

CRIMES COMMITTED BY POLICE OFFICERS IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA

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**A Thesis Submitted to Graduate School in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for
Master of Arts Degree in Security Management of Egerton University**

**EGERTON UNIVERSITY
SEPTEMBER, 2025**

DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Declaration

This Thesis is my original work and to the best of my knowledge, has not been presented for examination for any Degree or Diploma in any institution or university.



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Date: 21st September, 2025

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Recommendation

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our recommendation as university supervisors.


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DEDICATION

To my wife, Christine, and children, Leon and Hans, family members, friends, and colleagues. To my children, may this work be an inspiration for you to reach greater heights in academics.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Almighty God, whose grace and guidance have given me the motivation and perseverance to undertake this significant endeavor of writing this thesis. Without His blessings, this work might have remained only a vision. All glory and thanks are due to Him.

This achievement is not solely my own; it was made possible through the unwavering support, encouragement, and understanding of my family and friends. Their emotional, spiritual, and practical guidance sustained me throughout this journey, and I am sincerely thankful for their presence and assistance.

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the troubling phenomenon of crimes committed by police officers in Nairobi County, a subject often overlooked due to the scarcity of reliable data. Despite being entrusted with the responsibility to uphold law and order, instances of police misconduct have occurred, yet very little systematic information has been collected, shared, or used to inform strategies for crime management. Motivated by this gap, the study sought to understand the types of crimes committed by serving police officers, the prevalence of offenses by dismissed officers, and the perceptions of police personnel regarding the factors that link police misconduct to insecurity in the county. Guided by Rational Choice Theory and Routine Activities Theory, the research adopted a mixed-methods design. Ninety primary respondents and thirty key informants provided data through questionnaires. Quantitative responses were analyzed with SPSS and presented in tables, while qualitative insights were examined thematically, using direct quotes to illustrate key points. The findings were both revealing and alarming. Crimes by serving officers were dominated by violent acts, accounting for nearly half of the cases, followed closely by economically motivated crimes. Drug-related and alcohol-related offenses were less frequent but still present. The reality that these crimes were committed by those mandated to prevent wrongdoing exposes critical lapses in authority and legitimacy, with far-reaching implications for national security. Among dismissed officers, violent and economic crimes remained prevalent, while property-related offenses stood out, suggesting a distinct pattern in post-service criminal behavior. Further analysis showed strong positive relationships between factors leading to police misconduct and insecurity. Organizational conditions, individual motivations, and situational circumstances all contributed to the likelihood of offending, highlighting the complex and multi-layered nature of the problem. The study ultimately emphasizes the urgent need for systemic reforms within the National Police Service. Recommendations include implementing policies that reduce the incentive for officers to engage in crime, conducting rigorous background checks during recruitment, establishing monitoring mechanisms for dismissed officers, and drawing on global best practices to manage errant behavior effectively. Addressing these issues is essential not only for restoring public trust but also for strengthening security in Nairobi County.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BMS	Bob Morgan Security
CM	Chief Magistrate Courts
FGDs	Focused Group Discussion
KDF	Kenya Defence Forces
KTN	Kenya Television Network
KI	Key Informant
NACOSTI	Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NPF	Nigeria Police Force
NYPD	New York Police Department
NOPRIN	Network on Police Reform in Nigeria
PM	Principal Magistrates
RM	Resident Magistrate
IPOA	Independent Policing Oversight Authority
SRM	Senior Resident Magistrate
SPM	Senior Principal Magistrates
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
US	United States

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Police criminal behavior is a worldwide issue that both developed and developing nations are dealing with, even though many academics find it difficult to understand (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2003; Kappeler & Kraska, 1998; Nilson & Oliver, 2006). In a democratic society, the police are the first representatives of law enforcement organizations that implement policing tactics and start the criminal justice system in order to improve national security. By upholding public safety and order, law enforcement agencies are given substantial power and authority to enforce the law and safeguard the community (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2003; Nilson & Oliver, 2006). Additionally, Kappeler & Kraska (1998) claimed that crimes committed by police are those that are carried out by a person or people who have been appointed to serve as police officers and are still employed at the time of the offense.

Among other serious crimes, some studies indicate that police officers commit theft, burglaries, corruption, sex-related crimes, drug trafficking, and armed robberies while they are actively serving (Kappeler & Kraska, 1998). Policing is a special profession with characteristics that make it possible for police officers to engage in deviant behavior. The ability to speed, make arrests and detain people, use force reasonably, and even search and seize property are just a few of the liberties and privileges that police officers enjoy that are not granted to ordinary citizens. Siegel adds that the public will experience anxiety and unease if unchecked crime results in historically high levels of societal insecurity (Siegel & McCormick, 2023). This implies that if these crimes are carried out by individuals who have been employed, trained, assisted, and armed by the government, the situation deteriorates and becomes harmful not only to the police force but also to national security as a whole, where public confidence and trust are severely damaged and may have detrimental effects on society as a whole, including public uncertainty. Dismissed police officers will also be included in this study because, despite being employed and receiving government training on law enforcement, security management, and firearms skills, no published study describes the activities they partake in after being fired from their positions or how they are even policed and watched. This has consistently sparked legitimate concerns that they may be contributing to the nation's steadily rising level of insecurity. According to the study's working

definition, insecurity is a state of public uncertainty that puts people's lives at risk (Durkheim, 2023; Ritzer, 2003). All police actions must be grounded in the rule of law and balanced to accomplish the intended legitimate objectives because police are a state agency that implements policing strategies to maintain security, public order, and safety in all human societies (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2003; Nilson & Oliver, 2006). However, Kappeler & Kraska (1995) contended that crimes committed by police are those acts of commission and omission that contravene state laws, thereby violating the fundamental rights of individuals. These crimes are committed by police officers who have been sworn in and given the authority and powers of a police officer while they are committing or failing to commit such acts that constitute crimes. Surprisingly, crimes involving police officers have received little attention in research and literature, even as police administrators, researchers, and the public remain worried about such offences. For instance, more than 80 California law enforcement officers have criminal convictions, including rap sheets that include murder, manslaughter, robbery, abuse of authority, and animal cruelty (Kane & White, 2009). They abused family members, drove while intoxicated, cheated on time cards, and even killed other people due to their carelessness on the road (Brinks, 2003).

In a similar vein, Brinks (2003) observes that the São Paulo police killed more people in 1992 alone than Brazil's former military dictatorship had throughout its extended rule. Over the past two decades, São Paulo police have been responsible for at least 11,692 deaths (Caldeira, 2002). Since 1999, police killings in Rio de Janeiro have also risen sharply. Data from the Brazilian Public Security Yearbook indicate that police lethality in São Paulo accounts for approximately 35 percent of all homicides, the highest rate in the country (FBSP, 2018). In Rio de Janeiro, police were responsible for 14 percent of the 7,594 killings recorded in 2006. Since the early 2000s, Brazilian police have killed thousands of people annually under circumstances officially described as "resistance followed by death." This term has been criticized for allowing authorities to obscure the questionable legitimacy of police actions and for shielding officers who deploy deadly force outside extreme or legally defensible circumstances. Comparatively, the killing of George Floyd, a 46-year-old African American man, by a Minneapolis police officer on May 25, 2020, underscores the global resonance of police violence. Floyd, who had been accused of using counterfeit money, died after being handcuffed and pinned to the ground, with an officer kneeling on his neck for more than nine minutes. As Amnesty International (2008) notes, the lack of systematic investigation into most

of these cases makes it difficult to distinguish justified uses of force from those that represent unlawful killings.

Reports from the Open Society Institute (2010) and the Network on Police Reform in Nigeria (2010) indicate that the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) has been repeatedly involved in extrajudicial killings. Every year, hundreds of Nigerians lose their lives at the hands of the NPF. Field investigations reveal that many police stations operate under an unwritten code in which individuals labeled as “confirmed” armed robbery suspects are often described as being “escorted,” “sent on an errand,” or “transferred to Abuja”—all phrases used to mask unlawful executions or enforced disappearances. In most cases, suspects are deemed “confirmed” through torture before being “escorted” or “transferred” via extrajudicial killing or disappearance.

An illustrative case is that of 24-year-old Matthew Onyo, who was shot dead by police in the Enugu district. His father later confirmed his identity at the mortuary. Although police claimed Onyo was involved in armed robbery, eyewitnesses reported that he was unarmed during the incident. Further reports suggest that those suspected of armed robbery face a higher risk of unlawful killings.

The climate of abuse extends beyond suspected robbers. In September 2006, local Kano State politician “Abdullahi” recounted being tortured at the Karfi police post in Kano. During the assault, Abdullahi believed he would be executed; however, he was spared when a police sergeant intervened, stopping a colleague who insisted that such treatment was “only reserved for robbers.” This incident underscores how normalized extrajudicial practices have become within the Nigerian policing system, with arbitrary distinctions drawn between who is subjected to lethal force and who is not.

The Network on Police Reform in Nigeria (NOPRIN) has highlighted that Nigerian police are often perceived as “armed robbers” preying on innocent citizens and are frequently linked to extrajudicial killings (Sule & Madaki, 2017). This characterization not only conceals their unlawful actions but also heightens public fear of crime and fosters the dangerous assumption that those accused of armed robbery automatically lose their right to life and due process. A tragic illustration of this is the case of Waliyu Abudu, a poultry farm worker, wife, and mother, who was shot and killed by police in Makun, Ogun State, on December 12, 2008. Testimonies from her family and employers indicated that her death was entirely unprovoked, making her a completely innocent victim of unlawful police violence.

In response, the Ogun State Police Command held a press conference in which they branded Abudu as the leader of an armed robbery gang allegedly plotting to eliminate the police.

However, no evidence was ever produced to substantiate this claim. The authorities further refused to release her body to the family for an independent post-mortem or autopsy, thereby obstructing accountability. Despite the seriousness of the incident, no officer of the Nigerian Police Force was investigated or held responsible for her death (Sule & Madaki, 2017).

A quarter of all crimes in the nation are committed by the Kenya National Police Service, according to the Economic Survey (2016), revealing the corruption within the law enforcement agency (KNBS, 2016). Of the 72,490 recorded crimes in 2015, 24,647 were committed by officers in uniform, according to the 2016 Kenya Economic Survey report. The survey found that while sex scandals had decreased from 146 in 2014 to 118 in 2015, the majority of the men and women in uniform were engaged in economic crimes, drug trafficking, murder, and criminal damage. According to the report, "criminal damage and dangerous drugs together accounted for 72.5% of all reported offences in 2015." The percentage of female offenders increased to 20.7% from 18.4% in 2014. According to the Independent Police Oversight Authority (IPOA) annual Report 2019, there is an increase in complaints received from the public against police officers, ranging from serious crimes committed by police officers to misconduct and indiscipline cases involving police officers. Independent Police Oversight Authority receives and investigates complaints against police related to disciplinary or criminal offenses and monitors police operations affecting the public. According to the IPOA, a policing approach should put the protection and advancement of human rights and fundamental rights first by making sure that police actions are legal, necessary, and proportionate. Ethical behavior and integrity are also crucial for making sure that police operations are conducted in a way that is just, fair, and professional while adhering to the law. Regardless of their history or current situation, officers must treat everyone with dignity and respect. They should also always conduct themselves in a way that does not call into question their capacity to uphold public safety and security. According to KNBS (2016), upholding moral principles and the rule of law fosters public confidence and helps stop prejudice, discrimination, and power abuse in law enforcement.

Despite the gravity of police misconduct, very few studies have provided solid empirical data on the specific crimes committed by officers. Most existing research has relied heavily on surveys of officers, aiming to gauge their attitudes toward misconduct or to predict the likelihood of criminal behavior under certain circumstances. These methods, however, have notable limitations, as officers often maintain a "code of silence" or respond in ways they believe are socially acceptable when questioned about their own actions or those of their colleagues (Maguire & Mastrofski, 2000). To bridge this gap, the present study moved beyond

attitudinal surveys by systematically examining concrete data on crimes formally charged against police officers in court. Using records from the Milimani Court in Nairobi County between 2017 and 2019, the study analyzed both the nature and prevalence of these offenses and considered their broader implications for national security.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Due in large part to the lack of official national data systems devoted to gathering, preserving, or sharing such data for crime management, researchers have long grappled with the problem of quantifying crimes committed by police officers. This challenge is compounded by the fact that these crimes are perpetrated by individuals who are not only trained and equipped but, in some cases, also facilitated by the state. Each year, additional complexities emerge as police officers are dismissed from service, with National Police Service statistics indicating a rising trend in dismissals. However, little is known about what these dismissed officers do thereafter, raising concerns that their reintegration into society may be fraught with challenges and that monitoring them could prove equally problematic. This has fuelled reasonable suspicion that dismissed officers may be contributing to the rising levels of insecurity in the country. Despite the gravity of this issue, it has remained largely invisible to police executives, policymakers, and scholars. Against this backdrop, the present study aimed to examine the issue in depth, with the goal of identifying ways to curb police involvement in criminal activities and proposing strategies to strengthen public safety.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study was structured around both its general and specific objectives, outlined as follows:

1.3.1 Broad Study Objective

The broad objective of the study was to assess crimes committed by police officers in Nairobi County.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To assess the nature of crimes committed by serving police officers, as recorded at the Milimani Criminal Courts between 2017 and 2020 in Nairobi County.
- ii. To determine the prevalence of crimes committed by dismissed police officers, based on records from the Milimani Criminal Courts between 2017 and 2020 in Nairobi County

- iii. To explore police officers' perceptions regarding the relationship between the causal factors of crimes committed by police and insecurity in Nairobi County.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What is the nature of crimes committed by serving police officers, as recorded at the Milimani Criminal Courts between 2017 and 2020, and how do these crimes influence insecurity in Nairobi County
- ii. How prevalent are crimes committed by dismissed police officers, according to records from the Milimani Criminal Courts between 2017 and 2020, and what is their impact on insecurity in Nairobi County
- iii. How do police officers perceive the relationship between the causal factors of police misconduct and insecurity in Nairobi County?

