilot sites supported by Saferworld (Saferworld, 2015)

CBP is both a philosophy (a way of thinking) and an organizational strategy (a way of carrying out the philosophy), that allows the police and the community to work together in new ways to solve problems of crime, disorder and safety issues to improve the quality of life for everyone in that community. (Saferworld, 2015). Recognizing that

communities are best placed to identify their own security and safety needs and how they can be met, communities must be actively involved in planning and implementing locally-defined solutions to their problems. Community members also play a key role in monitoring progress and providing feedback.

Such initiatives like the community Based Policing (CBS) were part of efforts towards reforming a police service which as mentioned in earlier parts of this chapter had lost public confidence (Saferworld, 2015).

### **2.1.2.1 National Police Reforms in Context of Public Relations**

Looking back to the history of the police, first the mention of the word “police” according to (Matara, 2010) brings to most people’s minds unfriendly men in uniform, with guns in their hands and ready to attack. However, there has been a campaign in many democratic democracies to reorient policing goals so as to focus on serving the people in a professional and friendly manner: a shift from police force to police service.

(Sheptycki ,2002) in defining the term ‘Police’ stated that the term has been closely linked with the ancient word ‘policy’ a word infused with two senses: that of *curva promovendi salute* (concerned with promotion of safety of the public good) and *curvaadvent mala future* (concerned to avert future ills). (Hills,2000) argues that police have generally been associated to be estate agents. However, there are privately-owned policing companies, who can be hired by states, such as the case of South Africa, United States of America and the United Kingdom.

The establishment of the Kenya Police Force can be traced back in the period between 1887-1902 when one businessman Sir William McKinnon sought ways to protect his company, the Imperial British East African Company (IBEAC) which was situated along the Kenya Coastal Lines (KPS, Strategic Plan 2003-2007). This formed the foundation of the organization of the police, who were commonly referred to as '*Askaris*'. The expansion of the police force further inland the country may have contributed to the construction of the Kenya Uganda Railway. The Police force was later constituted by a Policy Ordinance in 1906. (KPS)

When Kenya gained independence from the British colony on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1963 drastic restructuring within the police was done, and the same marked with the replacement of the white top senior officers within local citizens (Kenya Police Service strategic plan, 2003-2007).

Fifty years later, Kenya is still struggling with reforming its National Police Service which is fettered in many challenges among them corruption within its ranks, extra-judicial killings, limited and/or lack of professionalism, poor housing, lack of modern crime fighting equipment among numerous other challenges. The constitution promulgated in 2010 made demands for structural and welfare reforms to be carried out in the National Police Service. (Kivoi and Mbae, 2013) It is worth noting that the reforms anticipated in the police service are now way behind schedule. The culture of impunity in the police service has contributed to too many cases of insecurity, gross violation of human rights, mistrust by citizens and derailment of key achievements in democratic governance. It is thus evident that an overhaul of Kenya's police service is critical.

### **2.1.2.2 Perceptions on Public Relations within the National Police Service (NPS)**

The perception of the public relations within the police then must be looked into in context, since the ongoing police reforms have already put the roadmap in place. Public Relations is a department which has not been effectively utilized in the public sector, particularly in the police force in Kenya. One can hardly find it clearly defined and stipulated in the statutes and organizational structures of the various public institutions. Its presumed nonexistence has resulted in lack of aggressiveness and low morale among staff members, negative publicity and bribery incidences in the forces, increased insecurity, negligence and public demonstrations as witnessed in Kenya during the 2007 post-election violence. (Muchilwa *et al*, 2014)

Public relations became a reality in Kenya in a process that was heralded by a campaign for the change of notion of the Police from 'Police force' to a "police Service" which is now re-elected in its vision to be, "a world-class police service, with people friendly, responsive and professional workforce (Kenya Police, Website). The major dilemma is that a campaign towards reform may be introduced, through training, human rights education or other models of policing such as community policing, but this may not take place if those in the Police Sector are not ready to welcome reform and resist the transition. In such instances, there may be a need to gradually overhaul the membership of the whole system, and replace, with properly trained officers who are ready to incorporate reforms.

In Kenya, there are approximately three hundred (300) stations of the police force, to enhance its performance and improve on its PR the police force has thus restructured its organization setup to include the position of the public relations officer also known as

police spokesman. In every police Division, there is a customer care desk which serves as an information desk, though, media relations are normally handled by the Officer Commanding the Police Division (OCPD).

However, it is not clear if the customer care desk applies other PR principles besides dissemination of information. One important function of PR is anticipating public opinion. For effective anticipation of public opinion, the PR department must deal with real and perceived public opinion as they establish and maintain relationships with their many internal and external publics (Black, 1972).

If public opinion is not anticipated, then there was no dynamic process of any interpersonal and media communication on issues, resulting in misunderstanding. Administrators need to understand the attitudes and values of their publics in order to achieve organizational goals, and counselling is extremely vital in this area. A PR practitioner acts as a counsellor to management and as a mediator helping to translate aims into reasonable and publicly acceptable policies and actions. (Drucker, 1954).

### **2.1.2.3 Technological Advances as a Channel to Better Police Public Relations**

Having looked at the perception of PR within the police service, technology is another aspect that is very intricately intertwined to the PR aspects of the police. A further influence on the development of police communications practice is that of technological advances in the media industries. The growth of digital technologies and the rise of the Internet have influenced how organizations communicate and how people gather, select and absorb information (Thompson 1995, Castells 2003, Allan 2006). The police and other public sector organizations now operate in a 24/7, multiplatform, intensely

competitive media context, described by (Ferrell and Greer ,2009, p. 5) as a ‘global media sphere with a live on-demand media cape’.

This shifting media landscape has consequences not only for those in the media’s focus, but also for the media industries themselves, particularly news organizations and the processes of news gathering. Technological change has enabled the growth of ‘news on demand’ through the Internet and the introduction of online editions of local and national newspapers. Over a relatively short time period, we have seen the emergence of open access blogging and citizen journalists contributing digital and mobile phone photos and camcorder footage, supplementing the work of professional journalists (Allan, 2006).

The same technological developments open up possibilities for organizations, including police forces, to bypass traditional media channels and to engage in direct communication.

This creates a context in which the media now face competition from not only ‘citizen’, but also ‘organizational’ journalism. The adaptation of the traditional media to new technologies has organizational and financial implications. In the case of newspapers, existing business models are being challenged and patterns of ownership have changed (Davies 2008, p. 65).

Consolidation of ownership, combined with the choice provided by digital technologies, has been accompanied by increased competition for audiences and advertising revenues, and declining circulations of purchased newspapers.



At the level of working practices, the process of convergence has implications not only for staff numbers and the training of journalists, but also for their reliance on outside news sources (see generally Davis 2003, Marr 2004, Allan 2006, Franklin 2006, and Davies 2008). Sketching out this background conveys that both police forces and media organizations currently operate within a challenging context. To compound this, there are overlapping issues of confidence and trust. In the criminal justice arena, despite an increase in police numbers and visible policing, many people believe crime is rising and personal safety is in decline (Casey 2008, Duffy et al. 2008).

Policymakers and senior police officers have placed the police service in the vanguard of closing such ‘perception gaps’ by championing reassurance policing strategies, embodied in the establishment of accessible and visible Neighbourhood Policing Teams in all areas of England and Wales from 1 April 2008. The importance of trust and confidence to the policing policy agenda was signalled in 2009 by the Home Office abandoning the existing wide range of police performance indicators in favour of setting police forces the single target of improving public confidence.

Given these pressures on police forces and media organizations, it is timely to re-examine the police-media relationship and the factors impacting upon the shaping of policing news. The academic literature on policing and the media forms a sub-area of the substantive body of work covering the relationship between crime and the media (Leishman and Mason 2003, Reiner 2007, 2008). Reiner (2008, p. 314) has argued that the media play an important role in projecting images of policing and tend to support ‘the assumption that the police are a functional prerequisite of social order’. However, the

media also provide a context in which police effectiveness and accountability are questioned. News is one arena in which this has traditionally taken place and the construction of policing news and relationships between crime reporters and police have been studied in a variety of jurisdictions.

Given the aforementioned strategies, this research was able to establish an information asymmetry in the way the police service manages its information to its publics. The most outstanding was that despite the organisational efforts of the service to share out updates to the public via its social media and magazines as well as mainstream media platforms. The Police Service's images still remain negatively perceived due to inundation of the media by negative images of violence and extra judicial moves by the offices.

## **2.2 Review of Relevant Theories of PR**

After looking at PR in context and a brief history, this section will seek to review the relevant theories of PR. Here am going to look at the theoretical background of this study and theories which will inform it. This study draws from three theories: Legitimacy Theory, Social Validation Theory and The New Public Management Theory/Framework. The three theories are important because they both have useful applications on management of public institutions of which the Police Service is one.

Theories simply provide an abstract understanding of the communication process (Miller, 2002). As an abstract understanding, they move beyond describing a single event by providing a means by which all such events can be understood.

### **2.2.1. Legitimacy Theory in Relation to PR**

The first theory that will guide this study is the Legitimacy theory, The Legitimacy theory suggests the existence of external “institutional” factors that influence the design (nature) of services and control systems (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983, 1991; Deegan, 2000, 2002).

In the police service context, such external pressure is exerted on the police by: unions and its workforce; government; community; regulators and legislators; media; and creditors and suppliers (Hoque, Arends & Alexander, 2004).

Legitimacy theory is explained through two isomorphic processes – coercive and mimetic processes, as suggested by DiMaggio and Powell (1983, 1991). These processes lead to the “cloning” or homogenization of organizational practices or operations.

Coercive isomorphism has been described as the formal or informal pressures of political influences to achieve legitimacy. Examples of coercive isomorphism include government mandates, the legal environment or even other dominant organizations such as the media. Mimetic isomorphism on the other hand, results from uncertainty. When organizations face uncertainty, they are likely to imitate or model themselves on other organizations in their industry that are perceived to be legitimate (Scott, 1995; Covalleski and Dirsmith, 1988; Meyer and Scott, 1992; Covalleski et al., 1993; Hoque and Alam, 1999; Hoque, Arends & Alexander, 2004).

There is the view that organizations adopt certain systems, policies and procedures to demonstrate conformity with institutionalized rules, thereby legitimizing it, to assist in

gaining society's continued support (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Meyer and Scott, 1992; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Scott, 1995; Hoque, Arends & Alexander, 2004).

### **2.2.2 New Public Management Model Theory**

The second theory was the Management Model theory, this theory entails managing and implementing democratic policing will require a strategic framework that incorporates democratic values. The new public management (NPM) philosophy has been described as a move towards a governance approach that places emphasis on transparency, performance management and accountability of public sector employees and managers. The philosophy has been identified as "one of the most striking international trends in public administration" that is capable of re-inventing government (Leishman *et al.*, 1996).

In the police context, NPM places an increased emphasis upon personal and organizational accountability and superior levels of performance in police organizations and offers a sharper focus on the achievement of outcomes rather than on outputs (Gillespie, 2006).

The provision of police services and the achievement of government outcomes is a balance between the demands of the community, and the organization retaining its flexibility so that it may respond to emerging incidents. Police need to be able to meet the required government outcomes within their allocated budget, remain accountable for their actions, and meet imposed effectiveness and efficiency standards. Correspondingly, the police have a responsibility to propose outcomes for which they alone are not capable of meeting.

They have the responsibility of correctly describing their relationship with the crime problem in the community, which should be done in consultation with the community (Reiner, 1986; Goldstein, 1990; Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, 1990; Alderson, 1998). The utilization of the NPM performance framework by Police allows them to encapsulate the identification of high-level objectives and relevant performance indicators. The adoption of this approach by the Police was a significant achievement when it was used in conjunction with a compilation of comprehensive performance indicators. The adoption of NPM by countries such as New Zealand, Scotland and the United Kingdom enabled their police agencies to measure the performance of their organizations to the performance of other police organizations and enabled comparisons to be made over time. However, this approach, as noted by Donnelly and Scott (2008), highlighted the difficulty in identifying the appropriate performance indicators when measuring the link between the organization's funding and their ability to achieve government directed social outcomes, such as improving personal safety, and the difficulty in monitoring these indicators.