1.5 Justification of the Study

The scarcity of reliable statistics has made empirical research on crimes committed by police officers particularly challenging. This study seeks to address that gap by providing evidence-based insights. First, the findings can generate comprehensive and actionable data that may guide the development of policies aimed at deterring police misconduct and reducing insecurity in Kenya. Second, examining the correlates of crimes committed by police can shed light on the relationship between specific causal factors and offending behavior, thereby informing targeted police reform initiatives. Third, expanding this area of research can enhance understanding of the role of police culture and socialization processes, especially when data encompass both on-duty and off-duty offenses committed throughout officers' careers. Fourth, previous scholars have largely avoided these questions due to the lack of detailed knowledge regarding the types, timing, and frequency of crimes perpetrated by police. Collecting such exploratory data is essential for advancing understanding in this field. Consequently, the findings of this study are particularly valuable, as they identify critical knowledge gaps and provide a foundation for further research and policy interventions.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focused on data collected from police officers in Nairobi County, as well as individuals charged at the Milimani Court for committing criminal offenses. While other police-related crimes may have occurred within the jurisdiction of various police stations, these were beyond the scope of the study. The research was also limited to offenses committed between

2017 and 2020, a period identified by the National Police Service (NPS) Annual Report (2021) as having a particularly high rate of police misconduct.

Although the study examined the impact of crimes committed by police officers on national security, its geographic focus was confined to Nairobi County, and it relied solely on court records from the Milimani Law Court. Consequently, the small sample size posed limitations in terms of generalizability.

Given the sensitive nature of the topic, some participants were initially reluctant to share critical information, often due to concerns about security or confidentiality. To address this, informed consent was sought from all respondents, and they were assured that the information provided would be used exclusively for academic purposes and to contribute to the improvement of the National Police Service.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Crimes Committed by Police Officers:	This was used in this study to mean recorded criminal acts committed by both serving and dismissed police officers
Crime:	This term was used in the study to mean an action or omission that constitutes an offence
Implication:	This term was used in the study to mean the possible effects of crimes
Prevalence of Crimes:	This term was used in this study to mean periodic frequency and number of incidences on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis of criminal activities by police officers.
Recorded Crimes:	This term was used in this study to mean only crimes recorded in court records.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of existing literature organized around the objectives of the study. It begins by examining research on crimes committed by active police officers, followed by a review of literature concerning offenses perpetrated by dismissed officers. The chapter also explores how police officers perceive the relationship between insecurity and the factors that contribute to police misconduct. Finally, the chapter discusses the theoretical frameworks that guided this research.

2.2 Nature of Crimes Committed by Police Officers

From 1975 to 1996, Fyfe examined the misconduct that ended the careers of 1,543 officers from the New York City Police Department (Fyfe, 1981). They classified cases of serious criminal law violations alongside minor offenses against police discipline, although this was an unintentional conceptual misunderstanding. Police misconduct and brutality incidents, which are defined by the needless and excessive use of deadly force against defenseless members of the public, have grown to be significant concerns in modern society. The aim of this study, however, was to determine the repercussions of major criminal law infractions committed by Nairobi County, Kenya, law enforcement personnel. Additionally, scholars such as Box and Francis identified several categories of crimes frequently committed by law enforcement officers (Box, 2002; Francis et al., 1999). These included: violence-related crimes, drug-related crimes, crimes against humanity, abuse of power, profit-motivated crimes, financial crimes, alcohol related offenses like driving under the influence of alcohol, and a variety of other crimes that were widely committed while the officers were off-duty (Francis et al., 1999). Kraska and Kappeler (1995) argue that drug-related crimes committed by police encompass three key dimensions: the aetiology of drug-related misconduct, the classification of such misconduct, and the prevalence of drug use among police officers. Building on this, Stoddard highlights the role of police culture and the occupational environment in shaping what he termed “blue coat crime.” Kraska and Kappeler further emphasize that the very nature of police work creates frequent on-the-job opportunities for officers, particularly those on patrol, to become entangled in the drug trade. Factors such as inadequate supervision, the ready availability of drugs, and repeated exposure to drug users, traffickers, and dealers significantly heighten this vulnerability. Amnesty International (2008) emphasizes the role of deviant police subcultures in shielding officers who adopt norms of secrecy, loyalty, and cynicism toward their

duties and the justice system, while simultaneously encouraging involvement in drug-related corruption. Similarly, Carter (1990) argues that substance abuse among police officers is often a “job-related condition,” particularly for those engaged in undercover operations. He further proposes a classification system to better understand the patterns and causes of such behaviour for drug-related offenses remains one of the most widely cited frameworks for understanding this phenomenon. Within this typology, one form of drug corruption arises from organizationally sanctioned objectives tied to drug enforcement, where officers may justify perjury, procedural violations, and the planting of evidence as necessary for securing convictions. While Carter’s typology offers a valuable framework for analysis, it also illustrates how involvement in the drug trade can foster criminal behavior that extends beyond organizational misconduct, encompassing offenses committed for personal advantage, including payoffs, shakedowns, robberies, and opportunistic theft.

Kraska and Kappeler (1995) caution that officers who use drugs recreationally expose themselves to heightened risks of manipulation and coercion by street-level dealers. Carter (1990), echoing the findings of the Mollen Commission (Baer Jr & Armao, 1995), observes that the dynamics of corruption have evolved in response to shifts within drug markets. In particular, the proliferation of crack houses, which present easily exploitable targets, along with the high volume of drug trafficking, has heightened frustrations with drug-law enforcement and, in turn, reshaped both the nature and extent of police involvement in drug-related corruption.

Kraska and Kappeler (1995), through their examination of a single medium-sized police department, provided what is often regarded as the only empirical study on on-duty drug use among police officers. Their research linked widespread drug-related corruption to factors such as rationalization, opportunity structures, and declining public trust. Findings demonstrated that 10% of police officers engaged in on-duty use of non-prescribed drugs—including stimulants, hallucinogens, and barbiturates—whereas 20% admitted to consuming marijuana at least two times a month.

Another important source of information on police drug use comes from official drug tests. Yet, this evidence remains limited, as most reports focus on The results reflect data from only one police agency, as broader, systematic national records tracking on how many officers fail these tests remain lacking. What is available paints a worrying picture. For instance, a journalistic investigation revealed that 14 officers from the Los Angeles Police Department failed drug tests between 2000 and 2006, while 75 officers from the Boston Police Department tested positive between 1999 and 2006. Notably, in Boston, cocaine accounted for over 81% of reported cases, prompting police chiefs to acknowledge that it had likely supplanted marijuana

as the “drug of choice” among officers (Smalley, 2017). Evidence from other countries indicates that this issue is not confined to the United States. In Australia, self-report surveys within a single police agency revealed a broader spectrum of drug use, including marijuana, amphetamines, cocaine, ecstasy, heroin, ketamine, and even non-prescription steroids (Gorta, 2009). Although these findings are somewhat fragmented, they highlight a troubling reality: police officers, despite their role in enforcing drug laws, are not immune to the same temptations and risks faced by the communities they serve.

Profit-motivated crimes within the New York Police Department (NYPD) have included a wide spectrum of offenses, ranging from larceny, insurance fraud, and burglary to receiving and concealing stolen property, as well as more violent acts such as robbery, forcible rape, manslaughter, and aggravated assault (Kane & White, 2009). Building on this, scholars like Fyfe, Kane, and White have broadened the study of NYPD misconduct to capture the diversity of crimes committed by officers. Stinson and colleagues further argue that profit-driven offenses represent a measurable dimension of police crime, offering valuable insights into how misconduct unfolds over the course of officers’ careers across non-federal law enforcement agencies in the United States. Their findings suggest that motivations and patterns of crime vary significantly by officer characteristics. For example, female officers are more likely to engage in financially motivated crimes, whereas less experienced officers tend to be involved in violent offenses (Stinson Sr, 2015). Interestingly, school resource officers stand out as a group rarely implicated in financially driven misconduct, suggesting that role-specific contexts influence the nature of police crime (Stinson Sr et al., 2015).

While earlier scholars, such as Carter (1990), documented the prevalence of crimes committed by police—including involvement in the drug trade and substance abuse—they primarily focused on how drug-related activities create conditions for additional offenses. However, Carter’s study did not clearly explain the mechanisms through which drug trade and drug use by police officers led to other forms of criminal behavior. Similarly, researchers such as Fyfe, Kane, and White examined a broader spectrum of police misconduct within the New York Police Department (NYPD), identifying instances of violent robbery, murder, theft, burglary, and other property-related crimes committed by officers (Kane & White, 2009). These studies collectively highlight that police misconduct is multifaceted, encompassing both drug-related offenses and other serious criminal acts.

Despite these studies, none explicitly examined the direct implications of police misconduct on national security. It is against this backdrop that the present study seeks to

address this knowledge gap by investigating how crimes committed by police officers influence national security, with a particular focus on Nairobi County, Kenya

2.3 Prevalence of Crimes Committed by Police Officers

According to Stinson, there is a dearth of official nationwide data that is gathered, maintained, shared, or made available to inform crime management, which contributes to the lack of statistics regarding crimes committed by law enforcement personnel (Stinson Sr, 2015). In the absence of any significant official data, researchers have studied police crimes using alternative methodologies. These techniques include internal agency records, surveys, field research, quasi-experiments, and investigative reports from numerous independent commissions tasked with documenting this phenomenon in specific jurisdictions (Stinson Sr., 2015). Furthermore, the absence of data on police misconduct and crimes is problematic because, in order to develop strategies and policies to minimize misconduct and police crimes, they must be documented and described in a way that is systematic and generalizable (Kraska & Kappeler, 1995)

Crimes committed by police officers are not uncommon, as evidenced by a limited number of published studies. For example, Stinson (2015) documented 6,724 criminal cases involving the arrest of 5,545 individual officers over a seven-year period in the United States. These officers were employed across 1,205 counties and independent cities in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, serving within 2,529 state and local law enforcement agencies. According to Stinson and Watkins (2014), police arrests occur across a wide range of jurisdictions, including suburbs, small towns, rural areas, and large metropolitan centers. The data indicate that hundreds of officers are arrested each year for serious offenses such as murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, rape, and robbery, demonstrating that police-perpetrated crimes are far from isolated incidents.

Even though there is evidence that police officers committed serious crimes against humanity that were sexually degrading, humiliating, and violating in Sao Paulo in 1992, there is no evidence of police officers' arrests or criminal justice process actions initiated, although Brinks indicated that the police killed 11,692 people, which are outright murders (Caldeira, 2002). Similarly, in Rio de Janeiro, police-related killings rose significantly after 1999. By 2006, such killings accounted for 14% of the total 7,594 recorded homicides in the city (Amnesty International, 2008). Likewise, the Network on Police Reform in Nigeria (NOPRIN) reported that incidents of violent robberies and other crimes against humanity perpetrated by police were also documented in 2007.

However, there was no documentation of the number of police arrests and charges for these grave violations of both domestic and international law. The Kenya Police are responsible for 25% of all crimes in the nation, according to the Economic Survey, which reveals corruption within the law enforcement agency (KNBS, 2016). Officers in uniform were responsible for 24,647 of the 72,490 crimes reported nationwide in 2015, according to the 2016 Kenya Economic Survey report. A security report by Bob Morgan (BM) also claimed that three civil police officers stole KES 6 million from two businesspeople at a lodge in Eastleigh, Nairobi (Alogo, 2015). Although reports from other agencies indicate that police crimes are widespread, there are no official records of officers committing crimes.