### **2.2.3 The Social Validation Theory**

Interpersonal interactions in contemporary society reflect the increasing use of technology, particularly text-based, stand alone, computer mediated communication (CMC) such as email, texting, blogging, and instant messaging. Among these interactions, the aforementioned types of CMC have become a modality for social influence attempts. Thus, the effectiveness of social influence—the scientific study of attitude and behaviour change due to real or imagined pressure (Cialdini, 2009)—in computer-mediated environments has been of interest to research and influence

practitioners alike. One such area of interest pertains to the effectiveness of Cialdini's six principles of influence—authority, reciprocity, scarcity, social validation, likability, and commitment and consistency— online, particularly in text-based interactions in which the communicator is distant from the target of influence. (Guadagno and Cialdini, 2005) conducted a literature review and concluded that, thus far, some influence principles (e.g., commitment and consistency) are effective when using the aforementioned types of CMC, whereas some (e.g., authority) are not. Furthermore, they found that others (e.g., liking) are effective in some online contexts but not others. The present investigation builds on previous literature to examine the effectiveness of two different social influence principles: likability and social validation on compliance—behaviour change without pressure—and whether these compliance tactics extend to an online context such as the types of CMC mentioned earlier in the text. This theory like the legitimacy and New Public management models will inform the conversation on Kenya social media which is one of the fronts where the police force is highly castigated and viewed as not people friendly.

### **2.3 Review of Related Previous Research**

Scholars have agreed that for an organization, be it private or public institution, to succeed in the management of the PR with the public, they must most carefully monitor the relationship which they have with their stakeholders if they want to gain credibility and public trust. (Kazoleas and Teven, 2013) and (Mulenga, 2012). In agreement with the above scholars (Young, 2006) as cited in and (Teven, 2013) says for an Organization to earn credibility it must make sure it sustains the trust that the public has in it for a longer

period of time. This school of thought is very relevant to the Kenyan case considering the already lost confidence the Kenya populace suffers in regards to the police.

(Young, 2006) explained that trust has the potential to “evolve from an amalgam of simple exploratory emotions enabling the decisions to take low level risks to something including emotions of the relationship sustaining and enjoying types”as cited by (Kazoleas and Teven, 2013) p.28. What this means is that once trust between the organization and its audience is broken it will sour the relationship and will be hard for the organization to win it back.

In the statement of the problem, the study indicated that the major issue surrounding public relations in the National Police Service is that the public is generally very sceptical with the way public relations is managed in government ministries because many public relations officers are not qualified in public relations. While what they were saying could be true to some extent, there was no evidence to substantiate them. However, their statements had the potential to create resentment towards public relations officers. The study, therefore, has brought to light the perceptions of stakeholders who deal with government ministries from time to time. Such information on perceptions of stakeholders is expected to guide public relations practitioners on whether the people they deal with trust them or not.

This is very similar to other African states. Another scholar who has studied PR extensively is (Mindano, 2012), in his study states that if an organization has hurt its audience in the way it handles public relations work, it becomes very difficult to mend that relationship once the trust is broken. (Mindano, 2012) also discovered that many

public relations officers, though they gain credibility from the audience, use unethical means in their practice such as dishonesty and lies. Therefore, concluded that credibility which is based on dishonesty cannot sustain the organization because truth will eventually catch up with the organization.

All these above studies indeed belabour the critical importance of earning organizational credibility using acceptable public relations practices. This study however focused on the knowledge of PR within the National Police Service. The study further looks into how the police officers perceive public relations. Also, in terms of efficacy as well as practicability of the same.

Public relations studies in Kenya Police, though very little has been done since the profession is still searching for footing, now that is hinged on the ongoing reforms. While these studies talk about credibility in the private sector, they have not said much on public relations credibility in the public sector. This study, therefore, bridged the gap on how credible public relations is in the government sector.

In a nutshell, it is clear that all organizations need to strive for trust and credibility if they are to be successful.

While the concept of public relations efficacy is not new in public relations, previous studies in other countries have been done to establish the efficacy of public relations, for instance in Malawi (Henderson,2005) was also concerned with auditing public relations programs to see if they were effective or not. She suggested the steps to take in evaluating public relations programs. However, she did not include an evaluation of public relations personnel as a starting point in evaluating the effectiveness of public



relations programs. The area of study aimed to look at the knowledge of public relations practitioners, and not necessarily the programs which they implement as it has been the case in other studies.

While people are looking at public relations programs, it is important to also look at the efficacy and knowledge of the practitioners of these specific strategies.

Previous studies were useful to this current study (as they highlight what has been the focus of research in the past) but most studies leave out the main players in the practice of public relations, who are public relations officers within the Police service. The focus of the study sought to reach out to the officers assigned to man the public relations desk. Previous studies have looked at PR in context of government initiatives but none have looked into the strategies. Therefore, the study area of focus highlights lacking in previous studies.

One problem is that Kenya, like most African countries, suffers a lack of balance in police citizen ratios. Whereas the United Nations recommends a ratio of 1:450, Kenya has a ratio of 1:1150 (Kimani 2009) in sharp contrast to Europe average of 1:350 (although there are relatively speaking more police in Kenya than elsewhere in East Africa). Nevertheless, the high dependency ratio on police officers is a likely loophole for security being channelled to “the highest bidder” (Kimani) with low-policed areas devising their own home-grown security solutions. As Buur and Jense (2004: 144) argue “there is a direct causal relationship between the weakness of the state and [traditional] policing or vigilantism”.

Also, this research in West Pokot County seeks to dispel the view that “those involved in CP (the Regular Police) are unaware of what [their counterparts in Provincial Administration and AP] are doing” (Hesta and Gordon 2004: 4)

Another recent study of the Independent Police Oversight Authority (IPOA) \_ in 2014 did an analysis of the famous ‘Usalama watch ‘initiative that was establish to flush out Al-Shabaab adherent in Eastleigh found out that among other issues, IPOA monitoring teams received many allegations of police officers seeking bribes and the Authority is currently conducting investigations into complaints on extortion arising from this operation. That said however the numerous allegations of bribery during the operation require the NPS to also pay particular attention to recommendations made in this Report regarding corruption and conducts its own internal assessment and audit of the operation to ensure in future operations there is strict monitoring to arrest cases of corruption that may even imperil the security of the country.

Further, there were complaints of detainees being beaten during arrests and at Police Stations. The detainees and members of the public further complained of harassment, being roughed up, inappropriate touching and demand of receipts for household items such as electronics and other home appliances. Failure to produce receipts, to the members of the NPS, resulted in either confiscation of the household goods, illegal arrest or extortion of bribes by the officers. While the Authority was unable to independently verify some of these claims during the monitoring process, it is investigating several complaints on harassment and assault with a view of recommending both disciplinary

action and prosecution of individual Police Officers involved where the allegations are found to be factual.

#### **2.4 Rationale for the Study Based on the Literature Review**

Researchers have looked into the negative perception of not only the police but public service as whole. (Kapanga ,2011) looks at the prevailing negative public perception of the police service which necessitated the service to deliberately take steps towards enhancing their public image. This however is a bold step that requires a lot of tact and resilience as well as very deliberate, practical and well-orchestrated steps.

Since the police reforms have begun in earnest in Kenya, there is a need to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness, pitfall and challenges of this process in contrast with the practice of Public relation in the communication field. It is on this basis that the study deemed it appropriate to interrogate public relations within the police force and its ramification on the perception of the public towards the force.

Form the literature review the following issues emerge as presented on Table 1 below:

The below table is a summary of the key issues that were raised in this chapter.

#### **2.5 Summary**

In this chapter, a rigorous review was conducted of the theories that apply to this study which have given an invaluable philosophical underpinning of the study topic. The review other studies have indeed shown that PR is still a field that is yet to be well structured within the Police Service. In the next chapter, the study will present research methodology.

**Table 2.1: Summary of Key Issues Arising from the Literature Review**

| <b>Section Reviewed in the Chapter</b>                         | <b>Key Issues from the Review of Literature</b>  |
|--|--|
| Situation Public Relations in communication studies            | -PR is a branch of communication studies which is the management function which evaluates attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or an organization with the public interest, and plans and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance.  |
| PR within the Police service                                   | -efforts to mainstream PR in the police force is yet to have any credible outcomes since the relics of the negative historical bias to the Police force is still in the minds of many Kenyans.   |
| History of Kenya Police Reforms in context of Public Relations | -The police reforms started as a British outfit and has remained more or less a force devoid of professionalism until recently after the constitution of Kenya of Kenya has brought with it some changes most notably Community policing.  |
| Public Relations in the Current Police Service                 | - The National Police Service is undergoing radical changes but the fruits of which are still yet to be felt.  |
| Review of relevant theories of PR                              | -Three theories were reviewed namely the Legitimacy Theory, New Public Management Theory and Social Validation Theory.   |
| Review of related previous research                            | -The Kenya police has over the years created a bad image to the public through extra judicial killing, torture and impunity<br>-PR has been non-existent within the police who seem to have believed that they can only rule by using force<br>-the police force has institutionalised deliberate reforms in an effort to conform to the constitution. |
|  | - there still remain a lot to be done to reform the police force and the reforms will take time  |
| Lack of much research literature in the area                   | -there is barely any research on public relations efforts by the force say for mentions in parliament by the legislators that there are plans to institution public relations desks.<br>- public relations desks are now existent in police stations but the officers manning them barely seem to know their job.                                      |
| Gaps that the study contributed to                             | -I hope my study informed the police reform process.<br>-I hope it influenced legislation and policy as well as public relations strategies employed by the police.<br>-I hope it brought to the fore any glaring discrepancies in the practice of PR within the force.  |

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter will present the research design, explain the population and sample, highlight the generation techniques and explain the process of data analysis. Focus will be on how to ensure trustworthiness due ethical considerations throughout this study.

#### **3.1 Philosophical Paradigm**

This study adopted the relativists - interpretive-constructivist paradigm as defined by (Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011). These authors explain a Philosophical paradigm as a researcher's worldview, the way of looking at the world as either real- fixed or relative and dynamic. They argue that these views inform the approach, method, data generation and analysis of the study.

(Rubin and Rubin, 2005) equally define a philosophical paradigm as a way of looking at the world and interpreting what is studied and there and indication of how research ought to be conducted, by whom, and to what degree of involvement and interpretation.

The interpretivist-constructivist epistemological stance best suited my research since it allowed different ways to study the subject, multiple ways of arriving at the interpretation and construction knowledge depending on context, opinions available in multiple forces surrounding the researcher and participants. (Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011)

(Johnson, 2008) further states that the relativist ontology takes a subjective position that there is no single viewpoint of the world and therefore reality is internal to and dependent on an individual's perceptions and experiences. (Mason, 2002) concludes this by stating

that there is thus no objective reality but multiple realities socially and culturally constructed by individuals from within their own contextual interpretation.

### **3.2 Research Approach**

In this study, a qualitative approach was consistently used with the philosophical paradigm explained above. This approach is the most suitable for the study since according to (Potter 1996) observes that the strength of qualitative research is that it gives “an enormously useful variety of means for examining how humans make sense out of their own world” (p.12). A qualitative study is one that involves data collecting procedures that result primarily in open-ended, non-numerical data which is analysed primarily by non-statistical methods.

Accordingly,(Jwan and Ong’ondo,2011) on the other hand describe this approach as an approach to inquiry that emphasises a naturalistic search for relativity in meaning, multiplicity of interpretations, particularity, detail and flexibility in studying a phenomenon or aspects of it that that the researcher chooses to focus on. By using qualitative research, researchers are able to collect data and explain phenomena more deeply and more exhaustively (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003) Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations (FHI, 2005.)

### **3.3 Research Method**

Still in consistency with the above chosen paradigm and approach the case study was adopted as the research method. The case, according to Ong’ondo and Jwan, is best suited since it pays close attention to matters political as well as social which gave me

more robust findings. This was conducted within my selected police division, now Sub County in Nakuru County.

Various authors have defined a case study, (Yin, 2009) say it is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.

Stake also supports Yin's view by arguing that case study is defined by interest in individual cases, not only by methods of inquiry and a researcher can collect detailed information using a variety of data generation procedures, on their part Jwan and Ong'ondo particular emphasize that the case study concentrates on the experiential knowledge of the case with close attention to the influence of social, political and other contexts.

Finally, this case study is an instrumental case study. According to stake (2005, p. 445) an instrumental case study is of secondary interest as it plays a supporting role and facilitates our understanding of something else. The instrumental case study is therefore used if a particular case is examined to mainly provide insight into an issue or to draw a generalization. The case is of secondary interest and plays a supportive role and facilitates our understanding of something else (Ong'ondo & Jwan, 2011).

### **3.4 Sampling**

For the purpose of this study, purposive sampling in concurrence with (Silverman, 2005) which describes this sampling technique as demanding that we think critically about the parameters of the population we are studying and choose our sample carefully on this

basis. It also involves choosing a case because it illustrates some feature or process in which we are interested.

### **3.4.1 Target Population**

This study was conducted in one police district whose name will be kept in tandem with ethical considerations section (see section 3.7).

This convenient sampling of the case was necessary considering the difficulty of getting access for research in police stations where I do not have any contacts. I chose this police district because it is most accessible to me and I also have individuals who will be able to allow me access to information and to research.

This Qualitative research was guided by the philosophical assumptions of qualitative inquiry: This gave due consideration to the multiple “realities” experienced by the participants themselves—the “insider” perspectives. Natural environments are favoured for discovering how participants construct their own meaning of events or situations. The search for an objective reality, favoured by quantitative researchers, was abandoned to the assumption that people construct their own personalized worlds.

The other premise of the research clear bias for the qualitative methodological ontology is that indeed description of people’s lived experiences, events, or situations is often described as “thick” (Denzin, 1989), meaning attention is given to rich detail, meaningful social and historical contexts and experiences, and the significance of emotional content in an attempt to open up the word of whoever or whatever is being studied.



The goal of qualitative data analysis is to uncover emerging themes, patterns, concepts, insights, and understandings (Patton, 2002). Qualitative studies often use an analytic framework—a network of linked concepts and classifications—to understand an underlying process; that is, a sequence of events or constructs and how they relate. Here is one example (an abstract provided by [ Moorefield-Lang,2010]) of a study that uses common sources of data to answer (“explore”) a research question under the qualitative paradigm:

A case study as the term suggests is the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case (Lang, 2010) My study was a case of one police district whose name is kept anonymous in consistency with the ethical considerations (see section 3.9).

However, this stated there is general consensus about classification systems among researchers who use quantitative research designs—how they are distinguished and what to call them—there is however less consensus among qualitative researchers about designs. The same can be said for quantitative and qualitative worldviews.

Sharan Merriam, notes that “there is almost no consistency across writers in how [the philosophical] aspect of qualitative research is discussed” (2009, p. 8). She also adds that, in true qualitative fashion, each writer makes sense of the field in a personal, socially constructed way. The field of qualitative research thus in my interpretation is indeed fragmented with confusing language in regard to its orientation and methodological principles of data collection and analysis. Because there is little consensus about the classification of qualitative research, (Merriam ,2009) uses a term that guides the following general discussion: *basic qualitative research*.

Further to qualify choice of research design with the fact that most qualitative researchers would agree with (Snider's,2010) observation that numbers impress, but unfortunately, also conceal far more than they reveal. They would also agree with (Davis's ,2007) observation that "good qualitative research has equalled, if not exceeded, quantitative research in status, relevance, and methodological rigor" (p. 574).

Despite the difficulty in reaching the police force I had in my proposal indicated that I had an advantage because I have links and happen to know people there who were to assist me to get access. This convenient sampling of the case was necessary considering the difficulty of getting access for research in police stations where I do not have any contacts. I chose this police district because I can be able to access it and it is convenient for me in terms of proximity as well.

### **3.4.2 Study Site**

The study was conducted within an already identified police division (this definition has since changed after the new constitution was enacted).; However, since this is not a significant deviation it remained as such in terms of geography and amenity. A police division is an administrative unit under the province which is headed by an OCPD and comprises more than five police stations each headed by an OCS. The particular district chosen has a workforce of about 300 police officers in total however; this also involved a strategic interview with the police spokesperson positioned at the police headquarters.

In addition, to note before embarking on the research, the researcher paid a courtesy visit to the OCPD to seek permission and offer him a letter confirming that he is a student and his intention be a research. The letter had a copy of the permit obtained from higher

education. Data was generated mainly through interviews lasting between 30 minutes with each of the participants.

In conclusion I particularly targeted some of the senior officers who my preliminary investigations reveal to be five, I managed six. Then I interviewed all the police officers working for the PR department in the district – these were 10 in total. In addition, I sampled officers who are not directly working for the PR department, because PR inevitably involves all the members of an *organisation* to some degree.

### **3.4.3 Sample Size**

From the group identified above, the researcher targeted **10**, and was able to get interviews from different sections (the administrative Police, and regular Police). Furthermore, **10** representatives of key stakeholders within the proximity of the police district were also interviewed. These were key politicians, some media practitioners, and trade union leaders, civil society members and the clergy. Thus, my total participants or rather respondents were **40** despite the fact that I had proposed to interview 35. See Table 1a. Below which summarises the list of participants. This sample size was a purposive sample which assisted the researcher to come by targeted data in resonance with qualitative research.

**Table 3.1: List and Numbers of Participants in the Study**

| 1 | Stakeholder             | Position in Society |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 2 | Police in PR department | 11                  |
| 3 | Church leaders          | 5                   |
| 4 | Media practitioners     | 10                  |
| 5 | Trade Union leaders     | 2                   |
| 6 | Human rights activists  | 4                   |
| 7 | Civic leaders           | 3                   |
|   | <b>Total</b>            | <b>35</b>           |

As mentioned above the practicability was to sample all the participants purposively and conveniently. Purposive sampling is a sampling strategy that results in the selection of a particular case. Convenient sampling falls under non-probability sampling procedure where an important criterion of sample selections is the convenience of the researcher. (Dornyei, 2010). Accordingly, I sampled purposively because I targeted people who are perceived to have the information that is of interest to this study. I also say conveniently, because I targeted participants whom I knew to be accessible because I leveraged on the fact that I would have been introduced to them through my contacts within the service.

### **3.5. Data Generation Techniques**

I used in -depth unstructured interviews as well as observation as my data collection tools. An interview according to (Cohen et al 2000) is a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research relevant information, or

professional conversation that has a structure and a purpose 'to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena (Kvale 1995:5-6).

They are advantageous in this case because I was able to capture quality data that enriched my research. I carried out 35 interviews and endeavoured that each interview audio recorded to ensure accuracy, though relevant notes were also taken to supplement the audio-recorded data. (See the interview guide appended). Although the questions appear to be few (only five) they are intended to capture only the main themes around which further questions and probing will emerge.

I also used observations of the interactions between the police and the public at certain crucial points of contact. Observations according to (Yin, 2003) are important sources of additional evidence regarding the phenomenon under study and lead to deeper understanding. I observed how the police work at the Police stations front desk/ the PR desk. Of particular interest was also traffic police points where I was able to observe, albeit from a safe inconspicuous distance, the interaction of the officers with the drivers on the road owing to the sensitive nature of this aspect of the study.

However, as a critical aspect of ethicality I intently observed with full knowledge of the officers especially where I had to take observation notes and photos. From my initial contact with the leaders of the Police District in question, I was assured of access to the station prior to my research and this was indeed the case when I went to collect data, however as will discuss further in chapter 4 and 5 this was not a walk in the park. I was

able to take direct observation notes where I was allowed, however in many instances, I could sense the discomfort of the officer, and this too is discussed in the next chapter.

Filling of the open-ended questionnaire/ Semi-structured was done in the presence of the researcher or in isolated cases with my research assistants to give clarification on questions or items that might not be clear. I was able to administer 35 questionnaires

### **3.6. Pilot Study**

An initial inquiry on the police post was conducted where I intended to study. Interviewed only three police officers. As a matter of protocol met with the officer in charge of the station whom I shared my intention in black and white. He allowed me to conduct one interview with the officer manning the PR Desk. This activity was very important since I was able to do a dry run and to test my research question as well as gather the initial sample data which I used to prepare for the actual administration of the questionnaires. I also made important observations most importantly the body language of the officers once they realized that a researcher was around.

This information was also meant to test and polish the data generation techniques and identify the potential challenges during the main study and how to possibly deal with them at this earlier stage.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

The data in my research was mainly analysed through a systematic process of transcribing, collating, editing, coding and reporting the data in a manner that makes it sensible and accessible for purposes of interpretation and discussion (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011), they further make an interesting observation that pictures, posters, mines,

gestures are considered data in qualitative research and I intend to transcribe descriptions of such nonverbal forms of data into words. However, most of this was computer assisted using the programme MAXQDA which facilitated coding, organization, and rapid retrieval of data from the field as well Microsoft Excel.

The report also shows how different or similarly the findings are compared to the researcher's expectations, which have been derived from experience or literature review. The messages given by the interviews are reported verbatim. Then I did some polishing or rather winnowing of the data which involved removal of repetitions and needless passes and connectors, I then re-familiarised myself with the data in its new form.

Thematic analysis strategy of data analysis was used that Jwan and Ong'ondo argue appears to be the most recommended and most widely used. Hammersley et al, define thematic analysis as methods for identifying, analysis and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes the data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently it goes further than interpreting various aspects of research topics.

The data treatment followed the seven steps of qualitative data analysis:

1. Transcribing the data- this involved turning of data from verbal to written. This I anticipated to be a tedious process whereby all the data was put into papers in the verbatim. Detail was however put to storing of the data in specific Microsoft word pages for easy retrieval.
2. Re-familiarization with the data (pre-coding)- this stage involved deliberate time taken to re-familiarise myself with the data and also clean the data by removing a lot

of unnecessary repetition, connectors as well as phrases that don't make sense so that the data is readable in continuous prose and logical.

3. First Phase Coding- this stage involved highlighting extracts of the transcribed data and labelling these in a way that they can be easily transcribed, retrieved separated or grouped each eliciting its own code. (Donyei,2009) Here I also employed the services of software's like the eNVvivo8 software as well as Microsoft Excel and MAQDATA. I was however guided by both the data and the research question to start the initial clustering of data as of the initial data into codes.
4. Second phase Coding- (axial Coding)- here I looked at the codes generated at the first coding stage, then I merged, grouped the data that I had coded whilst promoting and downgraded some codes. Primarily in this state I removed redundancies and overlaps (Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011.).
5. Third phase Coding- at this stage was grouped different categories and codes into themes and see if they are in tandem with the research questions and main scope of the study.
6. Producing a report – at this stage I turned the coding from verbatim data to a narration, I produced a first draft report and refined it into a second draft report more importantly I removed parts of the data that I consider repetitive and superfluous.

For the software assisted part, according to (Yin ,2009) most online qualitative data analysis software programs are well designed for self-instruction, are menu driven, and support common sources of qualitative data (text, image, audio, video). They facilitate



transcription and support different strategies for annotating, sorting, classifying, and generating custom reports (models, charts, etc.). Of course, software cannot think for you, but these programs ease common tasks in qualitative analysis, such as searching for trends and relationships and building and testing theories.

According to (Patton, 2002) qualitative analysis transforms data into findings. No formula exists for that transformation. Guidance, yes but no recipe according to this writer. He further adds that direction can and will be offered but the final destination remains unique for each inquirer, known only when-and if-arrived at (p.432)

### **3.8 Trustworthiness of the Study**

Trustworthiness entails ensuring that the research process is truthful, careful, rigorous enough to qualify to make the claims that it does” Jwan and Ong’ondo (2011, citing Bassegy 1999, p.129). Trustworthiness can be portrayed in terms of credibility, transferability dependability and conformability. In my work, I took deliberate effort to ensure trustworthiness in the following ways:

#### **Credibility**

According to Jwan and Ong’ondo (2011), researchers need to address the questions of credibility by reviewing the key concepts in the study, exercising triangulation, providing a chain of evidence and members checking! I did in my research use triangulation, I used different research methods, data generation techniques as well as data sources as explained at the beginning of this chapter. I also used different sources of data such as police officers, lawyers and other professionals as well as representatives of the public. I also used what Shenton (2004) calls iterative questioning. This is to say I returned to

matters previously raised by my respondents by rephrasing the question in order to see if there are deliberate lies or misleading. I -as mentioned earlier- did also conduct a pilot study which has been a traditionally associated practice with qualitative research, this assisted me gain some initial experience and pre-empt any challenges that may come up in the process of the main research. This was also an opportunity to test my research question as well as hone my interviewing skills.

**Transferability.**

Since this refers to the extent to which the findings of a study of aspects of it could be relevant to or applicable to other contexts in which the study was not done or other people who are not actually involved in the study but are engaged in issues that were studies. (Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011). Since some scholars believe this aspect to be suspect since human behaviour is indeed unique from one group to another (Gilham, 2000, p.6). I however overcame this since I employed naturalistic generalization since it allows me to generalize theories and not frequencies.

**Dependability:**

This according to (Yin 2003, p. 34) dependability is the ability to demonstrate that the operations of the study-such as the data collection procedures- can be repeated with the same results. I achieved this by providing sufficient details and clarity of the research entire process (thick description) in a way that would make it feasible for any reader to visualize and appreciate my research and for any researcher to replicate the study.