These studies, however, provide limited statistical data on the scope and extent of crimes committed by law enforcement officers, making empirical research on police misconduct particularly challenging. To address this gap, the present study aims to collect comprehensive and reliable data on crimes committed by police officers in Nairobi County, Kenya. The findings will be used to inform policies and strategies designed to deter police misconduct and reduce insecurity within the county.

It is a widely accepted fact that job dismissals can lead to frustration and desperation for the victim due to the loss of disposable income (Bausman & Goe, 2004). Consequently, the victim may be predisposed to find an alternative means of survival and meet basic needs (Bausman & Goe, 2004). Whereas this may appear to be the norm in most professions, this study assumes that the situation is different if the victim is only trained how to use a gun and lethal weapon, such as members of the Kenya Defence Forces (KDFs) and other disciplined services, such as the Kenya National Police Service, with no other skills. Despite this, no documented study has been conducted in this area, which is the rationale for this study. Hence, this study aims to examine the relationship between job loss or dismissal of police officers and the rise in crime in Nairobi County.

Losing a job makes things more difficult because most victims' standard of living declines significantly, which increases pressure to maintain the lifestyle one was accustomed to through unplanned or even unlawful means (Bausman & Goe, 2004). The reasoning behind this is that people who have lost their jobs and are therefore not able to support themselves financially might be more inclined to commit crimes than people who are still employed or have a steady income, because they stand to lose more if they are caught. Reducing crime to a manageable level across the country will have several advantages, including improved housing and education standards, a decrease in inequality, and increased domestic trade and foreign investment, which will spur economic growth (Sickels, 2014).

According to Agnew (2005), police officers who are dismissed often receive little to no benefits, which can generate feelings of anger and frustration. This emotional response can interfere with cognitive processes that normally support non-criminal coping strategies, making individuals more prone to engage in criminal behaviour. As a result, they may overlook information that could help resolve their problems and struggle to articulate complaints effectively. Agnew further argues that anger diminishes both the perceived and actual costs of committing crimes, as individuals feel justified in their actions by the injustices they have experienced. Moreover, anger can heighten motivation, foster a sense of control or power, and fuel desires for revenge or retribution, all of which can make criminal behaviour appear more acceptable or appealing.

Sacking of the so-called “rogue” members of the police service in the US, and most African countries, South Africa, Nigeria, Angola, Benin, Cameroon, has become the most common norm; little is known about what these officers do out there, given the sophisticated weaponry skills that they possess. In recent times in Kenya violent crime rates have been increasing tremendously from murders, terrorism, carjacking, serious assault, rape and kidnapping giving the security agencies sleepless nights on what could be the likely cause of sharp increase of these crimes and who in particular is behind architecture all these smartly knitted crimes and at the same time be able to circumvent the drug nets of the law enforcement agencies.

These studies, however, did not establish a direct link between dismissed police officers and increases in crime, nor did they examine the broader implications for national security. This study, therefore, seeks to fill this knowledge gap by exploring the correlation between officer dismissals, rising crime rates, and resulting insecurity in Nairobi County. This investigation forms the primary rationale for the present research.

2.4 Causal Factors of Police Crimes and Insecurity

Researchers have looked at situational, individual, organizational, and community-level variables as predictors. The decision to use coercive and lethal force is most strongly influenced by situational factors, according to studies that compare them to other factors, including those at the officer, organizational, and community levels (Frydl & Skogan, 2004). In cases where law enforcement agencies have used deadly force, researchers have most frequently examined the impact of situational factors (Alpert & Smith, 1999; Fyfe, 1981). This field of study has focused chiefly on the clear connection between an officer's decision to use lethal force and the degree of situational risk they face. Situational risk is the immediate situation in which law

enforcement must decide whether or not to shoot. Based on observational data, Sickels' research indicates that situational factors are also the main determinants of non-deadly use by law enforcement agencies (Sickels, 2014).

According to the Mollen Commission, police crimes are primarily motivated by greed (Baer Jr & Armao, 1995). This is accurate if the traditional definition of police corruption includes actions like accepting and demanding bribes to stop enforcing the law or to permit an illegality or crime. However, it remains unclear whether officers who engage in activities such as welfare or insurance fraud, shoplifting, theft, drug dealing, or robberies and burglaries during off-duty hours should be classified under broader forms of police corruption (Fyfe, 1981). Fyfe argues that police corruption is more complex than previously thought, reframing these acts as “profit-motivated crimes.” Similarly, Carter (1990) described police misconduct as part of a “profit-driven cycle” to capture the economic incentives behind such behaviours. Ross (2001) further differentiates between “economically motivated” and “non-economically motivated” police actions, placing some offenses within the category of profit-driven crimes, consistent with Carter’s earlier classification (Carter, 1990; Ross, 2001).

Scholars such as Skogan and Frydl (2004) have described crimes committed by police as being influenced by a range of individual, organizational, community-level, and situational predictors. However, the Mollen Commission introduced a different paradigm for understanding the causes of crime by police officers, which is worth exploring (Baer Jr. & Armao, 1995). According to the commission, the primary precipitant of crime committed by police is greed. There is, however, no study that has tried to explain how crimes committed by police, whether caused by individual, organizational, situational, and community-level factors, or even by greed, may contribute to more serious crimes. This study assumes that if greed, as stated by the Mollen Commission, is a precipitant of crimes committed by police, then at this epoch of terror threats and related activities, it can be a dangerous bait that jeopardizes the state's security and safety (Baer Jr & Armao, 1995).

These studies failed to show the connection links between crimes committed by police and individual, organizational, situation, and community-level causal factors of crime or even greed by police officers, hence this study is out to fill the knowledge gap by testing the effect of these variables on crime causation and their implications to national security.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by two theoretical frameworks: the Routine Activities Theory and the Rational Choice Theory.

2.5.1 Rational Choice Theory

The fundamental premise of this theory is that criminals make logical choices prior to committing crimes (Dahlbäck, 2003). Essentially, the framework advises people to maximize their utility by balancing possible costs and benefits when making decisions. Nevertheless, rationality is a complex concept that can be viewed from a variety of angles. According to Dahlbäck (2003), reliability refers to the idea that individuals' behavior stems from deliberate choices made among various possible courses of action. Therefore, rather than making decisions at random or without much thought, a person bases their choices on a well-considered assessment of all available options. People use reason to make decisions by evaluating all of the options that are available to them, figuring out the potential consequences of each option, and then calculating the expected advantages of each course of action (Dahlbäck, 2003). The course of action that is thought to be the most advantageous will be selected, which may involve taking illegal action.

Researcher (Brown & Altman, 1981) posit that rationality can be viewed as a sequence of decisions, wherein the offender makes successive rational decisions over a prolonged period of time. The offender must make more decisions after deciding at one point in time, which will result in a new set of options. Every choice the criminal makes changes subsequent decisions, increasing the likelihood of some crimes and targets while decreasing the likelihood of others. In conclusion, the offender's choices are interconnected and influenced by earlier choices. Several choices made by the offender culminate in the actual criminal act. Other scholars have suggested that criminal behavior results from a series of judgments rather than a single decision, with offenders exhibiting an incremental decision-making process (Hochstetler, 2001).

Cornish and Clarke (2014) highlight a clear distinction between criminal involvement and event-specific decisions. Engaging in criminal activity is a multi-step process that unfolds over time, whereas event decisions are more immediate and narrowly focused. Their model emphasizes that rational decision-making extends beyond the act of committing a crime itself, with the decision-making process often occurring well before the offense takes place. Similarly, Rengert and Wasilchick (2000) propose that offenders must not only decide to engage in criminal behavior but also plan how and where the crime will occur. In this framework as well, critical decisions are made well in advance of the criminal act.

Although rational choice theory has grown increasingly sophisticated, its core premise remains the same: individuals weigh the benefits, costs, and risks associated with criminal behavior (Dahlbäck, 2024). Within this framework, people are assumed to make decisions by conducting a utilitarian analysis of potential outcomes. Importantly, this decision-making

process is not uniform across all crimes; it varies both between categories of offenses and within specific types of criminal acts. Cornish and Clarke (2014) describe this as the “crime-specific focus” of rationality, emphasizing that treating broad categories of crime as homogeneous can obscure critical differences in offender reasoning. For example, the factors influencing a decision to commit a home-invasion robbery may differ markedly from those shaping a carjacking. These distinctions underscore the importance of applying rational choice theory in a nuanced way, tailored to the specific context of each type of crime.

Rational choice theory explains how police officers may commit crimes by balancing the likely rewards and penalties of their actions, as they perceive a low chance of being caught. This indicates that police officers' motivations for committing crimes are driven by their aspirations and objectives, which in turn create opportunities for criminal activity. With a distinct set of anticipated costs and benefits, every crime represents a different decision-making process. Therefore, the type of crime being considered has a significant impact on the rational choice made by criminals.

2.5.2 Routine Activities Theory

Similar to rational choice theory, the Routine Activities Theory has evolved alongside an expanding body of literature, yet the core framework proposed by Cohen and Felson has remained largely consistent (Cohen et al., 1980). The theory posits that crime occurs when three elements converge in time and space: a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian. Any changes in the daily routines of these three actors—offenders, potential targets, or guardians—can influence crime rates. Specifically, if routine activities create more opportunities for motivated offenders to access suitable targets without capable supervision, the likelihood of crime increases (Cohen et al., 1980). Moreover, patterns of victimization can reflect the daily movement and activities of potential targets, helping to explain differences in crime exposure across socioeconomic status, age, race, and gender (Cohen et al., 1981).

Spatial considerations have been integrated into the original Routine Activities Theory proposed by Cohen and Felson (1979) and subsequent research. A key aspect of the spatial component involves the proximity between potential offenders and suitable targets (Cohen et al., 1981). As the physical distance between motivated criminals and potential victims decreases through everyday routines, the likelihood of encounters—and thus victimization—increases. In other words, individuals who are physically closer to offenders are at greater risk of becoming victims. Cohen et al. (1981) further note that the probability of victimization rises with greater target exposure or visibility. Additionally, the demographic composition of a

community can influence criminal activity, as crime rates tend to increase when the presence of capable guardians declines, creating more opportunities for offenses to occur (Cohen et al., 1980).

The applicability of Routine Activities Theory to robbery is particularly evident. Robbery aligns closely with what Cohen and Felson (1979) described as “direct-contact predatory violations,” forming a central component of their model. The theory also highlights the role of mobility and offender travel, reinforcing the idea that crime occurs when a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian converge in time and space. In this regard, Routine Activities Theory emphasizes that movement and spatial dynamics are integral to understanding criminal activity. Over time, the theory has evolved into a valuable framework for examining journey-to-crime patterns by integrating spatial considerations into its original premise. Like Rational Choice Theory, it maintains that criminal opportunities are crime-specific and cannot be generalized across all types of offenses (Cohen & Felson, 1979).

According to the routine activity theory, police officers commit crimes whenever there is a chance that they will commit a crime, engage in misconduct, abuse their authority, or misuse their powers. Criminal opportunities are shaped by the convergence of a motivated offender, suitable targets, and the absence of capable guardians, such as accountability mechanisms. For instance, a vacant house may present an ideal target for a burglary but is unlikely to be the setting for crimes like rape or robbery, which require direct interaction between individuals. In this way, the specific patterns of routine activities within a community play a critical role in determining the likelihood of different types of crimes (Stangeland, 1998).

2.6 Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework illustrates the relationships between the variables under investigation. The independent variables are police officer crimes, the frequency of police crimes, and the factors that lead to them, whereas the dependent variable is security. There will be no crime if mitigating factors, such as officer supervision, transparency, accountability systems, and security operating policies, are improved. On the other hand, insufficient mitigation measures will result in continued crime and insecurity. Figure 2.1 displays the relationship between the variables.