**Conformability:**

This refers to the extent to which the findings of my study were free both internal and external either of the researcher (s), participants or institution(s) (where applicable). I am aware that the objectivity of my findings can lead to my findings adoption to influence policy direction even for the government. Since like other researchers I am prone to my own biases and pre-set minds especially on an institution like the Kenya police. I overcame this by acknowledging the fact that I may already have a pre-set mind and would not allow this to contaminate my research findings. I opted to also carry out a thick description of the process which made me pay attention to the fine grain of what I am observing and reflecting on it as well (Gilham, 2000).

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

Ethics define what is, or what is not legitimate to do, or what moral research procedure involves. Many ethical issues involve a balance between two values: the pursuit of scientific knowledge and the rights of those being studied or of others in the society

(Neuman, 2000). In the words of Ong'ondo and Jwan while quoting (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007) the goal of research being the production of knowledge it should not be pursued at all costs!

That said, I kept a couple of considerations in my mind while dealing with the participants. Ensured specific ethical concerns like not referring to my respondents/participants as subjects. Since some researchers view this as derogatory to the participants who offer me the information.

I also ensured I adhere to the principle of informed consent, by this I ensured that the individuals choose whether to participate in an investigation after being aware of the facts that would likely influence their decision (Cohen et al, 2007, p. 52). I also ensured that should the interviews be audio-recorded the participants would be reminded that the discussion would be audio-recorded and that those who do not want to be audio-recorded were free to withdraw, and indeed a lot of police refused to be audio-recorded. However, since I am interviewing the police this, I had anticipated it to be an uphill task for me rather than for them.

I assured the respondents who sought anonymity, of confidentiality and anonymity; this is defined as the confidential and anonymous treatment of participants data, this is important to reduce the respondents fears and encourage them to take part in my research (Walford,2008b) this as I keep in mind that it is absurd to offer confidentiality to respondent about the totality of the information that they give to researchers.

I also ensured and still uphold privacy; this is more than confidentiality (Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011) and means the person has the right not to take part in the research, not to answer questions and not to be interviewed. This was to go hand in hand with protection from harm, here I ensured that at all times I do not deceive participants nor deceive them about any aspects of the study that would cause them physical harm or excessive emotional discomfort.

I still firmly stand that I do and still continue to ensure that I do not fall to one of the most serious ethical breaches a researcher can commit which is to falsify data. This is since a

researcher is only sound and reliable to the degree that the researcher is honest. This goes hand in hand with falsifying results which is rare but indeed exists.

I do not plagiarize, which is a big temptation in this time of internet technology where I download information and present it as my personal views. Finally, I did not pay any respondent nor given them do any form of inducement prior to seeking their consent, nor any gifts.

My research is accessible to my respondents and due consideration should also be given to any vulnerable groups which are clearly stipulated in the constitution of Kenya, 2010.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

This chapter has highlighted the intended design, populations and sampling as well as the data analysis procedures, trustworthiness and finally the ethical considerations in the study.

**Table 3.2.: Summary of the Key Issues Raised in the Methodology**

| SECTION             | ISSUE  |
|---------------------|--|
| Research Design     | The study was qualitative with a case study that utilised a purposive sample of an anonymous police division of 35 respondent in total         |
| Sampling Techniques | The sample was interviewed via open ended questionnaires.  |
| Preliminary enquiry | I visited the initial 5 police officers to establish if there were any challenges and established rapport as part of the initial fact finding. |

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Data analysis                | Data was analysed via both the 7 steps of data analysis and also via the MAXQDATA software and excel.           |
| Trustworthiness of the Study | I ensured my data is trustworthy and worse still considering my sample population                               |
| Ethical Considerations       | I gave due consideration informed by the sensitivity of my respondents ensured ethical standards are adhered to |

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter aimed at presenting the findings from the interviews that were carried out in the field. As stated earlier, 35 respondents were earmarked to be interviewed, I ended up with an extra of five making my total respondents to 40, however, after analysis only 35 respondents data fit the criterion for presentation, on that basis you will see my respondents going back to 35. The sample increase of the extra participants was a great addendum to my research as it gave my findings more grounding, however the extra numbers did not negatively impact my research findings but rather gave more clarity to it. This study was conducted in one police district whose name will remain withheld due to ethical considerations of this research as stated in earlier chapters and more so my research methodology chapter which is chapter three. The target population was sifted and the following findings reached.

#### **4.1 Public Relations (PR) Strategies Used by the Police Service in Kenya**

As a matter of cause, the cluster of questions under this subheading raised some remarkable findings. 10 police officers were targeted from different sections of the

National Police Service; they are mainly the Kenya Police Service, Administrative Police Service and The Directorate Criminal Investigation.

However, I was able to establish out that there exist further formations of the police service; these included the traffic police, front desk, CID, GSU, Anti-Stock theft.

The Kenya police has various formations both within the regular and administrative police that serve various specialized functions. These functions are important and they complement other officers to ensure effectiveness of operations as well as to respond to issues as and when they arise to ensure law and order is not only restored but kept and the protection of lives and property is ensured.

Furthermore, interviews were carried out for 10 key stakeholders who in a way or the other had interaction with the police and policing sector as a whole but also from the said Police District. These people included politicians, media practitioners, and trade union leaders, civic and church leaders. In total 35 participants were interviewed in order to come up with these findings

The responses from the above participants were recorded and analysed. The findings were then further analysed and presented using the tools mentioned in chapter 3. It is important to point out that the response rate was good. The non-response rate was a meagre 5%. This was mainly because of the good rapport existing between the I-researcher- and the participants. The cooperation offered to the researcher was so immense that made the research to be more effective and worthwhile. Moreover, the respondents found it easy to respond because the questions are addressing matters that were within their sphere of knowledge.

#### **4.2 Strategies Intended to Enhance PR in Police Service**

Preliminarily, it was rather fascinating to note a certain phenomenon within the police population. The police service is thoroughly representative in terms of educational and cultural background of all the colours and shades of the hoi polloi that constitute the citizens of the Republic of Kenya. A close look at my data revealed that the service is made up of officers with various levels of education. These levels are as follows: those with secondary education-34.3%, college education- 45.7% and those who reached university accounted for 20% of the total sample size. This therefore means that various police officers attained different education levels and thus this should ideally, in a way or another, impact on their ability to understand or interact with Public Relations, an imperative of their day-to-day work. An interaction with these officers of the law doesn't explicitly reveal the education level of any of them at face value.

What was even more remarkable was even the diverse cultural backgrounds from which the respondents were drawn and as such, their world view on policing. The fact that the educational levels of an officer is not cognizable on face value, it was my finding that each police officer, in a way or another, leverages on their own personality and upbringing while interacting with the public. The police service was however until recently not keen on the educational background of recruits when recruiting and assigning them duties more so those that pertain to Public Relations and community policing. However, most respondents alluded to their training at the police training college either in Kiganjo Nyeri county or either school as one of the bases upon which they were habituated to interact with the public as officers of the law. Moreover, the



police would perfectly employ and even implement PR policies in their respective capacities.

While undergoing our training in Kiganjo before formally joining the police, we were once taught about Public relations, I even remember the instructor who was a Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP). I just however remember her mentioning that it is one of those aspects that an officer would want to build on, however she was fast to note that there is a directorate in charge of the same.

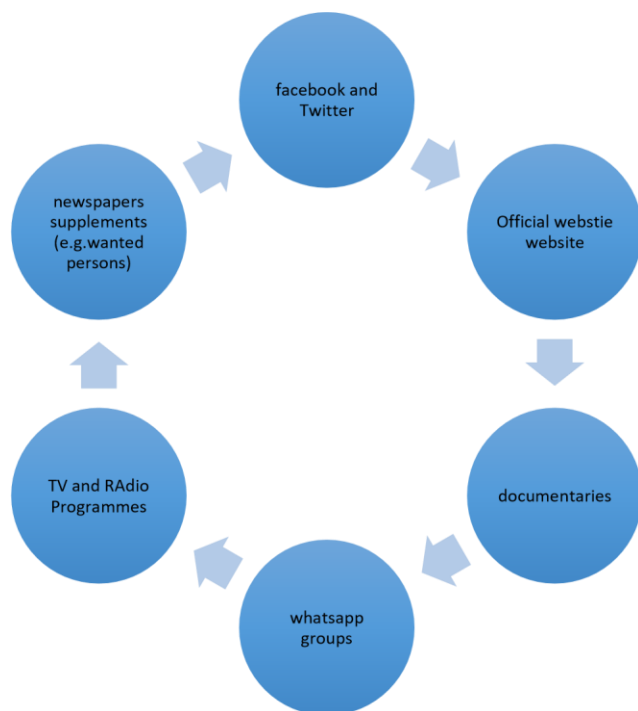
#### **4.2.1 Effective Communication as a Strategy**

I was able to find out that -given the advancement in technology and avenues of communication- the National Police Service has various avenues through which they communicate to the public. This communication is on security matters, on disaster management, on traffic updates, on electoral preparedness, on national holidays and other functions that they may be called upon by the mother ministry of interior. The police normally get an allocation from treasury which they use to communicate to the public through newspaper supplements, where they normally post photos of wanted people mostly that are connected to terrorism of high-profile suspect

The police now have modern communication equipment that makes the transmission of information both internally and externally faster and more efficient. The younger officers have also embraced technology as an avenue for sharing information especially on social media like twitter and Facebook which are active and interactive.

The National Police Service also have public information boards within each police station, they also develop various Information Education and Communication materials

which include developing posters for circulation on crime reporting especially matter that pertain to Gender Based Violence (GBV) as well as other important updates on crime which are disseminated via various avenues including the media. The Police also develop and commission documentaries on their mandate which they disseminated on Radio and television. The Police also through the media department liaise with various media stations to report crime related issues, they also liaise very closely with the office of the local chiefs, who during their barazas to hold security meetings especially on matter of community policing and finally using ubiquitous like the National Police Service website, Twitter handle, Facebook page and even on some cases WhatsApp pages. (See appendix diagram below)



**Figure 1: Kenya Police Various Communication Channels to enhance PR**

On how a police officer deals with an issue when it is reported depended on the nature of the issue that has been reported. More than 90% of respondents said it was discretionary

upon the officer to whom the matter has been reported to, to decide how to handle it on the basis of its merit. One theme that cut across all respondents, however, was the fact that according to the seriousness of the issue, it is then put down in the occurrence book (OB) and the complainant issued with an OB number for follow up and for filing purpose. In the case of the report desk especially if it is a theft, loss of property, of request for permit. However, if it is an issue that requires verbal direction for instance a traffic inquiry then the said officer will then direct the member of the public to the relevant office or institution.

The Public relations desk that the National Police Service has stationed at their offices was moved from the front report desk to separate desk outside the mains police building as an easier access to the members of the public who may be too intimidated to come into a police station premise. This I saw physically but was not allowed to take a photo.

#### **4.2.2 The Community Policing Programme as a Strategy**

Kenya has a comprehensive community policing program that mainly leverages on Public Relations to enhance police and public relations through shared information. This initiative was started for the exact reason that this paper seeks to probe which is to improve relationships as well reach out to its publics and share the tentacles of policing that cannot work sufficiently if the National Police Service (NPS) officers only wield them. These activities include rehabilitation of sheds for motorbikes, Peace Meetings now labelled county Peace Corps committees, religious rallies, participation in charitable events like walks, training the community on first aid, lifesaving skills and counter terrorism. Community policing is one of those initiatives that the police started to ensure that the public is co-opted in the management of their own security as mutual partners in

ensuring their own security. You know the police are understaffed and cannot take care of everyone in their houses or estates unless you are a government VIP or foreign diplomat.

The general perception among police officers is that the relationship with the public is improving but is doing so at a snail's pace due to a myriad of issues. However, to contextualize this study I visited the police headquarters to hear from the most consequential decision maker as a matter of cause and information. There are public relations desks (PR) in each police station, which are manned by a friendly officer who has been briefed and trained on how to interact with the public. However, some formations of the police service like the General Service Unit did not have Public Relations desks while the Administration Police were the most proactive on community policing and outreach activities and a fully manned front desk.

To me, this was then an admission that there still exists a negative perception of the police by most citizens. The response of the police to the affirmative was 70% of my respondents. The dissenting 30 % attributed this to efforts by the police service to reach out to the public, better education, (reviewed syllabus/curriculum) PR Desk as well as gender approach in dealing with some cases of the vulnerable members of the public like GBV cases and those of minors. The police district that is the case study for this research has a public relations desk, which is labelled a public information desk with a rotational officer assigned to it.

### **4.3 Issues that Determine the Knowledge of PR and its Use by Police Officers**

A myriad of issues came out from the respondent as being the determinant of understanding of Public relations in the Police Service.