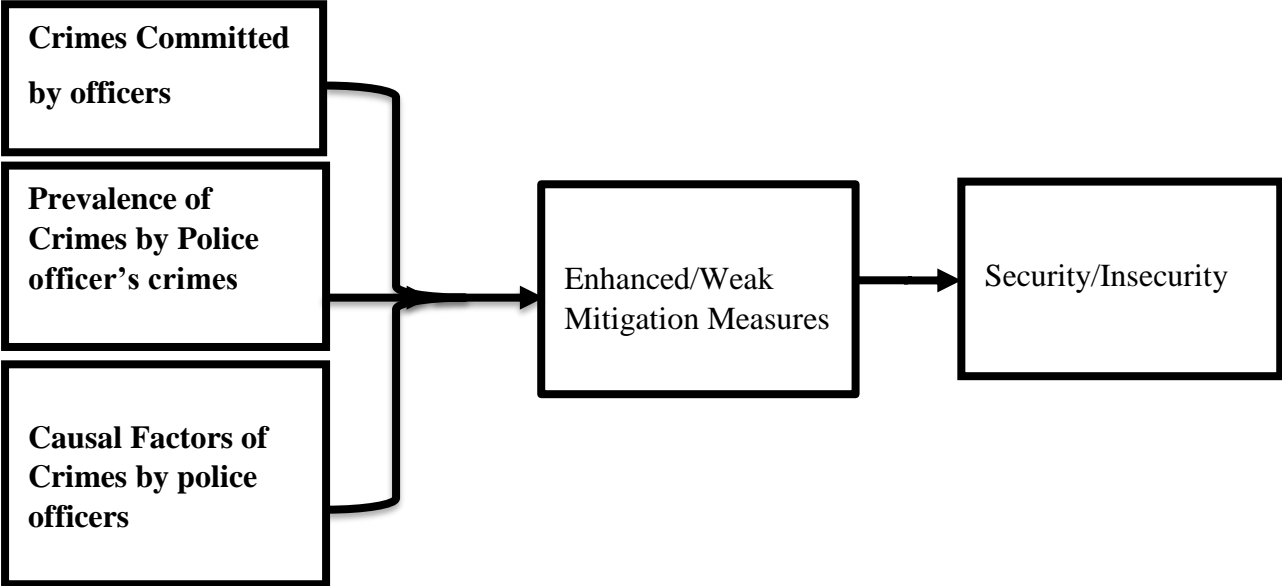


Figure 2. 1
Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter entails the research design, study area, target population, sampling procedure, data collection tools, and the method that was used in the analysis of data. These sub-sections are explained below.

3.2 Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches to capture the breadth and depth of the phenomenon under investigation. By integrating multiple perspectives—including diverse methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation—the design enhanced both understanding and corroboration of findings (Johnson et al., 2007). The selection of this approach was motivated by the need to provide a comprehensive explanation of the relationships between the variables of interest.

3.3 Study Location

The Milimani Law Courts are situated in Nairobi County, Kenya, on Upper Hill Road. There are more than 100 courtrooms and judicial chambers there. According to the Constitution, the Milimani Law Courts function at two levels: subordinate courts, which are presided over by magistrates, and superior courts, which are presided over by judges. In order to facilitate the effective administration of justice, subordinate courts are further separated into four hierarchical tiers: Senior Principal Magistrates' Courts (SPM), which are headed by Senior Principal Magistrates, and Chief Magistrate Courts (CM), which the Chief Magistrate heads. Under the leadership of the Principal Magistrate, the PM is the Principal Magistrate's Court. Both Senior Resident Magistrates and Resident Magistrates are in charge of Senior Resident Magistrate Courts (SRM) and Resident Magistrate Courts (RM), respectively.

The site was chosen because they have jurisdiction to try all types of criminal cases, ranging from capital offenses and other serious crimes such as treason and terror-related crimes and violent robberies to other minor offences. In addition, most cases relating to government officers are always referred to the Milimani Courts for arbitration.

It is worth noting that even though Nairobi County has the highest number of Kenya police service officers (about 8000) distributed among 13 sub-counties, only sub-counties with the highest numbers of convicted or charged officers were included in the study.

Finally, the Kenyan Police Headquarters, located in Nairobi, served as a source of secondary data for this study. The office provided valuable information on dismissed police officers and their contact details. A map of the study site is presented in Figure 3.1

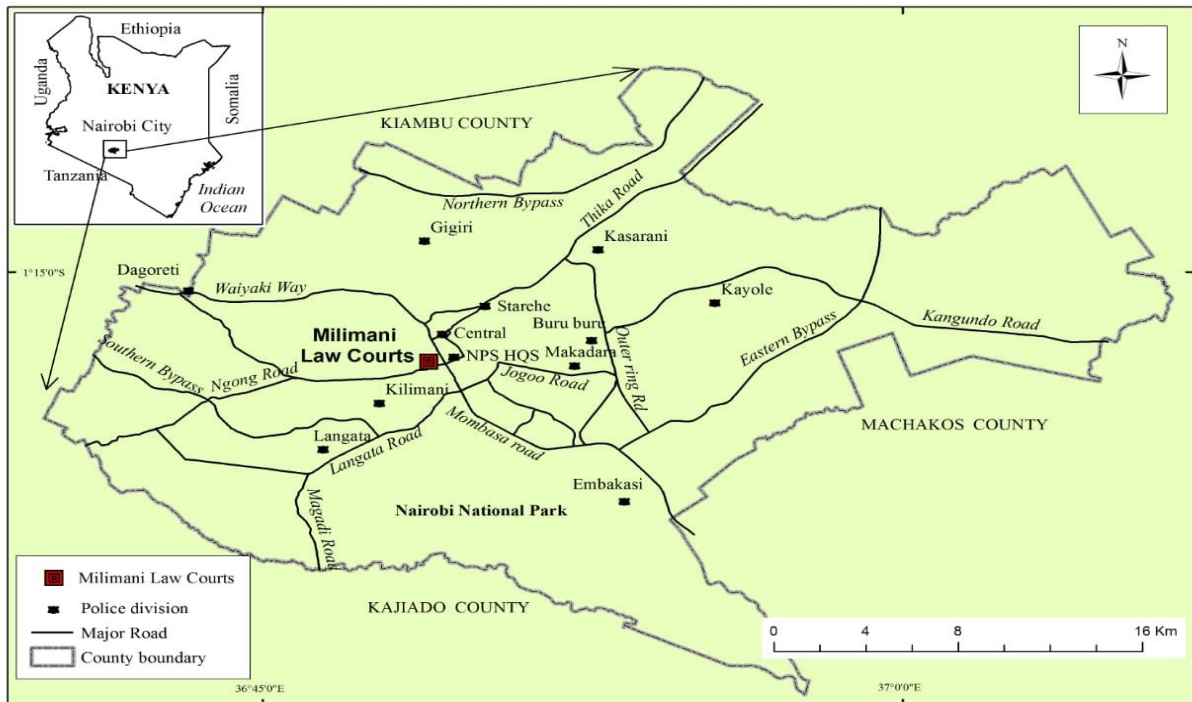


Figure 3. 1
Map of the Study

3.4 Target Population, Sampling Procedure, and Sample Size

This study targeted two primary population groups. The first group consisted of serving police officers who had been charged in court for committing crimes. The second group included dismissed police officers who had been arrested, charged, or convicted of criminal offenses. In addition, five categories of key informants (KIs) were selected, including magistrates, crime victims, officers from the Kenya Crime Research Centre, investigating officers, and senior police officials. Purposive sampling, specifically convenience sampling, was employed to select all respondents for the study.

The National Police Service (NPS) Annual Reports for 2017, 2018, and 2019 state that 300 crimes were committed by Nairobi County police officers. Officers who were fired from the police force were responsible for 187 of these crimes. This figure served as the study's target population.

According to Kothari, 10 % - 30 % of the target population is an optimum sample that fulfils the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability, and flexibility. In line with these requirements, this study purposively selected a sample of 90 police officers (30% of the target population) who had been charged in court. From the court case files and prosecution records, the names of charged police officers and victims of their crimes, their working stations, and the officers investigating these cases were obtained. Investigating officers were used to locate all charged officers and victims of their crimes (the respondents) for data collection purposes (Kothari, 2004).

For purposes of inclusion and exclusion, an equal number of respondents of dismissed and serving officers was obtained. Additionally, for the purpose of supplementing data that was collected from charged police officers, 30 additional K.I. were included in the study. These included: Magistrates (4), Senior Police Officers (3), Senior Officers Kenya Crime Research Centre (3), 10 Investigation officers of violent crimes committed by the officers, and 10 victims of crimes committed by police. Hence, this study comprised a total of 120 respondents. A summary of all respondents in this study is presented in Table 3.1

Table 3.1

Total Summary of the Sample

Group	Description	Sample Size
Main Respondents	Serving police officers who have been charged in court.	45
	Dismissed police officers who have been	45
KI	Magistrates	4
	Senior Police Officers	3
	Senior Officers, Kenya Crime Research Centre	3
	Investigation officers of violent crimes	10
	Victims of crimes	10
Total		120

3.5 Sources of Data

Data for this study was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected directly from the respondents through interviews and questionnaires. Secondary data, on the other hand, was drawn from official records, including court proceedings, prosecution files, and dismissal reports obtained from the police headquarters.

3.6 Units of Analysis

The units of analysis in this study comprised serving police officers charged in court, dismissed police officers charged in court, victims of police crimes, Magistrates, Senior Police Officers, officers from the Kenya Crime Research Centre, and investigators handling violent crime cases

3.7 Methods and Tools of Data Collection

Three methods of data collection were used.

3.7.1 Questionnaire

The primary respondents—two groups of respondents: active police officers charged with crimes and police officers who had been fired—were given a questionnaire. The probing nature of both closed-ended and open-ended questions allowed for the extraction of detailed information about the issue being studied.

3.7.2 Interview Method

This approach was used to collect insights from key informants, namely senior officials from the Kenya Crime Research Centre, magistrates, senior-ranking police officers, and detectives involved in investigating violent crimes perpetrated by police officers.

3.7.3 Content / Document Analysis

According to Palmquist et al. (2020), content analysis is a systematic research method used to identify, categorize, and interpret the presence of specific words, concepts, or patterns within texts or sets of texts. This approach not only enables the quantification of occurrences but also facilitates deeper analysis of their meanings and interrelationships, allowing researchers to draw inferences about underlying messages, the authors' intentions, the target audience, and the broader cultural or historical context in which the texts were produced. In the context of this study, content analysis was employed to scrutinize court case files involving police officers implicated in criminal activity. Both conceptual analysis—focusing on the frequency and presence of recurring themes—and relational analysis—examining the

connections between concepts—were applied to uncover patterns that reveal the nature and implications of crimes committed by police officers (Palmquist et al., 2020).

3.8 Data Analysis

The responses obtained from questionnaires, key informant interviews (K.I.s), and content analysis reports were systematically examined during the data analysis phase. To facilitate interpretation, qualitative data were categorized numerically into a limited set of groups. This process was complemented by the inclusion of direct quotations from respondents, which provided depth and context to the findings. Content analysis was specifically employed to trace the occurrence of selected words, themes, and concepts within court documents, enabling the researcher to quantify and interpret both their meanings and interrelationships. By applying both conceptual and relational analyses, the study was able to uncover patterns in the court case files of police officers implicated in criminal activities. Thematic presentation was adopted to organize and interpret qualitative findings, while descriptive statistics—such as tables, percentages, and bar graphs—were employed to summarize and display quantitative data, thereby offering a clearer picture of trends and relationships within the dataset.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The researcher secured the necessary approvals from several institutions to conduct the study, including the Egerton University Ethical Review Board, Vigilance House, the Kenya National Crime Research Centre, the Nairobi County Police Command, and the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). All participants were clearly informed of the academic purpose of the research and assured that their confidentiality, as well as the integrity of the information they provided, would be safeguarded. This enabled them to make informed decisions about whether or not to participate. To further encourage openness and cooperation, participants who were reluctant to share personal information were not compelled to do so, ensuring respect for individual comfort levels and ethical compliance throughout the data collection process.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the study's findings, along with their discussion, structured according to the research objectives. The results are organised thematically, with sections and subsections corresponding to each objective to ensure clarity and coherence. The chapter begins with a brief introduction, followed by an overview of the response rate and the demographic profile of the participants. It then provides a detailed presentation and analysis of the findings, contextualising them within the study objectives and relevant literature.

4.2 Response Rate

The study reached all 120 respondents (100% response rate) as depicted in Table 4.1. Out of the 120 respondents, 90 were the primary respondents, while 30 were the K.I.s. According to Amin (2005), a 70% response rate is adequate for any study. The total response rate of 100% in this study, therefore, implied an accurate depiction of the situation on the ground.

Table 4.1

Summary of Respondents

Respondents	Description	Population Size
Main Respondents	Serving Police officers	45
	Dismissed Police officers	45
K.I	Magistrates	4
	Senior Police officers	4
	Senior Officers Kenya Crime Research	2
	Investigation officers of violent crimes	10
	Victims of crimes	10
	TOTAL	120

4.3 Socio-Demographic Information

The discussion of demographic information was organized around three sets of respondents, as outlined in the subsequent sections. The characteristics examined include the respondents' sex, age, level of education, and religious affiliation.

4.3.1 Serving Police Officers Charged in Court

The research aimed to evaluate the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents serving in the National Police Service who, although charged in court, remained in service under interdiction. The analysis focused on key attributes, namely gender, age, educational attainment, and length of service. These characteristics are presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2

Socio-Demographic Information of Serving Police Officers Charged in Court.