#### **4.3.1 Improved Interaction with the Media**

Officers in charge of the PR program in various stations indicated that the department has greatly boosted the image of the police to the public and indeed the world. In view of this, the media has severally in the past been a channel through which the police can piggy ride on as an outreach to the public on issues like peace building, community policing and even various community support programs like drug prevention and prevention of Gender Based Violence (GBV).

The deliberate decision to mainstream PR into the day-to-day operations of the service under the ambit of the Inspector General and represented principally by the official Police Spokesperson, good rapport between the media and the police exists. In fact, this department is currently dealing with the interaction between the media and the police save for the IG. The officer's reported that initially, the mere presence of the media officer within a police station was always perceived as posing a great risk to them. This shows mutual lack of trust in utmost good faith when each party is dispelling their day-to-day activities in my observation.

This has been the situation many a times since most media stories that pertained the police were awash with negative depictions and connotations with stories of not only police brutality, but also corruption and unabated use of force against the public. As a

matter of fact, the media only showed up to snoop on the police and to come up with undercover exposes of miscalculations and impunity on the part of the police.

One of the major challenges that pervaded all facets of this research as far as interaction with the police was concerned. There was constant suspicion towards the researcher, I constantly felt that I was walking on eggshells while interacting with the police save for a few instances where I was personally known to the officer. I came by murmurs and insinuations that I was either an undercover journalist or a representative of a constitutional watchdog body like the IPOA. I had to build trust upon which information was then freely collected. Any time that the media came in contact with the police, it was a sign of danger. Trouble was always brewing. One of the officers reported,

The presence of cameras meant trouble. It meant someone was being hunted down. We literally flew away from them. Nobody wanted to address them. We were always sure that they were witch hunting one of us. Only our boss (OCS) would gather the courage and talk to them. They were viewed as bad people,” the officer reported.

The introduction of the PR program spearheaded with the directorate of public communications gave the police service a clear source of security in dealing with the media. They now know how to address them and what to tell them. In fact, officers reported on the training, which has enabled them to effectively hand in the information that might be of interest to the media. The officer noted:

Initially the media was a threat to us. These days we have been trained to handle them well. We answer all their questions without hesitation until they have no more questions to ask.

In view of the above, it is evident that the PR program has boosted the rapport between the media practitioners and the police service.

#### **4.3.2 Training of Police Officers on the PR**

This was an issue that divided my respondents right in the middle, it actually elicited more information than I had anticipated as a matter of course! I thought that this is very important to note. My intention with this question was to get a sense of how the police conduct their training and if it is a deliberate part of their curriculum in Police training college. More than 50% of my respondents could not succinctly tease-out PR as a matter of their training; however, a good number of my respondents, 4 actually had a recollection of a 'unit' during their training that mentioned PR. I gleaned more information from the Police spokesperson who gave me a lot of direction and school. The stakeholders also gave their input but as it were, the public was barely aware of the curriculum used to inform the police on PR thus the information gathered did not meet the criteria for coding to create a meaningful addition to my thesis on Research Question 2 (two).

#### **4.3.3. Job Alertness and Promptness**

There is a sense of direction in the station and in the service as a whole. At least everyone knows what they are meant to do. Job promptness means that an officer will know what to do and do it in time. The PR department plays an important role of linking the station

to the overall command. The department seamlessly communicates the information from the top to the officers on the ground. One of the respondents testified to this fact by saying that;

In the past, we used to get news concerning us from the television or even along the road. You'll just hear that some of you will be demoted or rather promoted through the radio. There was no official communication for these things. When this department was brought, it immediately linked us to the top offices that were basically out of reach to the junior officers. News about our affairs is easily communicated through the department, we now have bulletins, notice boards both for the police and public, we even now have Facebook account, twitter handle, film department and many documentaries produced by the police exclusively and even jointly with the media to educate the public and improve the image of the service. We really feel good that the government remembered us.

Actually, the police spokesperson attested to the fact that the PR department is able to link the people at the grassroots with the current affairs in the country. This therefore means that the department has played an effective role in defining the job relevance of the various police officers. It has come in handy to aid in the jobs preparedness, alertness of the police service and even preparedness as well as the connection with the public with mutual understanding and less misconceptions on both sides based on credible information rather than rumours and myths coupled with unfounded stereotypes. Now the archetypical police man is more tech savvy, streetwise and indeed due to PR more effective in dispelling his mandate of maintaining law and order whilst protecting life, public and private property.



#### **4.3.4 Enhanced Communication with the Public**

As far as good communication is concerned, this by far the most important role that the PR has played in the police service as a result of deliberate efforts for capacity building of the officers to better communicate the public is concerned. It has opened up the police doors to the public. The PR has made the police service to be friendlier and more approachable to the public. A number of police respondents pinpointed this as the best achievement that the PR has brought to the service. The first respondent said the following about PR's role in the station:

Since the police got PR desks, we have seen more people pouring into the station. They know that there is someone friendly that will receive them and offer information as opposed to the past where they would meet stern intimidating officers. For gender related issues the Sexual Offenses Act of 2006 also established Gender desks on every police station alongside the PR Desk for only gender related reporting. These days you can find people coming to the They just come and come to the station for anything.

Yet another respondent (civilian) expressed optimism since the PR desks were introduced to police stations. She said:

I'm telling you there's optimism in the station these days. We do not stay on our own. People can now afford to pay us visits without worrying about what they will say. Even a courtesy call to the station makes us happy. It shows us that people love us.

She could not hide her joy of the station being opened for the public to come in any time they wish to. She jokingly added,

In fact, some of us have the hope of being married to other people other than police officers since they now visit us occasionally to admire our beauty. Nice people come to see us these days.

Therefore, it is true to say that the department has effectively eradicated the fear of the police from the public. The respondents are happy to report that members of the public are now visiting them. They are excited that the PR desk welcomed more people to come and see them, which is a motivating factor. It motivates them to see the public as friendly.

#### **4.4. Challenges the Police Encounter while Implementing PR Strategies**

This question sought to look into the challenges and bottlenecks the police service face in relations to the dispelling the PR mandate as well the interaction with the public.

##### **4.4.1. Funding of the PR department**

The office of the police spokesperson dwelt a lot on the issue of funding -in most of their responses -as the main challenge to implementation of effective PR. He decried the situation where the ministry of interior has allocated a thin budget to enhance police public perception as well as PR related capacity building training. One of the respondents said that, being a graduate with a background in media, he is better placed to contribute to the development and implementation of the Kenya Police Service communication strategy however; this component is not given as much attention as it should.

You see...most of us police have got very good ideas for promoting better relationships with the public because at the end of the day, we also have families and loved ones who are not police and we want the best for them. However, every time the police give our budgetary needs through our Cabinet Secretary, (CS), Parliament, Treasury and the now new Commission for Revenue Allocation (CRA) scale it down massively. We are now left to focus more on issues like the armoury, police uniforms and tend to neglect community relations...I think a lot of people don't appreciate that PR is very crucial.

The issue of funding was equally cited for poor outdoor campaigns by the police service. My observation however was able to see some information at the police notice boards which were mostly developed by Non-Governmental organizations. To avert the funding handicap, the police spokesman informed me that the police go for non – monetary activities which brought the second challenge which is bureaucracy. However, the police have been able to thrive by the use of online channels of dissemination of information for instance the NPS website is well done and has a section where one can download news.

“The NPS appreciate development partner like the USAID who have partners with the police to disseminate information to the public who still remain ignorant about the role of police, our role is not only maintaining law and order we are governed by four standing order that have now been made robust to included proper presentation of the police to the public.

Financial challenges stand out as being a major setback to the operations of the PR department. The department needs to be well equipped with sufficient numbers of human resources and other resources to well serve the intended purpose. The department is at the mercy of the senior police officer’ directives. One of the trade unionists gave a reason why he thinks this is so. He said:

We have fought for years for the department to be established. Finally, our wish was given but then they deprive it of any resources. It’s just the same as giving birth to a baby and then denying it food. It’s practically impossible for it to grow. That is the problem we have with most government initiatives that lack strong policy backing.

The department was established and then seemingly was expected to take off and influence massive change in perception and improvement of relations with the public. However, this is yet to take off in earnest and will take time and greater efforts form

multi-stakeholders. To make matters worse, the little cash that is given to them is used as bait. Whoever gives them the cash expects that the department maintains loyalty to it. A PR member that I interviewed made the same confession:

We are like parasites. Always depending on the well wish of our superiors to survive. We can't even make a firm stand on our own. We can't even stand out as important as we should. We are always forced to lie on the side of those who give us the little held we need, otherwise our department could starve to death. This is very sad.

In comparison of the views collected above, the PR department of the police service can be an effective desk for operation and effectiveness of the police service. Both the police and the stakeholders' sentiments come to an agreement that the effectiveness of the department heavily depends on the independence that is granted to them. In case the department is arm twisted, its integrity is in doubt. Therefore, the department should be well funded and supported for it to be effective in its operations. It is evident that if the department is propped up with resourcing and capacity, then it stands a high chance of becoming one of the most effective departments within the police force.

#### **4.4.2 Community Policing as a Challenge**

Community Policing is an approach to policing that recognizes the independence and shared responsibility of the Police and the Community in ensuring a safe and secure environment for all citizens. It aims at establishing an active and equal partnership between the Police and the public through which crime and community safety issues can jointly be discussed and solutions determined and implemented. This is an initiative that the Police Service has been actively conducting. I was able to observe police drop boxes otherwise known as suggestion boxes for the community to share information confidentially and anonymously as well as to interact with members of the 'nyumba kumi

‘initiative. This is a cluster of 10 houses approach whereby the community gets involved in matters that pertain to their security. ‘The challenge to this approach as the intake by the populations especially because it seemed like a knee jerk reaction to the rampant acts of terrorism that inundated the county from neighbouring Somalia said one of the police officers.

The fact that the police -public relationships remain frosty has led to slow intake of the initiative in some areas of the police district. The other challenge was lack of enough police personnel to follow up issues raised by the community swiftly to inspire confidence and sustainability. The final challenge, which specifically came from the police spokesperson, was the lack of concomitance with the mainstream media, this is what he said:

The media many a times is in a hurry to villainize the police force so much so that if there is a positive story coming from the police it is many times presented as rather suspicious, or worthy of more investigation. The media has a very good opportunity to partner with the police to inform the public that it is their right and prerogative to take full charge of their security and well-being, the police alone cannot know what every Kenyan is doing at what time.

#### **4.4.3 Unrealistic expectations**

Apart from the challenges highlighted above, there are numerous other challenges that are paused to the operation of the PR department. Apart from financial constraints and interference by name and unnamed external forces, other challenges include lack of autonomy and unrealistic expectations. Two respondents brought it out clearly during my interviews. The first one said:

Working at this desk is very hard. You are always a robot. It is very hard to make an independent decision. You always have to rely on your seniors especially because on matters of dealing with the public such information could go far and boomerang back! You sing his tune, otherwise the job is gone. Sometimes you

have to call him even when he is in a meeting several kilometres away, just to get his go ahead.

The same officer continued lamenting and confided in me saying:

And then they expect that you have to be perfect. You know I'm the face of the whole station. So, everyone looks up to me but then the bigger hand of the boss is always pushing me to do this or that. It's not fair at all.

It is therefore evident that whoever sits on the PR desk is not at all sitting on a rosy bed.

A different officer in a different station also lamented in a similar manner. The officer said: There is this day that I was to talk to the media. But then the story that I was to comment on directly linked my boss at the station. If it were you, would you dare talk about your boss and lose the job? Only a fool can do that. Especially in these days when finding a job is very hard.

A closer observation of the manner in which PR officers work reveals that they are both beneficial to the police service's existence but at the same time they haven't fulfilled the maximum potential that they should bear. If at all the loopholes above can be sealed, then the police PR desk will be the best place to make a stopover for the police. The department will indeed come in handy to uphold the cohesiveness and integrity of the police service.

#### **4.4.4. Lack of Involvement of Officers in Decision-Making**

There are times when decisions are only made for the Public Relations Officer without necessarily enquiring for their input as such. In this context, the advice and input of the people on the ground is not considered at all. The officers are given the final laws to implement, some of which are irrelevant for the target population. At one of the stations I

visited, a PR officer complained that some of what they are told to do is completely not in touch with the reality on the ground. Here are her words:

Imagine we are normally forced to do some things which don't make sense at all. You are just told that they are orders from above and must be obeyed. So, you wonder why they didn't even ask for our advice when deciding some of these things!

The officer was completely dismayed at the manner in which policies are made from a centralized point and then transmitted downwards for them-junior officers- to implement. She continued lamenting and said,

Recently I was told to counsel all the youths that come to the station and warn them about substance abuse, especially alcohol consumption. Much as I am a parent, these young men found in this region are brought with allegations of vandalism and gang incidents. In my view, educating them against gangster and theft would work. These youths would also highly benefit if they would be made aware of the importance of hard work. Besides, the police should also collaborate with rehabilitation centres and help them to gain one or two skills to find something to do. But these are laws that come from above. We must obey them and do as they say. You see? That is where we start failing terribly. We are addressing the wrong problems.

#### **4.5 Stakeholder perceptions on PR practices by police officers**

This study was keen to explore what other key stakeholders have to say in relations to their interaction with the Public Relations within the police service and their impressions about the same. The respondents were varied as indicated in chapter 3; I got them from various facets of the community so as to get a well-rounded research finding. My initial interaction with the constitutional office holders more so from the Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA) was that, in any organization, there is rationale linking the manner in which the organization and their stakeholders ought to interact. This therefore means that there is a specified structure and formality in which things are done. With the

efforts within the Police Service to mainstream public communications as a matter of introduction of the PR, there is an easier linkage between the police service and their stakeholders. There is ease in terms of transacting business with the external stakeholders. The numerous formalities have been eliminated. This has brought about effectiveness in terms of the manner in which the service is being run. One respondent gave an interesting view as follows;

We are now connected to 'big' organizations. People such as human right commissions have no problem dealing with us since our system is very straightforward. We have a good way of doing things. They know we are good people these days. We know how to handle them and all of us co-exist peacefully. The PR has won the confidence of those organizations. We now work as friends.

#### **4.5.1 Stakeholder Views on the PR Strategies used by the Police Service.**

Other stakeholders who are non-uniformed police officers were able to weigh in on RQ1 more-so on the crucial aspect of better customer care relations as a measure of strategy of the police to engage with the public.

The respondents noted that there is some improvement in the manner in which visitors to police stations are received and treated. Initially, one would visit a police station and not know who specifically was required to be addressed. Currently, with the establishment of the PR department there is a dedicated person waiting to receive the visitor to the station. This ends up encouraging more visits to the station without fear of intimidation by officers who do not have the necessary PR skills. In return, the police are now emerging as an outstanding entity in public affairs.

On their part, a representative of the clergy who was interviewed was so clear on this matter. He said;



I can state firmly without fear of contradiction that the best practices introduced by the police so far are the introduction of this PR desk and the community-policing program. It makes me admire visiting the police station. When you make a call to the station, you are invited to the station very well. I have no fear of advising my congregation to visit the station any time for assistance. I have personally made a number of visits in which I was well received, treated well and even given full attention. The PR is a revolution of the police service for the advantage of the common mwananchi.

In the midst of all these advantages, quite a large number of people hold the contrary opinion. Many of these people think that the PR is just another scheme by the police to try to brand themselves in a knee jerk reaction to negative perception by their stakeholders.

However, the program can be made more effective only if the loopholes of ineffectiveness would be sealed in the following areas.

“I think the police just lack proper training; I am even surprised if they are trained at all! You will find a lot of confusion in most of the police stations especially this one here when someone reports to the front desk especially young girls who have been defiled, they are normally too intimidated to even seek help. It is a confusion I tell you my brother!”

The stakeholders also reported that there had been complaints on the police services over poor handling of the clients. Many people often complain of inappropriate handling in the hands of the police. The police PR department is not well versed in the techniques required to handle their visitors. Quite a large number of the people who have visited police stations have complained either of being mishandled or even in some instance's mistreatment in the hands of police. This, to them, shows inability to properly execute their roles and to optimally attain customer satisfaction. A member of the civil society

had this to say given, as a human rights entity, they watchdog police excess that is a crucial indicator of the perception of the service by the public:

Since the introduction of the PR departments in the police, we cannot dispute the achievements that came with this department in police reforms. In spite of this, there is a major shortcoming in the operations of the police PR desks. We have had numerous complaints about their inefficiency. People who visited the station occasionally were treated badly if they were not accorded help to their expectations. Furthermore, a number of them who had sensitive cases complained that the people who served them at the PR desk hardly knew what to do. Much of what we gathered and were thereby meant to believe is that these people did not know what to do simply because there was not any formal training that they had undergone to enable them solve such sensitive cases.

Another interviewee/respondent concurred with this and was so categorical in his refusal to give credit to the PR. He said:

My line of work forces me to interact severally with the police. I have visited the PR desk you are saying. At times, when we want them to help us and they ask us how we want them to do so. It becomes rather tricky when a police officer wants you to tell them their job. Don't you think so too? I think this is because they may not be trained in such issues. However, that is just my thought. They are serious police officers to deal with criminals but not these social cases.

#### **4.5.2 How stakeholders View the Success of the PR Strategies used by the Police?**

Here I was intent on comparing what the police say vis-a-vis their stakeholders or in this case the public. My first respondent from the IPOA gave an important background; the achievement of results and fulfilment of an organization's mission and vision largely depends with the manner in which policies are communicated to the people in the lower cadre of the organization. The PR department does not only serve the outsiders. The department is in place to serve the police service internally more than it does outsiders. It should cater for their needs. In this view, the PR department has played an important linkage role of bringing together the police service to the rule above. This means that the department has linked up the officers to its superior. This has actually brought about a

smooth flow of information from the top to the subordinates. By doing so, it has made management easier and effective in the sense that information takes less time to travel from top to bottom of the hierarchy. One respondent said it clearly;

In my many years of service, it's now that we are experiencing some smooth and clear news concerning us. There are many things that the department has helped us. As you know, the two sides of the police (regular police and administration police) were separate at the beginning. In the new Constitution, we were brought together under the command of the IG despite them operating differently. But as you know, two bulls cannot be brought together without some friction. Each formation has its own PR Component that is supposed to make efforts to reach out to the public in the best way they can and in the ultimate interest of national security.

The PR department has really helped to ease management issues in the police service.

The police are happy that their affairs are well dealt with.

#### **4.5.3 Perceptions Against the PR Department**

The researcher was keen enough to note some discrepancies against the recently launched PR program. Although the program has been highly regarded as effective, there are those who think that the contrary to the opinion of the majority. These people punching holes in the program lay a number of weaknesses which when strengthened, the program will result in a better outcome. The weaknesses of the program include the following as illustrated:

This was one of the emergent issues that I was able to highlight when asking the public on their perception of the PR within the police. The comparison of what the police have vis a vis that of the private sector in reaching out to the public was put into question across the board. One respondent was keen to note that PR as a skill is not automatically earned but should grow organically with a lot of trust built. The various personnel who

will be in charge of such a component in any organization have to be capacity built. This calls for allocation of funds from the exchequer which many-at-times is constrained and riddled with red tape. This then creates a situation where most of the staff are either untrained or poorly trained. This deficit can however be dealt with by reaching out to development partners to collaborate with the government to ensure capacity building to the police on public relations and managing their external outlook as a matter of building confidence and trust with their stakeholders. The private sector is also well resourced. One of the police opened up to this fact and said the following:

You see we were told that PR departments were coming. People were selected from among us and placed in those capacities. Some of those placed in those dockets hardly knew what to do. Maybe that is why some of us messed up as we hardly knew what to do. Then there are these private people. They are good at absorbing the people trained by the government. I want you to think of a scenario where you have been trained and are underpaid. You get a chance to be employed by a private security firm and paid almost double of what you earn now. Do you think you will think twice about the current job? Of course not.

It stood out that some facets of the private sector have cut its niche remarkably well in the field of public relations for instance corporates in mobile telephony. Notably, most corporates who deal in the private security either train their own, pay them better and thus comparatively deprive the Police Service the necessary workforce by virtue of financial motivation, career progression and job security. In this view, the police service is always left with poorly motivated staff, ill-trained staff or a larger percentage of its well-trained PR staff jumping ship to the private sector. This is a big loss to the police service.

Innovation and independence of the junior officers especially within the PR department is a challenge. This is the main stumbling block that stands in the way of various groups

which all have interest in the police in their own way or another. By extension, the police PR is limited in the regard of mainstreaming innovation even with ubiquity of technology as an enabler to better and far-reaching communication. The police standing orders and rules of engagement as well as traditions are inspired by and show a scripted and rigid work regime. In other words, there is minimal independence. In instances where many forces come into play to tip the power dynamics for instance in the name of politicians, civil society organizations and other consequential players. A senior member of the service made the following comment:

Sometimes our PRO finds themselves in hard places. A matter may be of public interest but at the same time endanger the reputation of the government or a certain powerful politician. They are torn in between standing for the public or turning against the government; which apparently is your employer. This greatly interferes with our ability to make firm decisions and stand by them.

In the event that such a case is evident, it is therefore probable that the operations of the PR will be rendered ineffective. They will either work in fear or even underperform in their operations.

An officer of the county government also weighed in on this matter. She confided in me on the privacy and independence of the police and the PR to be specific. She insisted that the person in charge of PR should always strive to uphold the face of the organization they represent.

Many are the times when my superiors have had to reprimand the PR department of our nearby station. We can't accept being portrayed in a bad way. We both serve the same government. There's no way two arms of the same government can fight each other. When they don't know what to say to us, they ask and my boss gives them what to say.

It is crystal clear there is interference in the operations of the PR of the police. The more the department is interfered with, the less independent it becomes in its operations. A local chief gave me a response that I considered appropriate for this section:

PR is however taken by many people as a spin component of the police that lies to the public. Every time the police representative be it the official spokesperson , the IG or an chief like me is addressing a serious matter to the public , when questions arise we always suffer the public perception that what we are saying is '*Kiswahili*' simply put we are suspected to be lying or speaking on behalf of the political party in power.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

In a nutshell, this chapter looked at research findings from the police and other crucial stakeholders that interact with the police on the PR. The chapter sought to find out the knowledge of PR within the police force in general, the deliberate efforts put in place to entrench this within the service whilst appreciating the challenges. The same questions were asked to external stakeholders but with a key view in finding out their interaction with the police force and their impression of the NPS efforts to entrench this. This chapter has presented the findings of the study. The major themes that emerged from the data include: lack of proper training in the police Service on Public Relations, lack of good communication management skills, poor job alertness and promptness, considerable outside interference of police works especially by politicians and other arms of government, some improvement on media relations by the Kenya Police, new communication platforms, propaganda and distortion of facts, indicative achievements and challenges. The findings have revealed the perceptions of both sets of stakeholders (internal and external stakeholders). Many of them are similar and a few of them are different. The next chapter discusses these findings.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

In this Chapter, I report the key findings under each main theme in one chapter followed as well as discussion of findings. The research questions have been adopted as the main themes that will guide the discussion.

#### 5.1 Summary of Key Findings

The table below presents a summary of the main findings of the study.

**Table 5.1: Summary of Main Findings Based on Research Questions**

| Research Question  | Key/Main Finding  |
|--|---|
| What are the Public Relations (PR) strategies used by the police force in Kenya? | The Kenya Police made some efforts to relate better to the public. For instance, they have put into place a corporate communication directorate and that of a dedicated police spokesperson with a new image. |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| What are the issues that determine the knowledge of PR and its use by the officers within the police service? | Capacity building of police through various training is the most glaring missing link as far as knowledge is concerned.  |
| What challenges do the police encounter while implementing their PR strategies?                               | Lack of sufficient funding of the PR component with the police.  |
| How do key stakeholders perceive Public Relations practices by the officers in the police service?            | The perception of the police is that they are hostile and therefore unapproachable, however there seems to be some efforts at a later to state go change this. |

## **5.2 Discussion**

This section discusses the findings in relation to the literature review and theories reviewed in chapter two. The discussion has been divided into two parts; perceptions on efficacy of public relations officers and perceptions on inefficiency of public relations officers in view of the key findings. Under each sub-heading differences or similarities have also been highlighted.

### **5.2.1 Public Relations Strategies Used by the National Police Service**

The findings of this research show that the police service mostly use the client information and media publicity as the main Public Relations strategies. Studies conducted by Khumbo (2013) and Male (2007) found out that reforms in the National Police Service of Malawi also relied heavily and successfully on use of information desks and media relations as the key PR strategies. To this extent, my study increases the literature on PR that demonstrates that information provision and media platform



publicity are effective strategies for enhancing relations between the police and their publics.

The study shows that the media had been a-at times- great ally in dissemination information by the National Police Service to the public. It emerged that the power and influence of the media in information sharing as well as agenda setting especially on matters concerning policing cannot be overlooked. External stakeholders also took this as a great recommendation to be leveraged upon both by police and other government entities.