	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	43	60.0
	Female	2	40.0
	Totals	45	100.0
Age	20-29	13	13.0
	30-39	30	42.0
	40 and above	2	45.0
	Totals	45	100.0
Education	Secondary	30	48.0
	Diploma	13	22.0
	University	2	20.0
	Totals	45	100

As indicated in Table 4.2, the male respondents of those who were charged in Court were the majority (60%) compared to their female counterparts (40%). This may be explained by the fact that the Kenya national police service profession and those who work in the defence service, especially in most patriarchal societies, are male-dominated. Concerning age, the majority (42%) of serving police officers charged in Court were between 30-39 years of age. Regarding education level, however, most accused serving police officers only attained secondary education (48%). Most people who join the police service are those who did not excel academically to pursue their studies beyond secondary education.

4.3.2 Dismissed Police Officers Charged in Court

The study also sought to establish the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents who had been dismissed from the National Police Service. The analysis considered their sex, age, level of education, and length of service prior to dismissal. These details are summarized in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3*Socio-Demographic Information of Dismissed Police Officers charged in Court*

	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	45	100.0
	Female	0	00.0
	Totals	45	100.0
Age	20-29	13	13.0
	30-39	30	42.0
	40 and above	2	45.0
	Totals	45	100.0
Education	Secondary	30	48.0
	Diploma	13	22.0
	University	2	20.0
	Totals	45	100

As indicated in Table 4.3, all (100%) dismissed Kenya police officers charged in Court were males. Concerning age, the majority (42%) of dismissed police officer respondents charged in Court were between 30-39 years of age. Regarding education, however, most dismissed police officers had only attained secondary education (48%). The percentage of diploma-level respondents who were dismissed police officers charged in court was 22%. Only 20% of dismissed police officers charged in Court attained a university education.

4.3.3 Key Informants

This study consisted of thirty (30) Key informants: 5 women (6.7%) and 25 men (93.3%). They comprised of: Magistrates (4), Senior Police Officers (4), Senior Officers Kenya Crime Research Centre (2), 10 Investigatots handling violent offences committed by the officers, and 10 victims of violent crimes. Twenty-nine (96.7%) of the respondents were Christians while one (3.3%) was Muslim. The fact that the majority of respondents were Christians may be attributed to the fact that Kenya's population is mainly Christian.

4.4 Nature of Crimes Committed by Serving Police Officers between 2017 and 2020

The first objective of the study was to examine the nature of crimes committed by serving police officers between 2017 and 2020, as recorded at the Milimani Criminal Courts. The findings are summarized and presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4*Criminal Activities Linked to Serving Police Officers (2017–2020)*

Crime category	Nature of crimes	Frequency(n=45)	Percentage (%)
Violent Crimes	Armed robberies	10	8.5
	Manslaughters	5	11.9
	Grievous bodily harm	4	21.9
	Injuries through Berserk shooting	1	1.0
	Total	20	43.3
Economic motivated	Frauds	2	11.9
	Stealing	9	9.0
	Bribery	4	8.0
	Extortion	3	11.9
	Total	18	40.8
Drug Related	Drug abuse	4	7.0
	Drug Peddling	1	3.0
	Total	5	10.0
Alcohol related	Affray	2	5.7
	Grand Total	45	100

According to Table 4.4, crimes committed by serving police officers and reported to the courts were categorized into four groups: violent crimes (43.3%), economically motivated crimes (40.0%), drug-related offenses (8.9%), and alcohol-related offenses (2.2%). The violent crimes included armed robbery, murder, rape, assault, sexual assault, kidnapping, carjacking, threats of bodily harm, harassment, grievous bodily harm, and incidents involving indiscriminate shooting. Among the crimes with economic motivations were extortion, fraud, theft, money laundering, and intellectual property crimes. The lowest-ranked crimes were those involving drugs, including drug abuse, drug trafficking, and drug peddling, as well as crimes resulting from alcohol use. These crimes are noteworthy because they were committed by employees who were hired and trained by an organization with extensive constitutional mandates to uphold the rule of law, legitimately prevent crimes, and maintain public safety and security. Protecting internal security, fostering goodwill, and preserving public confidence are all part of the police's broad mandate, which they are sworn to enforce. National security may

be jeopardized by these indications of law enforcement agency conduct and accountability issues, abuse of power, and legitimacy deficiencies.

Evidently, there was a correlation between the unwarranted use of deadly force and certain violent crimes, like murders (11–9%), because of factors that allegedly forced officers to use their weapons. According to a key informant.

Officers are more prone to using firearms because of various situational factors. Officers frequently assess situational risk, including scenarios where a suspect possesses a gun or other hazardous weapons, or when potential harm is directed at law enforcement, civilians, or property. According to an IPOA Investigating Officer based in Nairobi, most of these circumstances are situational and are further intensified by suspect resistance (Male Key Informant, 30s, 2023). Factors such as the immediate threat posed to officers, attempts by suspects to seize firearms, and heightened resistance encountered during arrests were identified as major contributors to violent crimes, including murder, manslaughter, and bodily harm resulting from excessive use of force.

Violent crimes, such as robberies, were due to an untamed desire for quick and easy money to get rich. This greed makes the affected officers stop at nothing to acquire wealth. These armed robberies happen by police officers themselves or police officers conspiring and colluding with known criminals.

As a key informant stated,

“Rogue police officers in Nairobi go as far as committing robberies themselves or even worse still, collude and conspire with criminals to rob the public. It is unfortunate and regrettable.” (Source: Male key informant in his 40s, Senior Police Officer in Nairobi, 2023).

Specific factors like greed for quick wealth have led officers to act with impulsive behaviour, engaging in criminal activities with aggression and committing violent crimes, such as robbery with violence and other violent acts against people who deserve their protection. Crimes such as manslaughter, where the police officers were involved, were due to myriad factors, including depression.

One key informant stated that;

“Some junior police officers, because of stress, frustrations, and depression, end up fatally shooting their senior officers, grievously injuring other officers, family members, and

even civilians before turning the firearm on themselves.” (Source: Male key informant in his 40s, Senior Police Officer in Nairobi, 2023).

Police officers experiencing a depressed mood feel disgruntled or irritable and are more likely to commit violent crimes against their colleagues, civilians, and family members. This may also influence the use of unreasonable force that is unwarranted in certain situations, especially when confronted with frustration. The above findings, therefore, imply that whereas serving police officers may use deadly force and be implicated for committing crimes, in some cases, as in the case of death threats from armed suspects themselves, the officers are compelled to do so. Looking at it differently, perhaps it is to assess the officer's equipment, such as the availability of bulletproof jackets, before vilifying or condemning them. Other cases are due to personal factors that cause the police officers to misuse their firearms.

It should be noted that although 40 percent of active police officers have committed crimes with economic motivations, this does not in any way justify any officer tasked with upholding the law and protecting the public from engaging in such behavior. It is possible that policymakers will investigate the welfare of police officers, including their compensation. Raising wages could solve this issue from the ground up.

A key informant stated this concerning economically motivated crimes,

Profit-motivated crimes committed by police officers—including theft, receiving stolen property, bribery, money laundering, and extortion—are largely driven by the pursuit of quick and illicit financial gain. According to a senior police officer in Nairobi, inadequate compensation within the service creates fertile ground for such misconduct, as officers may exploit their positions to accumulate illegal wealth (Female Key Informant, 40s, 2023).

As indicated in this study, 8.9 percent of serving police officers committed drug-related offences. The implication is what may transpire if the problem spreads through the influence of the few to the entire police service. Perhaps this crime should be seriously sanctioned. It is unthinkable, though, to even imagine why the officers were still serving in the first place, although the law presumes an accused person to be innocent until proven guilty.

A key informant stated this concerning economically motivated crimes,

“Poor remuneration is a key driver of profit-motivated crimes among police officers, with the desire to acquire quick illegal wealth emerging as the primary motivator. Such

crimes include including theft, receiving stolen property, bribery, money laundering, and extortion" (Female Key Informant, Senior Police Officer, Nairobi, 2023).

As indicated in this study, 8.9 percent of serving police officers committed drug-related offences. The implication is what may transpire if the problem spreads through the influence of the few to the entire police service. Perhaps this crime should be seriously sanctioned. It is unthinkable, though, to even imagine why the officers were still serving in the first place, although the law presumes an accused person to be innocent until proven guilty.

A respondent stated these concerning police officers' involvement in illegal drugs,

The temptation for officers to engage in drug-related criminality is substantial, given their frequent exposure to drugs, users, and traffickers. Moreover, officers can easily become ensnared in a cycle of drug peddling, trafficking, and other criminal activities, as numerous opportunities exist to make quick money through payoffs, shake-downs, robberies, and opportunistic thefts (Male key informant, Senior Police Officer, Nairobi, 2023).

Arguably, though 2.2 percent of serving police officers committed alcohol related crimes, these crimes may be linked to job-related aggression stressors, and as a result, because of their inability to cope, they opt into driving behaviour which predisposes them to criminal violence, such as killing their superiors and members of the public. Further, because this is likely to be a mental health issue, police authorities may need to look into it if public safety is to be guaranteed. Concerning alcohol-related crimes, one respondent stated that;

"One key respondent claimed that police officers who drank excessively had trouble handling the stress of their jobs, which resulted in unfavorable interactions with the public. Additionally, this can occasionally lead to domestic violence between them and their spouses, which can be lethal in certain situations. Sometimes intoxicated police officers start arguments with their superiors and start shooting at them, killing them, their loved ones, or themselves. To settle known or unknown scores, intoxicated police officers occasionally shoot members of the public." (Source: Male key informant in his 40s, Senior Police Officer in Nairobi, 2023).

Another respondent stated,

"Alcohol consumption has been linked to criminal activity due to its effects, which include weakening the will, destroying moral character, and impairing judgment and reasoning. Therefore, in the event of an internal or external attack, armed police officers drinking alcohol may be inherently dangerous to their security as well as the security of the community." (Source: Male key informant in his 20s, victim of crime in Nairobi, 2023).

The notion that alcohol creates crime-causing triggers can also be equated to "mother of all crimes, felonies, and serious crimes, and other equivalent heinous acts that are detrimental

to national security. Besides, officers' effectiveness during any operations is anchored on their ability to make sound judgments and decisions in case of an attack. Given that alcohol is known to affect officers' ability to make sound judgment by impairing the cognitive functioning of the human brain, this may further negatively affect the service delivery

Table 4.5

Nature of Armed Robberies Committed by Serving Police Officers Between 2017 And 2020)

Crime category		Frequency (n=12)	Percentage (%)
Armed Robberies	Street robberies	7	58
	Highway robberies	3	25
	Residential areas robberies	2	17
Total		12	100.0

As indicated in Table 4.5, the study identified three types of robbery crimes committed by serving police officers in the Nairobi County. Robberies in the streets were the highest (58%), followed by high robberies (25%), and lastly residential area robberies (17%). This was attributed to serving police officers utilizing criminality and misconduct as an opportunity for sustaining their lifestyle.

A key informant asserted that;

“Some police officers take loans that they misuse and end up in a vicious circle of borrowing. When borrowing becomes unsustainable, they become frustrated and sink more into drug abuse, which impairs their conscience. Eventually, they end up in crimes such as stealing and robberies to eke out a living, which is very tough in the city”

(Source: Male key informant in his 30s, Senior Police Officer in Nairobi, 2023).

Observably, crimes such as the robberies by the police officers are more complicated because they are committed by “government” trained criminals paid by taxpayers' money who, in turn, are the victims, which lowers public trust. The best way forward may be to benchmark with developed countries for international best practices, strategies, and policies for dealing with such errant police officers.

4.4.1 Perceptions of Investigating Officers on Crimes Committed by the Serving Police Officers

This study aimed to investigate the perceptions of officers regarding major crimes committed by dismissed police officers. These included Robberies, Abductions, Car Thefts, and Burglaries as shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

Perceptions of Investigating Officers on Crimes Committed by Serving Police Officers

		Mean score	Percent
On a scale of 1-10, how do you rate the prevalence of property crimes committed by the serving police officers?	Robberies	6	60.0
	Abductions	0	00.0
	Car Thefts	0	00.0
	Burglaries	2	20.0

As shown in Table 4.6, these are the perceptions of investigating officers regarding crimes committed by serving police officers. Robberies ranked highest at 60.0%, followed by burglaries at 20%, while abductions and car thefts were reported at 0.0%. This pattern aligns with broader perceptions of property-related crimes, suggesting that some serving officers may exploit opportunities for criminal gain, particularly when their salaries are inadequate to meet personal or family needs.