A vast majority of respondents from the NPS said that media relations have greatly improved since the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 as well as setting up of PR desks in each police station in the police stations. This revelation is not surprising because one of the accusations that have been levelled against public relations officers in the past is that many public relations officers have been underutilized and are not effective in reaching out to the public or the public shies away from reaching out to them.

A counter key finding was however, in relation to the office of the police spokesperson. While this was also intended to enhance provision of essential information about policing to the public, it emerged that the intention was not being achieved as anticipated. Most stakeholders felt that the police spokesperson is very much too often siding with police officers even when they have been accused of wrongdoing.

According to Khumbo's (2013) thesis, the general public in Malawi generally measures the success of the PR efforts of the police through what they see in the media. If NPS is

seen in newspapers and heard on radios more often, then people will conclude that the police are successful insofar as his job is concerned. His observation is confirmed in this study by what the participants said about the achievements of the public relations efforts of the National Police Service. To them if the organization is being positively covered in the media then that is an achievement of the PR component headed by the Police Spokesperson and indeed the IG. At the same time, even if the organization is visible in the media, as long as the visibility is not positive (i.e., if visibility is about negative stories about an organization), people will not take that as an achievement. This is evidenced by the fact that participants were comparing what they used to see in the media before the public relations officers were employed to what they are seeing in the media today when the ministry has the public relations officer.

A related finding was that Public relations officers improved positive visibility in the media. According to Broom (2009) one of the primary duties of the public relations officer in every organization is to promote the image of that organization through publicity and promotional messages. The findings of my study confirm that the public relations officers' actions on media relations are consistent with what Broom (2009) advocated for.

Successful law enforcement is heavily dependent on the people's willingness to report crimes, to call for help, to report suspicious activities and to serve as a witness or informant (Lyons 2002). The police need to be able to elicit such types of cooperation from citizens in order to effectively and efficiently control crime and secure people's

safety. Legal authorities can specifically benefit strongly from the cooperation of adolescents (Hinds 2009; Clayman & Skinns 2011).

The public relations strategies that the police used were in concomitance with the Social Validation theory (Cialdini, 2009). This has been exemplified by the efforts of the KPS to modernize their communication channels through the use of technology which as explained in the theory is an attempt to influence. When the police have gone out of their way to embrace Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) and use of social media like Facebook and twitter to embrace the changes in the communication sector.

The use of community policing also as a strategy that included the incorporation of PR Desks and efforts to co-opt the public in policing through community led initiatives with the police, speaks to the Legitimacy theory (Meyer et al, 1997,2000,2002). This theory, as explained in details in chapter two (2) of this thesis, makes mention of external forces and factors that influence the design & nature of service and control systems of institutions as a result. In the main findings the police cited other factors as impediments to the effective implementation of PR as well as some others acting as enablers to effective PR.

Previous studies have used similar theories to show the perceptions that shape the relationship of the police and the public. According to Tyler's process-based model (Tyler and Fagan 2008), those legitimacy beliefs are strongly influenced by people's evaluations of the procedural fairness of the police. When people view the police as an authority that makes its decisions in a fair way and treats people in a fair way, they are

likely to perceive the police as a legitimate authority and, as such, to willingly cooperate with the police.

### **5.2.2 Issues that Determine Knowledge and Use of PR by Police Officers**

The findings indicate that overall, capacity building of the police has improved since the police reforms were initiated by the parent ministry of Kenya. Perceptions of both sets of stakeholders were just similar on this one. The independence that the Constitution of Kenya (2010) conferred upon the police has also made the service more effective in running its day-to-day operations. The consensus among my participants was that the flow of information now is far much better than it was when there were no public relations officers within the NPS.

These findings are similar to those of Khumbo (2013), where he was studying the role of public relations officers as boundary spanners. He said capacity building of officers has helped improve communications management in statutory corporations in Malawi. This finding is also in line with what some authors such as Richmond and McCroskey (2005) say about the importance of capacity building in PR. They say that training in good communications management sustains the organization because it increases the trust that the people have in the organization. Most sentiments expressed by the participants indicate that they feel motivated and involved in the organizations' decisions when they are communicated to.

This is also in line with what The Stakeholders' Theory advocates for. The theory posits that the interests of all legitimate stakeholders are valuable to the organization and the organization must always communicate with them and get their opinion which would help to achieve their goals (Donaldson and Preston 1995).

My take on this finding is that the issue of proper training is an imperative to effective PR in the police as was exemplified in the findings both of the police and external stakeholders. The mutual distrust between the police and public will be and can be averted but this will take time. However, with the recent police reforms, the future may be bleak but it has a silver lining.

The task of policing rather than maintaining security in general is a very delicate and far-reaching task that must be given the seriousness it deserves. Susan, Gakure, Kiraiche & Waititu (2011) while citing Goldstein give the same assertion that indeed Out of all governmental operations, the police function is the most intimate – the daily, varied encounters between police officers and individuals, ranging from routine to traumatic experiences, represent the most visible and powerful interaction between the government and the public. If the police perform their role effectively, society benefits immeasurably and the government scores high; if the police perform their duties poorly, the damage to police confidence and democratic principles can be irreparable. This is the same opinion I hold as far as the capacity building needs of the KPS is concerned

### **5.2.3 Challenge the Police Encounter While Implementing PR Strategies**

Under this theme the key finding that came out was that most police officers put in charge of public relations and to man the PR Desk are not well trained with the subject matter at hand. The few officers that seemed to understand the essence of good police - community relations are the minority within the service. Majority of respondents alluded to this and even further gave the suggestion of police embarrassing civil society organizations that offer sponsored capacity building. This is in line with what

(Mindano,2012) found out in his studies. Mandano talks about lack of training for public relations practitioners generally, as a factor contributing to the failure of public relations officers. According to Cutlip, Center and Broom (2000), one of the elements that qualify someone to become a professional is training and education.

In addition, according to Cutlip, Center and Broom (2000), ethical and moral obligations are also key to qualifying someone as a professional. Therefore, someone who does a particular job but without both education and training, and without regard to moral and ethical obligations may not be able to carry out his duties effectively (Ferguson, 1987). Some studies such as (Mulenga, 2012) have suggested that ethics, education and training cannot be looked at in isolation. (Were *et al.*, 2012) also note that good performance in the security sector creates stability for economic growth and therefore ignoring such a key area would undermine development. When police cite lack of proper training attributed to underfunding as in the case of the KPS it then claws back on the good plans as anticipated in the police reforms.

In his study, Makwen (2008) was looking at the role of education in establishing a reliable communication system. He discovered that all public relations programs which are headed by people without relevant training had failed in one way or the other. Operation police work is seldom performed under the watchful eyes of a supervisor and a great reliance is placed on the high levels of motivation and professionalism of individual officers. Were *et al* (2012) while citing Beck, & Farr-Wharton, highly motivated officers produce better outcomes on their work and day to day activity as far as policing is

concerned. It is important that managers understand factors that impact on motivation and this ought to be current.

(Wyrick ,2013) in his study in the case of the Americans is that the history of policing is simple: police shape themselves according to contemporary events. They react to problems in society and change so they can confront and resolve them. In this context, the professionalization movement attempting to solve the overbearing problems of corruption and lack of training is of the same spirit as the militarization movement's response to modern society's problems such as gun control, the war on drugs, and global terrorism.

I discovered that one thing is different between my studies and what previous studies found out. Contrary to what Chawe (2012) puts forward (i.e., that the public institutions are employing public relations officers who are not qualified so that they can easily manipulate them), the findings on this topic indicate that the Kenya police service employ such people because they cannot afford to compete with private organizations in paying higher salaries for qualified public relations officers.

#### **5.2.4 Stakeholder Perceptions of PR Practices by the Police**

The Key finding in this section is that there exists an overwhelming perception among key stakeholders that the police have very poor public relations strategies. Most external stakeholders who took part in the study felt that public relations officers stationed at the police front desks merely work as propaganda officers; distorting facts to suit the interests of the service and government of the day. The dichotomy of the officer who is at the PR desk to his colleagues was indistinguishable to the external observer who I call

key stakeholder in this research. The perception thus was that despite the PR desk being clearly named and manned by a 'friendly' officer this did not convince the stakeholders about the effectiveness of the PR desks. Internal stakeholders within the service did not think public relations officers were distorting facts.

This finding is consistent with research findings of that of (Khumbo: 2013) despite the fact that it was conducted in another county - Malawi. The difference in their perception can be explained by the fact that respondents within the Police are seen as part and parcel of the state while some external stakeholders are seen as threats hence all controversial messages are censored before they are released to the public or external stakeholders. At the same time, the difference in their perception shows that the police must still do a lot of convincing in order to gain trust from stakeholders who still believe ministries are not reliable.

According to Four Models of Public Relations, as put forward by (Grunig & Hunt ,1984) this type of public relations, where practitioners distort information, is usually referred to as Press Agency. The Press Agency Model of Public Relations in Grunig's Four Models of Public Relations says that public relations officers who practice Press Agency rely on manipulation of facts (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). This shows that practitioners in government ministries practice Press Agency since participants said that public relations officers distort information. In History, Press Agency was practiced during the First World War and came under a lot of criticism because it does not value accuracy and truth. In today's public relations press Agency is generally discouraged (Khumbo, 2013). Bulk & Van Jan while citing (Dowler ,2003). Researchers have repeatedly emphasized that, for most people, the media are their primary source of information on the police. It



would appear therefore that the Kenya police are heavily relying on an outdated retrogressive model of PR which should be discarded.

What is encouraged in contemporary public relations is the Two-way Symmetrical Model which emphasizes on truth and the need to value audience opinion (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). In short public relations strategies in the police need to switch from Press Agency which relies on manipulation of facts to Two-way symmetrical model which emphasizes that there must be mutual understanding and respect between the organization and its stakeholders. This is the only way public relations officers within the national police service will gain trust from external stakeholders.

The KHRC while auditing police reforms in Kenya make an observation in their findings in their report that:

While the members of the public have high expectations from the accountability mechanisms, some of the decisions that have been made by these mechanisms have never gone well with certain sections of the society. A case in point is the decision that was made by the IPOA to charge a police officer who had been involved in several extra – judicial killings and the members of the public went into riots along Thika Road to protest the decision. Members of the public should be educated on the importance of these accountability mechanisms and the need to provide support to their work. (KHRC,2015)

Another research is by Bruce (2014) who in his thesis on police reforms in Kenya notes that community partnerships can be indeed one way of enabling members of the public to feel that their concerns are being addressed by the police. He further recommends that

reaching out to the public can also provide a solid foundation upon which the fight against crime can be boosted. With regard to community policing therefore, 9% of the respondents noted that some of the features associated with police reforms included introduction of community policing and training police officers on human rights.

The Independent Police Oversight Authority (IPOA) in Kenya made a report on the police conduct during the 2016 post-election protest in Kenya. And in this report released in 2016, they noted that the public in Kenya has fundamentally lost their confidence in the police and not only this time. This is because, observably the NPS has been consistently accused of being biased, which eventually led to the loss of trust and confidence in them by the public, on their role and independence, while maintaining law and order. As was evident during the demonstrations, between April and June 2016, the police had not changed (IPOA, 2016).

The relationship between the police and public can actually be improved for the good of both the state and its citizens. However, this finding unearths the complicity of individuals with the police service in ensuring that a good relationship is fostered with the public. The police have clearly shown a priority for other issues but good relationship with the public.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

Overall, this thesis concludes that clearly, there are efforts to apply some public relations strategies within the Kenya Police to enhance the public perception and information sharing. However, the Kenya Police need a lot of public relations capacity building.

My thesis statements that the PR strategies of the National Police Service are in dire need of urgent, timely and well-organized resuscitation to avert anarchy between the police and the public and eventually the state. This study therefore highlights the lack of adoption of PR strategies and monitoring mechanisms of their effectiveness poses challenges to effective practice of PR. Ultimately, in those circumstances, the perceptions of stakeholders remain largely negative and this is detrimental to effective police service.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings, discussion and conclusions in this study, I recommend as follows:

On the strategies that police use for PR; that, as per the National Police Service Act (2011) and the Constitution of Kenya (2010) which states in Article 244, the NPS shall:

- (a) Strive for the highest standards of professionalism and discipline among its members
- (b) Prevent corruption and promote and practice transparency and accountability (c)

Comply with constitution standards of human rights and fundamental freedoms; there is a need for the Police Service To take cure the knowledge deficit of police on PR.