4.4.2 Key Informants' Opinion on Crimes Committed by Serving Police Officers

The section sought to establish the Key informants' opinions on the effects of organizational factors on crimes committed by police. The results are shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7

Key Informants' Opinion on Crimes Committed by Serving Police Officers

		Mean score	Percent
On a scale of 1-10, how do you rate the effect of the following organizational predisposing factors on police criminality	Greed	8	80.0
	Misconduct such as evidence tampering, unlawful search and seizure, witness interference and Disclosure of	6	60.0
	Low Pay	7	70.0

As indicated by Key informants in Table 4.7, the causes of police officers' criminality were mainly caused by Low pay (70%), greed (80%), and misconduct (60%) that led to offences against discipline, such as evidence tampering, interference with witnesses, Disclosure of privileged Information, unlawful search and seizure. This finding by Key informants is a pointer to an urgent need for police reform to look into Human resource policy issues and review existing legislation and regulations to sanction stiffer penalties for police misconduct, such as greed. This is because the implication of, for example, disclosure of privileged police Information may compromise the national security of the country.

4.5 Nature of Crimes Committed by Dismissed Police Officers between 2017 and 2020

The second goal was to determine the types of offenses that former police officers had committed and had been reported to the Milimani criminal courts. The court files and registers provided this information. Table 4.8 presents the findings.

Table 4. 8

Nature of Crimes Committed by Dismissed Police Officers Between 2017 And 2020

Crime category	Nature of crimes	Frequency (n=45)	Percentage (%)
Violent Crimes	Armed robberies	18	40.0
	Manslaughters	12	26.7
	Grievous body harm	0	0.0
	Burglaries	2	4.4
	Total	32	71.1
Economic motivated	Frauds	0	0.0
	Stealing	10	22.2
	Bribery	0	0.0
	Extortion	0	0.0
	Total	10	22.2
Drug Related	Drug abuse	0	0.0
	Drug Peddling	3	6.7
	Total	3	6.7
Alcohol related	Affray	0	0.0
	Grand Total	45	100.0

According to Table 4.8, the crimes committed by dismissed police officers and reported to the courts were classified into three main categories: violent crimes (71.1 percent), economically motivated crimes (22.2 percent), and drug-related crimes (6.7 percent). Violent crimes—such as murder, burglary, and armed robbery—constituted the majority, highlighting the serious threat posed by officers who had been removed from service. Economic crimes, which primarily included theft, ranked second. Drug-related offenses, limited mainly to peddling, accounted for the smallest proportion of cases. Notably, as indicated in Table 4.5, a distinct trend emerged in which property-related crimes featured prominently among dismissed officers, suggesting that their criminal involvement often extended beyond direct violence into acquisitive forms of offending.

Another trend that this study illustrated was the high frequency of property crimes committed by police officers who were fired. The largest percentage (40 percent) of the population engaged in armed robberies, with theft coming in second (22 percent). This raises the possibility that fired officers turned to crime as a means of employment or a source of income.

A respondent echoed this perspective by saying, *"When a police officer is terminated from their position, their family often struggles to meet basic needs, children may drop out of school, and issues such as drug abuse and domestic violence can arise. This cumulative effect can drive the desperate officer to resort to criminal activities. Additionally, dismissed police officers typically receive little to no benefits from their employment. This situation fosters feelings of anger, which can promote criminal behavior by disrupting the cognitive processes that would otherwise encourage non-criminal coping strategies, leading individuals to overlook helpful information that could resolve their issues and diminishing their capacity to articulate their grievances effectively. Moreover, anger lowers both the actual and perceived costs associated with committing crimes". It fosters a tendency to feel less remorse and rationalize their criminal actions, as they believe that the injustices they experienced warrant their wrongdoing"* (Source: Male key informant in his 30s, Senior Police Officer in Nairobi, 2023).

Notably, whether the officers were dismissed through legal or irregular means, their involvement in crimes such as robbery, theft, and burglary makes the community more susceptible to danger and insecurity, particularly because these offenses often involve the use of firearms. While the primary objective of the police is to prevent crime, this study argues that dismissing trained police officers for any reason is fundamentally misguided, as it potentially

increases societal danger by leading these individuals to commit more crimes. This perspective was further emphasized by a participant who remarked:

“There are concerns that police officers may work together with individuals who were terminated to engage in property and various other crimes” (Source: Male key informant in his 20s, Investigating Officer in Nairobi, 2023).

The observation, however, may extend beyond property crimes to encompass other serious offenses against the state, including terrorism-related activities. The potential consequences for national security if this occurs could be severe. This study highlighted another trend indicating a rise in robberies carried out by former police officers. Furthermore, the study analyzed the specifics of robbery offenses committed by dismissed police officers in Nairobi County, Kenya. The findings are shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9

Nature of Armed Robberies Committed by Dismissed Police Officers Between 2017 And 2020

Crime category		Frequency (n=18)	Percentage (%)
Armed Robberies	Street robberies	10	55.5
	Highway robberies	6	33.3
	Residential areas robberies	2	11.1
Total		18	100.0

The study found that ex-police officers in Nairobi County committed three different kinds of robbery crimes, as shown in Table 4.9. Street robberies accounted for the largest percentage of robberies (55 percent), followed by high robberies (33 percent), and residential area robberies (11 percent). As previously mentioned, this was ascribed to ex-police officers turning to crime as a means of employment or a source of income. The key informant's claim, which read as follows, reinforced this even more.

An inclination to always dismiss police officers may not be the most effective strategy, as it ultimately undermines the capacity of security organs to fight crime. Dismissed officers are not only trained in crime prevention but also in the use of lethal force when threatened, making them potentially dangerous once outside the service. As one key informant observed:

“Former police officers are very dangerous. There is one operating along the Mombasa–Nairobi highway who targets trailers and transit goods. After robbing, he sometimes kills the drivers, though the motive for the killings remains unclear. These cases have been reported to the highway police patrol, but little has been done. Crimes become extremely complex when perpetrated by skilled and seasoned former officers. Perhaps to improve Kenyan citizens’ security, expelled officers should be managed using best practices drawn from developed nations.”
 (Source: Male key informant in his 40s, Senior Police Officer in Nairobi, 2023).

Observably, the robberies by dismissed police officers are more intricate because they are committed by "government" trained criminals. The best way forward may be to benchmark with developed countries to learn from their international best practices and policies for dealing with such errant police officers

4.5.1 Perceptions of Investigating Officers on Crimes by Dismissed Police Officers

This study aimed to investigate the perceptions of officers regarding major crimes committed by dismissed police officers. These included robberies, abductions, car thefts, and burglaries, as shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10

Summary on Perceptions of 10 Investigating Officers on Crimes by Dismissed Officers

		Mean score	Percent
On a scale of 1-10, how do you rate the prevalence of property crimes committed by dismissed police officers?	Robberies	9	90.0
	Abductions	2	20.0
	Car Thefts	9	90.0
	Burglaries	3	30.0

According to Table 4.10, these reflect the views of investigating officers concerning crimes perpetrated by dismissed police personnel. Robberies and vehicle thefts were perceived as the most common offenses (90.0%), followed by burglaries (30%), and abductions came in last at 20.0%. This finding is consistent with the general belief about property crimes, indicating that former officers frequently resorted to criminal activities as a means of opportunity or earning a living.

4.5.2 Key Informants' Opinion on Crimes Committed by Dismissed Police Officers

The study additionally aimed to explore the views of key informants on how organizational factors affect the criminal behavior of dismissed police officers. These organizational dynamics—such as recruitment processes, disciplinary mechanisms, promotion structures, remuneration, and welfare provisions—were considered critical in shaping officers’ conduct both during and after their service. The findings from key informants were summarized and presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11

Key Informants' opinion on Dismissed Police Officer's Criminality

	Mean score	Percent
	9	90.0
	9	90.0
	9	90.0
	9	90.0
	7	70.0

As shown in Table 4.11, investigation officers claimed that low pay (70 percent), greed (90 percent), corruption (90 percent) that further protected illegal activities, evidence

tampering, theft, and disclosure of privileged information, the lack of alternative discipline mechanisms (90 percent) to punish errant police officers other than dismissing or removing them from service, and, lastly, the lack of a surveillance system or effective mechanism to monitor dismissed police officers (90 percent) were the main causes of criminality among dismissed police officers.

Naturally, avaricious police officers run the risk of being enticed into committing major crimes like terrorism and endangering the national security of the nation. Furthermore, police greed must be addressed because it may also be the driving force behind corruption that results in the protection of unlawful activity, evidence tampering or theft, and the disclosure of privileged information. By implication, it may be extremely harmful to even police officers' safety to reveal classified information or intelligence, such as secret police operations or critical installations.

4.6 Police Perceptions on the Relationship Between the Causal Factors of Crimes Committed by Police and Insecurity

The final objective was to explore police perceptions of the link between insecurity and the underlying causes of police-perpetrated crimes, drawing primarily on the perspectives of key informants. One respondent, a senior police officer in Nairobi (male, 40s), highlighted situational factors as a major influence. According to him, officers often evaluate the degree of risk in specific encounters based on situational cues such as suspect provocation or resistance. For instance, a suspect armed with a firearm or other lethal weapon may pose a direct threat to the officer or members of the public. Furthermore, comparatively low remuneration was identified as a driver of economically motivated offenses, including larceny, receipt of stolen property, bribery, money laundering, and extortion.

According to key informants, factors including resistance from suspects, situational risks, serious threats posed by suspects, and insufficient pay often play a role in police misconduct. Notably, as highlighted elsewhere in this study, although 40 percent of active police officers have been found to commit economically motivated crimes, this does not justify any officer—entrusted with protecting the public and enforcing the law fairly and legitimately—engaging in such offenses. Policymakers may consider addressing officer welfare, including compensation, as a potential means to mitigate these risks.

Among organizational factors, low accountability and inadequate reforms were identified as significant contributors to police misconduct. *“Police accountability and organizational reform remain low, and police operations remain dubious,”* a key informant

observed. At this level, officers may act with impunity. For example, human resource policies related to police welfare are often insufficient. Furthermore, accountability mechanisms remain largely ineffective due to persistent cover-ups and inaction regarding crimes committed by officers (Male key informant, Senior Police Officer, Nairobi, 2023).

The findings call into question the effectiveness of the Internal Affairs Unit (IAU) and the Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA), two critical institutions mandated to uphold police accountability. Both appear overstretched and, at times, dysfunctional. In Kenya, IPOA is a constitutional body responsible for monitoring police operations, investigating misconduct, and probing cases involving deaths or serious injuries resulting from police action. However, persistent challenges such as resource limitations, political interference, and weak enforcement mechanisms have hindered its ability to fulfill this mandate effectively. Similarly, the IAU, which operates within the police service, often struggles with impartiality and lacks the autonomy required to hold officers accountable.

“In Kenya, corruption is a pervasive issue that significantly affects the police. It is often perceived as an entrenched “culture,” deeply embedded in society, and likened to a cancer eroding the moral fabric of the nation. According to a key informant, corrupt individuals sometimes coerce senior police officers to abuse their positions by facilitating the disappearance of suspects or releasing criminals accused of serious offenses from lawful custody”. (Male key informant, Senior Police Officer, Nairobi, 2023). Such actions allow dangerous offenders to remain at large, undermining public trust and straining the relationship between the police and the communities they serve. This finding underscores the urgent need for comprehensive police reforms, including initiatives aimed at educating society about the security and safety risks associated with corruption.

4.7 Interplay Between the Causes of Police Misconduct and Insecurity

Another objective of this study was to examine perceptions of the relationship between police-perpetrated crimes and insecurity in Nairobi County, Kenya. To achieve this, two correlation analyses were undertaken. The first analysis sought to establish the type and strength of the relationship between factors contributing to police criminality and their perceived impact on societal insecurity. The second analysis examined the perceived correlation between the rise in criminal violations committed by police officers and the broader insecurity experienced within the community. The findings of these analyses are presented below.

4.7.1 Perceptions of How Police Crime Factors Relate to Insecurity

To determine the type and degree of the association between insecurity and the causes of police-perpetrated crimes, correlation analyses were performed. Three categories of variables were evaluated as part of the variables of interest that were measured. These were variables at the situational, personal, and organizational levels.

Individual variables were focused on personal factors, situational variables were focused on circumstances, and organizational level variables were focused on workplace environment factors. All three indicator variables show whether there is a correlation between the variables, particularly between insecurity and police-perpetrated crimes. Table 4.12 presents the findings.

Table 4.12*Correlation Coefficients*

		Organizational Factors	Individual Factors	Situational Factors
On a scale of 1 to 10, how strong do you consider the relationship between the causal factors of police crimes and overall insecurity?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2- tailed) N	1 90		
Organizational factors	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2- tailed) N	.432** .05 90	1 90	
Individual factors	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2- tailed) N	.245* .01 90	-.075 .483 90	1 90
Situational factors	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2- tailed) N	.405** .02 90	.151 .157 90	.519** .001 90

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.02 level (2-tailed).

As illustrated in Table 4.12, the findings indicate a positive link between organizational factors and insecurity, with a correlation of $r(89) = 0.432, p = 0.05$. In the same way, individual-level

factors that drive criminal behavior also showed a significant positive correlation with insecurity, $r(83) = 0.245, p = 0.01$. The analysis further revealed that situational factors—those immediate conditions that trigger crime—were strongly correlated with insecurity, $r(89) = 0.405, p = 0.02$. Taken together, these results suggest that when organizational and situational influences on crime are perceived to be stronger, society also tends to feel more insecure, linking the root causes of police crimes directly to broader concerns about public safety.

4.7.2 Coefficient of Determination

The coefficient of determination indicates the proportion of variation in the dependent variable that can be explained by changes in the independent variables. In simple terms, it reflects the percentage of variation in the outcome that can be explained by the predictors. In this study, the R-squared value was 0.301, which adjusted to 0.292. This indicates that approximately 29.2% of the observed relationship between the causes of crime and societal insecurity is explained by the independent variables included in the study.

4.7.3 Police Officers' Perceptions of What Could Be Done to Avert Crimes by Police

The purpose of the section was to find out how police officers felt about what they could do to prevent crimes. Table 4.13 presents the findings.

Table 4.12*Police Officers' Perceptions on Mitigation Measures to Avert Crime by Their Colleagues*

	Response	Mean score	Percent
On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the effectiveness of the following measures in mitigating police criminality?	Curb police greed	10	100.0
	Introduce alternative disciplinary actions for police officers who engage in misconduct instead of relying solely on dismissal or removal from service.	10	100.0
	Establish a robust monitoring framework to keep track of all dismissed police officers.	10	100.0
	Embrace and adapt international best practices from developed nations in handling misconduct among police officers.	9	90.0

As shown in Table 4.13, to prevent crimes by police officers—whether serving or dismissed—officers recommended several mitigation measures, including:

Mitigating police corruption requires the introduction of different disciplinary methods for wayward officers instead of dismissal, instituting a monitoring system for all ex-police officers, and adopting best practices from developed nations for managing errant police personnel.

4.8 Discussions of the Findings

This segment presents a discussion of the study’s findings, situating them within the context of previous research and the study objectives while comparing them to existing literature. The objectives focused on identifying the types of crimes committed by serving police officers, assessing the frequency of offenses by dismissed officers as documented in the

Milimani Criminal Courts from 2017 to 2020, and evaluating their contribution to societal insecurity. Additionally, the study explored police officers' perceptions regarding how the underlying factors influencing police-related crimes relate to broader insecurity in Nairobi County, Kenya.

4.8.1 The Nature of Crimes Committed by Serving Police

Findings indicated that criminal acts committed by active police officers, documented at the Milimani Criminal Courts, fell under four broad categories: violence-related crimes, crimes driven by economic motives, drug-related, and alcohol-related. Violence-related crimes included cases such as armed robbery, murder, grievous bodily harm, rape, and indiscriminate killings. Economically motivated crimes encompassed fraud, theft, bribery, money laundering, and extortion. Drug-related offenses—ranging from abuse and trafficking to peddling—together with alcohol-related affrays, appeared least frequently. Strikingly, these violations were perpetrated by officers who are not only state-trained but also constitutionally mandated to enforce the law and prevent such acts. This contradiction exposes weaknesses in institutional legitimacy and erodes public trust in the police service. The findings of this study are consistent with earlier research by Box (1983), Jupp, and Francis, which established a link between violent crimes—such as murder and manslaughter—and the misuse of lethal force by police officers, often triggered by situational pressures (Box, 2002; Francis et al., 1999; Jupp et al., 1999). In the current study, such pressures were further intensified when suspects resisted arrest, particularly in cases where they were armed with firearms or other dangerous weapons, or posed immediate threats to officers, civilians, or property. These results also lend support to Sherman's (1980) assertion that police violence frequently stems from the use of force—whether justified or not—which can lead to serious bodily harm and, in extreme situations, the loss of life (Sherman, 2018).

Pertaining to offenses with an economic motive, the study revealed that inadequate remuneration often pushed police officers toward the pursuit of illicit wealth through offenses such as larceny, receiving stolen property, bribery, and extortion (KNBS 2016). Moreover, officers' routine exposure to drugs, drug users, and drug traffickers created fertile ground for involvement in drug-related crimes. This constant interaction not only normalized such activities but also heightened the temptation to participate. This led some officers to become trapped in patterns of drug dealing and related criminal activities, driven mainly by the opportunity for fast financial gain through extortion, robberies, payoffs, and opportunistic thefts (Kane & White, 2009).

As noted by McLaughlin (2019), the study revealed that police officers who engaged in heavy drinking often struggled to cope with the stresses inherent in policing, which in turn contributed to negative interactions with colleagues and members of the community (Muncie & McLaughlin, 2019). Excessive alcohol consumption was also linked to domestic violence involving officers and their spouses, with some cases proving fatal. Furthermore, concerns were raised that intoxicated officers might engage in confrontations with their superiors, potentially escalating to the use of firearms against them, against themselves, or even against members of the public as a means of settling grievances. Consistent with Diba et al. (2023), the study associated alcohol consumption with severe criminogenic effects, including the erosion of moral character, impaired judgment, clouded reasoning, slowed reflexes, and weakened self-control. The implication is that alcohol consumption among armed officers presents a significant risk not only to their own safety but also to that of the wider community, particularly in contexts of internal or external aggression and more so when officers are actively on duty.

4.8.2 Nature of Crimes by Dismissed Police Officers

The second objective of the study examined the nature of crimes committed by dismissed police officers, as documented at the Milimani Criminal Courts. These offenses were broadly categorized into violent crimes, economically driven crimes, and drug-related offenses. Violent crimes emerged as the most dominant and included acts such as armed robbery, murder, grievous bodily harm, rape, and injuries resulting from indiscriminate shootings. Economically motivated crimes were the second most prevalent, encompassing fraud, theft, tax evasion, bribery, money laundering, and extortion. Drug-related offenses, which included abuse, trafficking, and peddling, were reported least frequently. While these crimes closely mirrored those committed by serving officers, the study highlighted a distinct trend: dismissed officers exhibited a greater tendency to engage in property-related offenses compared to other categories of criminal activity.

The findings reveal that dismissing police officers carries profound socio-economic consequences, particularly for their families. The sudden loss of income often leaves basic needs unmet, leads to school dropouts among children, heightens vulnerability to drug abuse, and fuels incidents of domestic violence. These pressures accumulate over time, pushing some dismissed officers toward criminal activity as a survival strategy. The study further found that dismissed officers generally receive limited or no benefits, leaving them unable to adequately support their families or maintain their personal well-being. This financial and social strain often breeds anger and resentment, weakening positive coping mechanisms. As a result, many

dismissed officers begin to rationalize or justify criminal behavior, framing it as a legitimate reaction to the injustices and hardships they face (Kane & White, 2009; Sherman, 2018).

The study found that, irrespective of whether police officers were formally or irregularly dismissed, their involvement in offenses such as robbery, theft, and burglary heightened community vulnerability and insecurity, particularly because these crimes often involved the misuse of firearms by individuals trained to protect the public. Even though the central role of the police is to curb crime and maintain safety, order, and security in society, the study shows that dismissing trained officers—without adequate safeguards—may be counterproductive, as it increases the risk of these individuals engaging in criminal activities. This concern was further reinforced by reports indicating that some serving officers collaborate with dismissed colleagues in committing property-related crimes. Although the study primarily highlighted property crimes, it acknowledged the potential for more severe offenses, including terror-related crimes, which, if perpetrated by trained ex-officers, could have dire consequences for national security.

The study found that an overreliance on dismissal as a disciplinary measure may be counterproductive, as it can weaken the capacity of security agencies to prevent and manage crime. Dismissed officers are not only trained to enforce the law but also possess the skills to protect the public, and when they engage in criminal activity, their offenses tend to be more sophisticated due to their training and experience. To address this risk, policymakers are encouraged to adopt best practices from developed countries regarding the management of dismissed police officers, thereby strengthening national security and safeguarding citizens. Investigating officers reported that robberies and car thefts were the most prevalent criminal activities involving dismissed police personnel (90.0%), followed by burglaries (30%) and abductions (20.0%). These findings align with broader perceptions of property-related offenses, suggesting that dismissed officers often turn to such crimes as a source of livelihood.

4.8.3 Police Perceptions on the Relationship between the Causal Factors of Crimes by Police and Insecurity

The final objective of the study was to examine police officers' perceptions of how the underlying causes of police-perpetrated crimes contribute to broader insecurity. Guided by Skogan and Frydl's (2004) framework, these causes were grouped into situational, organizational, and community-related factors. Situational influences, such as suspect resistance, shaped officers' assessment of risk, particularly in encounters where suspects were armed or posed immediate threats to officers, civilians, or property. Low pay also emerged as

a critical situational pressure, increasing the temptation for officers to engage in profit-driven crimes like larceny, bribery, extortion, and dealing in stolen goods. In some cases, violent outcomes—including killings during confrontations—were also linked to situational triggers. Moreover, frequent exposure to drugs, drug users, and traffickers heightened officers' vulnerability to drug-related offenses. This exposure created opportunities for involvement in cycles of peddling, trafficking, and associated crimes, often motivated by the lure of quick financial gains through payoffs, shakedowns, robberies, or opportunistic theft.

With regard to organizational factors, the study highlighted two key drivers of police criminality: weak accountability mechanisms and slow, inadequate reforms. Consistent with Skogan and Frydl (2004), police operations in Kenya were found to be opaque, with limited transparency and minimal checks on misconduct. Systems intended to hold officers and institutions accountable were described as largely ineffective, thereby fostering a culture of impunity. For example, human resource policies related to police welfare were often inconsistent and poorly enforced.

Oversight bodies such as the Internal Affairs Unit (IAU) and the Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA)—both mandated to investigate police misconduct and safeguard accountability—were perceived as overstretched, underfunded, and constrained by political interference. As a result, their effectiveness was undermined by frequent cover-ups and a lack of decisive action against offending officers (Kundro & Nurmohamed, 2021). IPOA, in particular, although constitutionally empowered to investigate police-related deaths, serious injuries, and misconduct, was viewed as struggling to fully deliver on its mandate.

The findings underscore the crucial role of political will in strengthening accountability frameworks, including reforms to recruitment and vetting processes to ensure that only competent and ethical candidates enter the police service (Frydl & Skogan, 2004).

When looking at community-wide factors, the study identified corruption as one of the most significant drivers of police criminality (Fyfe, 1981). In Kenya, corruption was described not just as a challenge within the police service but as a pervasive societal problem—so deeply rooted that it has, over time, take shape as both an embedded culture and a degenerative force slowly eroding the moral fabric of society (Nyongesa, 2019). This environment was said to create conditions where even some senior police personnel engage in power misuse, exemplified by the illegal release of individuals indicted for serious crimes (Hope Sr, 2019).

The findings suggest that addressing such a systemic problem requires comprehensive police reforms that extend beyond the institution itself, incorporating broad-based civic

education on the security and safety challenges arising from corruption. When corrupt officers release dangerous criminals back into society, it undermines the justice system and endangers communities (Hope, 2016).

Furthermore, corruption often manifests in more subtle but equally damaging ways, including the concealment of unlawful dealings, fabrication with or stealing evidence, and the leaking of classified information. These acts are frequently linked to greed and highlight the urgent need to rein in opportunistic behavior among officers. As Nemeth (2022) notes, disclosing sensitive intelligence—such as details of police operations or vulnerabilities in critical installations—not only compromises public safety but also endangers the lives of officers themselves.

Building on Ombaka's (2015) observations, this study explored how police officers perceived the relationship between the underlying causes of police-perpetrated crimes and broader security threats in Nairobi County, Kenya. Two correlation analyses were undertaken. The first examined the strength and nature of the link between the drivers of crime and their supposed influence on perceived unsafety. The second focused on the perceived link between the rise in criminal violations and the corresponding increase in insecurity.

The results showed that when officers viewed organizational and situational influences—such as weak accountability structures, inadequate reforms, or high-risk encounters—as significant, they were more likely to perceive a strong connection between these factors and growing civil disorder. A notable finding was the general perception that the dismissal of police officers directly contributed to higher levels of perceived unsafety in Nairobi County. Moreover, the study established a strong positive correlation between recurring breaches of criminal law and the rise in security challenges, underscoring the link between police misconduct, institutional shortcomings, and risks to public safety.