As recommended in part (d) of the Constitution of Kenya (2010) in Article 244, the National Police Service needs to urgently ‘Train staff to the highest possible standards of Competence, Integrity, Respect for human rights.

Finally, as per the feedback from other stakeholders who are not within the police service, I recommend qualified public relations officers to take the lead on improving police image through massive training on effective management of PR desks to avoid the perception that they are propaganda platforms for justifying police brutality and impunity.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Research**

Future studies should look at other sets of stakeholders who have not been included in this study. As I explained earlier, this study has not included all stakeholders such as the other disciplined officers like the National Intelligence Service (NIS), Kenya Prisons service and the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF). Future studies may look at these types of stakeholders.

Another area for further research is to look at the differences and nexus between public relations in the private sector and public sector. According to some participants, public relations in the private sector is more efficient than it is in the public sector (Khumbo, 2013). Therefore, the best way to improve it in the public sector is to look at the differences of the practice in these two sectors and then borrow from the best practices done in the private sector, which has been said to be more efficient.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I: WORKPLAN

The following is the time schedule for the intended research

| <b>ACTIVITY</b>  | <b>DURATION</b>  |
|--|------------------|
| 1. Collecting data for pilot study and transcribing          | April- June 2014 |
| 2. Analysing data for a pilot study                          | July-Aug 2014    |
| 3. Conducting Interviews and focus group discussions and     | January 2015     |
| 4. Document analysis   | December 2015    |
| 5.. Familiarization with the text                            | January 2016     |
| 6. Data analysis   | August 2017      |
| 7. Submitting to supervisors                                 | January, 2018    |
| 8. Making corrections  | Feb-July, 2018   |
| 9. Submitting copies to the school and preparing for defence | TBA              |
| 10. Defending the Thesis                                     | TBA              |
| 11. Submitting to external supervisors                       | TBA              |

## **APPENDIX II: CONSENT**

### **Consent Form for Participants**

This research is conducted in partial fulfilment for the award of a Master of Science in Communication Studies at Moi University in Kenya. I expect to have an interview with you for approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes.

I am also you may well feel at times uneasy to divulge information which you think may jeopardize your job or compromise your security. I can assure you that, in line with research ethics, your identity in this study shall remain anonymous (i.e., research ethics demand that the identity of a participant in a research project remain unknown).

In the event that you feel uncomfortable to participate in this study, you halt your submissions and withdraw/recant at any given time and your decision will be respected as such. However, your participation would be beneficial to the country in the sense that it will help to shape the Public Relations profession within the National Police Service since the service was established in pre-colonial times.

It will also help other relevant stakeholders being institutions, scholars and government agencies to understand the differences between public relations in the public sector and the private sector since at the moment very little is known about public relations in the country, in as far as evidence-based literature is concerned. The study will also help me to graduate in my school as per the requirement. If you have any problem with the way I conduct this research, you can contact the Moi University School of Human Resource Development, Department of Development studies.

If you are willing to participate in this study sign in space provided below.

Participant signature:

## **APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR POLICE OFFICERS**

### **1. What are the Public Relations (PR) strategies used by the police Service in Kenya?**

- a. What activities are you involved in that are intended to enhance PR in police service?
- b. How do you inform the public on certain areas of concern to them like security alerts, crime watch? e.tc (how often? What approaches do you employ? How do you ensure feedback?)
- c. What are the strategies that you employ when you want to communicate to the public for instance public safety on the roads?
- d. Kindly let me know how do you handle a case that is reported to you from the time of arrival at the station to the logical conclusion of the case?
- e. What are the activities that the police service engages in to improve the lives of those living around them that are not within their core duties of keeping law and order? E.g. building schools, fundraising, and charity runs/walks.
- f. Do you acknowledge that the public perception of the police has been a negative being of corruption and the fear of police officers by the public? What are you doing to change that?
- g. Do you have a PR desk in your station? If yes what are the day-to-day activities of the officers that man this desk?
- h. Are there any other PR activities that you are engaged in that I have not asked and what are they?

### **2. How are police officers trained on the PR strategies they are expected to implement?**

- a) What is your understanding of PR?
- b) Is there any training for police officers on PR (if yes what does that training involve if no, what are the plans for the same)?
- c) Are there police specifically assigned to hospitality and PR in the force
- d) Is PR part of the teaching curriculum in the police college?

**3. What challenges do the police encounter while implementing their PR strategies?**

- e) What are the challenges you face when you want to inform the public on certain areas of concern e.g. public safety on the roads, crime watch etc.

What are the challenges you face when you want to inform the public on certain areas of concern e.g. public safety on the roads, crime watch etc.

- f) What challenges do you face when handling a client who has come to the station to report a case?
- g) What challenges do you face in relation to the activities that the Police service participates in so as to improve/positively impact the lives of those living with and around them.
- h) What challenge you face in your efforts to address the negative image of the police force.



**APPENDIX 111b.: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR OTHERS (NON-POLICE, CIVILIANS, OTHER CIVIL SERVANTS AND OTHER DISCIPLINED FORCES**

- What is your understanding of Public Relations?
- Do you think Public Relations in the police force is a reality?
- What experience have you ever had with the police
- What recommendations can you suggest towards the same

**APPENDIX 1V: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR KEY STAKEHOLDERS****1. How do key stakeholders view the success of the PR strategies used by the police?**

- a) Have you ever interacted with the police service? What do you know about the activities the police service is involved in that are intended to enhance Public Relations?
- b) Are you aware of any efforts by the police force to improve the negative public perception of the service (if yes how effective if no, then what can be done to improve this?)
- c) Have you ever heard of how the police inform the public on certain areas of concern? Do you think the communication strategies; are effective? E.g., information on road safety, crime and general security
- d) Have you ever reported any case to the police? What do you understand about how the police handle a case when it is reported to them and follow up the case to its logical conclusion?
- e) Do you know of any activities that the police have involved themselves that pertains to improving the lives of those around them that are not within their core duties of keeping law and order? E.g., building schools, fundraising, and charity runs/walks. (If yes, are they effective? If not, what can be done to improve?)

**APPENDIX V: BUDGET**

| <b>NO.</b> | <b>ITEM/ACTIVITY</b>                    | <b>QTY</b>  | <b>PRICE<br/>PER UNIT</b> | <b>TOTAL</b>     |
|------------|---|-------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| 1.         | Field Notebook                          | 1           | 30.00                     | 30.00            |
| 2.         | Spring Files                            | 5           | 30.00                     | 150.00           |
| 3.         | Document Holders                        | 5           | 30.00                     | 150.00           |
| 4.         | A4 Ruled Papers                         | 2           | 320.00                    | 640.00           |
|            |   | Reams       |                           |                  |
| 5.         | Photocopying papers                     | 3           | 400.00                    | 1,200.00         |
|            |   | Reams       |                           |                  |
| 6.         | Traveling Allowance for<br>researcher   | 60 days     | 600.00                    | 32,000.00        |
| 7.         | Subsistence Allowance for<br>researcher | 60 days     | 200.00                    | 12,000.00        |
| 9.         | Thesis Typing                           | 150<br>pgs. | 30.00                     | 4,500.00         |
| 10.        | Photocopying of thesis                  | 6 cps       | 300.00                    | 1,800.00         |
| 11.        | Binding thesis                          | 6 cps       | 200.00                    | 1,200.00         |
| 12.        | Contingencies 10%                       |             |                           | 5,367.00         |
|            | <b>TOTAL</b>                            |             |                           | <b>59,037.00</b> |
|            |   |             |                           |                  |

**APPENDIX VI: SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION**

[00:00:01.08] Mr. Ogina: Good morning. Kindly tell us your name.

Ali Juma: Good morning sir. My name is Ali Juma [Not his real name].

[00:00:11.18] Mr. Ogina: Could you tell us which department this is?

Ali Juma: This is the Public Relations department of the police. It is a department that was recently introduced so as to cater for the needs of both the police and the public. In other words, the department aims at making the police look better in the eyes of the public. We want to eradicate this notion that all policemen are bad people.

[00:00:47.01] Mr. Ogina: Ahaaaa..could you tell why it was seen necessary to come up with this department?

Ali Juma: Yeah yeah...things were very bad initially. There was a lot of suspicion from the members of the general public. None of them was willing to be associated with the police. So it was seen necessary by our superiors that we come up with this department.

[00:01:16.16] Mr. Ogina: Okay. So what exactly do you do?

Ali Juma: I do a lot. This is a busy desk. I received all the visitors to this station. Sometimes people come to the station because they want to know more about the police. Not necessarily to report a crime. I do receive such people and often furnish them with the information they need. Even NGO's and many other people just walk in and I serve them.

[00:01:57.20] Mr. Ogina: How long have you served on this desk?

Ali Juma: I have been here for years. You see, this desk needs someone who has a sweet tongue. A good tongue. Someone who knows how to talk to people. I have also received adequate training on the same. So this is my sixth year. I enjoy a lot what I'm doing.

[00:02:17.04] Mr. Ogina: what is the best thing about this desk that cannot be found anywhere else?

Ali Juma: Ahaaaaa..very many things. But the best of them all is that, for once, anybody can walk into the station, find a warm police officer who doesn't have a gun, hold a warm conversation and go back home smiling. That is the best thing about this desk.

[00:03:15.14] Mr. Ogina: that sounds very interesting.

Ali Juma: yeah it is. That is why many people these days do not fear police as they used to.

[00:05:02.19] Mr. Ogina: So according to you, it is a big success to have introduced the PR desk?

Ali Juma: wow. It is a big success story. You can't imagine how enjoyable the department is. Many civilians now have no fear for the police.

[00:05:20.02] Mr. Ogina: Is this desk available in each and every police station?

Ali Juma: Ahhhhh...this is a new concept in policing. You know even those implementing must first of all see its importance in this small operation before actually implementing it in large numbers. I'm sure it will take some time for every police station to have a PR desk. But one day, the dream will come true.

[00:05:54.19] Mr. Ogina: It's good to know that...

Ali Juma: Yeah. We're happy the trend is catching up in many places.

[00:06:05.03] Mr. Ogina: You guys must be doing a very good job then. Congratulations.

Ali Juma: Thank you. And again, the stations do not have this desk because they lack the right people to man these desks. Well, not everyone can manage the PR desk. It is a very sensitive desk that requires a lot of patience, dedication, intelligence and good manners. You see, obviously not everyone can fit in the docket. One can easily mess.

[00:06:13.18] Mr. Ogina: I got you sir?

Ali Juma: Yeah. That's where we are right now.

[00:06:17.23] Mr. Ogina: At least I'm enlightened about the role of the department in relation to the public. How about within the service? How has the PR department helped police officers within the service?

Ali Juma: Ahaaa.. Even the police are happy to have this department being operational. In the past, we used to get news concerning us from the television or even along the road. You'll just hear that some of you will be demoted or rather promoted through the radio. There was no official communication for these things. When this department was brought, it immediately linked us to the top offices that were basically out of reach to the junior officers. News about our affairs is easily communicated through the department, we now have bulletins, notice boards both for the police and public, we even now have Facebook account, twitter handle, film department and many documentaries produced by the police exclusively and even jointly with the media to educate the public and improve the image of the service. We really feel good that the government remembered us.

[00:07:30.09] Mr. Ogina: That's very encouraging sir.

Ali Juma: yeah. In the end, both the police and the department are proud stakeholders of the police force and are very proud to be associated with us. That's what we want now.

[00:07:38.18] Mr. Ogina: may be as we come to an end, what are some of the challenges that you face as a department?

Ali Juma: Yeah. Challenges are always there. We are at times misunderstood. Many people have often said that we are bribing the public; pretending to be good to them yet we are dogs. So a number of people have not appreciated the fact that we are now a reformed police force.

[00:07:58.29] Mr. Ogina: I really wish they would understand how you function.

Ali Juma: Yes. That would be very good. And then there is the issue of funding. We have always wanted this department to be established. Finally, our wish was granted but then they denied us of any resources. It's just the same as giving birth to a baby and then denying it food. It's practically impossible for it to grow. This has always made life very hard.

[00:08:57.21] Mr. Ogina: have you appealed to the national government for help?

Ali Juma: We are like parasites. Always depending on the well wish of our superiors to survive. We can't even make a firm stand on our own. We can't even stand out as important as we should. We are always forced to lie on the side of those who give us the little held we need, otherwise our department could starve to death. This is very sad.

[00:09:54.19] Mr. Ogina: Thank you so much Mr. Ali for your time. It is my hope that the department will continue receiving support from the Government, continue to grow and properly fulfill all you mandate.

Ali Juma: You're welcome. Thank you so much too.