Building on these findings, the study sought officers' views on strategies to mitigate police-perpetrated crime. Serving and dismissed officers alike proposed several measures, including curbing police greed, adopting alternative disciplinary mechanisms other than outright dismissal, instituting surveillance systems to monitor dismissed officers, and benchmarking international best practices—particularly from developed contexts—for addressing misconduct among police personnel (Worden et al., 2024).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study was driven by the recognition that, despite Kenya's established security institutions, incidents of insecurity have continued to escalate, partly due to police-related criminal activities. The research investigated the categories of offenses perpetrated by serving officers and analyzed the prevalence of crimes committed by dismissed officers, as documented at the Milimani Criminal Courts between 2017 and 2020, with particular attention to their implications for public security. In addition, the study examined how police officers in Nairobi County perceived the connection between police-perpetrated crimes and broader insecurity. The findings are presented thematically and aligned with the study's stated objectives.

Between 2017 and 2020, the Milimani Criminal Courts recorded cases of serving police officers engaged in four principal forms of criminality: violent acts, financially driven offenses, drug-related crimes, and alcohol-associated violations. The study revealed that violent crimes such as murder and manslaughter were often linked to the unjustified use of excessive force. Economically motivated crimes were largely attributed to inadequate remuneration, which drove officers to engage in offenses such as larceny, bribery, extortion, and handling stolen property in pursuit of unlawful financial gain. Moreover, the officers' frequent exposure to drugs, users, and traffickers heightened their vulnerability to drug peddling and related criminal behaviour.

Violent, financially motivated, and drug-related offenses were among the patterns of criminal conduct among ex-police officers that were documented at the Milimani criminal courts. According to the study, resigned police officers were more likely to commit property-based crimes than other kinds of crimes. This is explained by the fact that police officers receive very little compensation for their years of service after being fired. Because it interfered with their ability to cope with resistance in non-criminal ways and created a tendency to rationalize their criminal behavior, this caused them to become angry, which in turn encouraged crime.

Finding out how police officers perceive the connection between the causes of crimes committed by police and security personnel was the final goal. The study determined that situational, organizational, and community-level factors are the three main causes of police criminality. The majority of violent and economically motivated crimes were primarily caused by situational factors. Both active and retired officers were mostly responsible for property crimes. According to this study, robberies came in second, after bribery.

Low police accountability and organizational reform were two important organizational factors that affected police criminality. There is still little accountability and organizational change in the police, and police operations are still shrouded in secrecy. Because police officer crimes are still being covered up and ignored, this study found that agencies like the Independent Policing Authority and the Internal Affairs Unit, which are tasked with ensuring police accountability, are mainly ineffectual. They are thought to be dysfunctional and mostly overburdened.

In terms of community factors, widespread corruption was a significant factor that affected police corruption. In Kenya, it was believed that corruption was a widespread issue that also affected the police. It was claimed to be firmly established, seemingly becoming accepted as a "culture," and consuming our society's moral fabric like a cancer. Through the unlawful discharge of suspects facing grave charges from official custody, it was alleged to entice senior police officers to misuse their position. The study claims that because of the release of dangerous criminals from the custody of corrupt police officers to haunt society, a significant societal issue necessitates comprehensive police reforms that center on educating the public about the security and safety risks of corruption. Additionally, the study noted that corruption frequently results in the protection of unlawful activity, the theft or tampering of evidence, and the disclosure of confidential information—all of which may be motivated by greed. It is crucial as a result.

The study revealed that opportunistic and self-serving police officers may be lured into activities that endanger national security, including acts linked to terrorism. Tackling police corruption is therefore essential, as it is often rooted in greed and expressed through practices such as shielding illegal activities, tampering with evidence, theft, or leaking sensitive information. The analysis additionally demonstrated a noted positive link between situational factors and insecurity, a positive association between organizational factors and insecurity, and a clear connection between individual factors and insecurity. The findings, taken as a whole, suggest that situational and organizational determinants are central to understanding why police officers engage in crime and how this behavior aggravates insecurity.

Additionally, the study found a positive correlation between insecurity and criminal law violations and a direct correlation between the rise in insecurity in Nairobi County, Kenya, and the dismissal of police officers. Police officers proposed mitigation measures to prevent crime by police officers, whether they were dismissed or still in service. These measures included: curbing police greed; having alternatives to dismissal as a form of discipline; setting up a surveillance system to keep an eye on all police officers who were dismissed; and

comparing best practices and policies for handling errant police officers, particularly from the developed world.

5.2 Conclusions

This section outlines the study's conclusions, which are drawn directly from the research findings. For better comprehension, the conclusions are presented in two distinct groups: theoretical and empirical.

5.2.1 Theoretical Conclusions

The study conducted was anchored on two key theoretical frameworks. First, the Rational Choice Theory, which explains how individuals weigh costs, risks, and benefits before engaging in criminal behaviour. The findings of this study demonstrated that, even when certain actions were illegal or posed risks to national security, offenders—particularly police officers—chose them because they were perceived as advantageous or beneficial. Second, the Routine Activities Theory suggests that crime tends to occur when three conditions intersect in the same time and place: the presence of a motivated offender, the availability of a suitable target, and the lack of an effective guardian. The study found that the presence of all three elements significantly increased the likelihood of criminal acts. Based on these findings, it is concluded that the National Police Service must implement regulations that deter officers from engaging in criminal behaviour. Furthermore, the National Police Service Commission should conduct comprehensive research to better understand the conditions that facilitate such crimes and to inform strategies for prevention.

5.2.2 Empirical Conclusions

Between 2017 and 2020, active police officers reported at the Milimani Criminal Courts committed crimes of violence, economically driven crimes, drug-related offenses, and alcohol-related offenses. These acts are particularly significant because they were perpetrated by trained personnel of a state institution constitutionally mandated to protect public safety and uphold the law. Such violations highlight abuses of authority and institutional legitimacy gaps, with far-reaching negative implications for national security.

The Milimani Criminal Courts recorded that dismissed police officers committed violent crimes, economically motivated offenses, and drug-related crimes. While these offenses were similar in type to those committed by active officers, a notable pattern emerged: dismissed officers were disproportionately involved in property-related crimes, including robberies, thefts, and burglaries, often facilitated by their access to firearms. Regardless of whether

officers were lawfully or unlawfully dismissed, their continued criminal activity heightens community vulnerability and undermines public safety. Although the primary role of police is to combat crime, this study suggests that retrenching skilled law enforcement personnel without effective oversight can be counterproductive, as some may resort to criminality. The concern is heightened by the possibility of collaboration between active and former officers in property crimes, and the risk extends to more severe offenses, including acts that could threaten national security, such as terrorism.

The study found four factors—situational, individual, organizational, and community-level, that contribute to police criminality. For most violent and economically motivated crimes, situational factors were the main culprits. A significant portion of property crimes were committed by active police officers. Robberies came in second to bribery, according to this study. Excessive police discretion in their enforcement of property crimes may also help to explain this. At the same time, they are more likely to accept bribes due to their comparatively lower income and materialistic avarice. Organizational factors that contribute to crime and insecurity were found to be positively correlated with one another, while situational factors that lead to crime and insecurity were found to be positively correlated with one another. It is anticipated that a greater awareness of the factors that contribute to crime and the emergence of insecurity in society will result from a greater understanding of the impact of situational and organizational factors. The findings additionally indicated a significant positive correlation between insecurity and criminal law violations, as well as a direct correlation between the rise in insecurity in Nairobi County, Kenya, and the dismissal of police forces.

5.3 Recommendations

Drawing from these findings, the study proposes the following recommendations:

- i. The study found that serving police officers are involved in a variety of crimes, such as economic crimes. Therefore, the study recommends the enactment of policies to address the root cause of criminality perpetrated by police officers in Nairobi County.
- ii. The study found that dismissed officers are more likely to commit a series of crimes. Consequently, this study recommends that the National Police Service Commission benchmark itself with developed nations to adopt best policies and practices for dealing with economic crimes, such as break-ins committed by dismissed police officers in Nairobi County.
- iii. The study found that situational, organizational, and community factors combine and contribute to crime among serving and dismissed police officers. Therefore, this study

recommends that the National Police Service Commission develop a policy to address the insecurity caused by criminality among serving and dismissed police officers in Nairobi County.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

The research advances the position that:

- i. Comparative study of criminality across the genders in the police service. This is essential for crime analysis in the service and eventual formulation of crime prevention policy.
- ii. A comparative study should be done on criminality among all policing agencies in Kenya. This is important to help develop effective crime prevention policies

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Letter of Introduction

**MARTIN NJUGUNA
EGERTON UNIVERSITY
BOX 536
NJORO -KENYA**

Dear Respondent,

RE: DATA COLLECTION

I am a Master of Arts student in Security Management at Egerton University, currently conducting research titled, **“The Security Implications of Crimes Committed by Police Officers in Nairobi County, Kenya.”**

I would greatly appreciate your participation in this study by responding to the questions that follow. Please be assured that all information you provide will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes.

Thank you very much for your time and support.

Yours Faithfully,

MARTIN NJUGUNA

Appendix II: Questionnaire for All Main Respondents

Section A: Background Information

1. What is your gender?
Male
Female

2. Age Category: Between
20-29
30-39
40 and above

3. What is your level of Education?
Secondary
College
University
Post graduate

4. What is your Rank?
Constable
CPL
Sergeant
Inspector

Section B: Prevalence of Crimes by police

5. The following statements describe different aspects of police crimes. Indicate your level of agreement by ticking in the box provided where; (1), NO (2), YES.

S/N0	Statement	NO	YES
5,1	Crimes committed by police are on the rise in Kenya, more so in the Nairobi County.		
5,2	There is a direct correlation between Criminal law violations by members of the police service and rise of insecurity in the Nairobi County, Kenya		

5,3	There is a direct correlation between Dismissed members of the police service and rise of insecurity in the Nairobi County, Kenya		
5, 4	There is need for alternative discipline to errant police officers than dismissing or removing them from service		
5, 5	The government should establish a surveillance system of all dismissed police officers		
5, 6	Most crimes committed by police are profit motivated		
5, 7	The primary cause of crimes committed by police is greed		
5, 8	Most crimes committed by police include both violent related crimes and drug related crimes		
5, 9	Greedy police officers are likely to be lured into terrorist activities and risk national security		
5, 10	Abuse of drugs by police officers result to violent crimes by police officers		
5, 11	Both police office men and women likely to commit violent crimes		
5, 12	Police men are more likely to commit violent crimes than police women		

6. Is there anything else that you feel was forgotten that describe different aspects of crimes committed by police.? If yes, please explain

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7. What are the major causal factors of crimes committed by police in the Nairobi County, Kenya today?

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8. What is the nature of crimes committed by police officers in the Nairobi County, Kenya today?

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9. What are the implications of crimes committed by police in the Nairobi County, Kenya today?

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10. What are the implications of crimes committed by police to national security Kenya today?

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11. What do you think can be done to avert crimes committed by police in Kenya today?

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Appendix III: Interview Schedule for Key Informants

1. What are the major crimes committed by police prevalent in the Nairobi County, Kenya today?

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2. What are the major causes of crimes committed by police in the Nairobi County, Kenya today?

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3. What are the types of crime committed by police in the Nairobi County, Kenya today?

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4. What are the implications of in crimes committed by police the Nairobi County, Kenya today?

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5. What are the implications of crimes committed by police to national security Kenya today?

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6. What do you think can be done to avert crimes committed by police in Kenya today?

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Appendix IV: Research Permit

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 228427	Date of Issue: 04/April/2023
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Mr. martin gitau njuguna of Egerton University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Nairobi on the topic: Security Implication of crimes committed by police officers in Nairobi County, Kenya, for the period ending : 04/April/2024.	
License No: NACOSTI/P/23/24641	
228427 Applicant Identification Number	 Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
	Verification QR Code 
NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.	
See overleaf for conditions	

Appendix V: Abstract of the Published Paper



GLOBAL JOURNAL OF HUMAN-SOCIAL SCIENCE: A
ARTS & HUMANITIES - PSYCHOLOGY
Volume 24 Issue 7 Version 1.0 Year 2024
Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
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Security Implication of Crimes Committed by Police Officers, in Nairobi County, Kenya

By Martin Gitau Njuguna & Kibet Ngetich

Abstract- This study sought to examine the security implication of crime committed by police officers in Nairobi County. This was necessitated by the fact that police officers have been committing crimes yet hardly any data has been collected, maintained, disseminated or made available to inform crime management. The study assessed the nature of crimes committed by serving police officers recorded at the Milimani Criminal Courts between 2017 and 2020 and their implications on insecurity in Nairobi County, established prevalence of crimes committed by dismissed police officers recorded at the Milimani Criminal Courts between 2017 and 2020 and their implications on insecurity in Nairobi County, and established police officers' perceptions on the relationship between the causal factors of crimes committed by police officers and insecurity in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study used mixed methods study design. Questionnaires were used to collect data from 90 primary respondents and 30 Key informants. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis and presented thematically using verbatim quotes.

Keywords: crimes committed by police officers, recorded crimes, insecurity prevalence of crimes.

GJHSS-A Classification: HV7936.P5



Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:



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