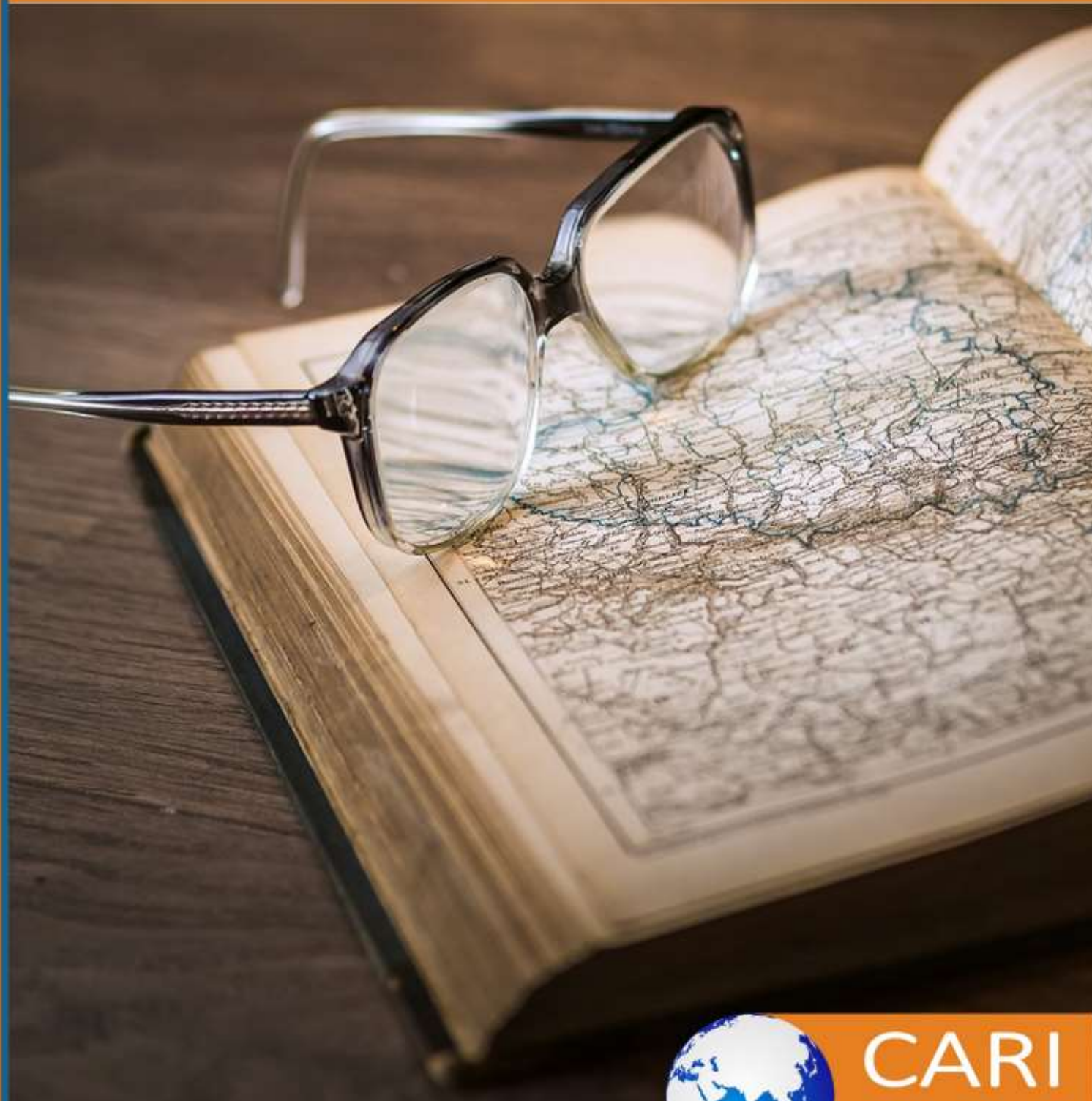


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(IJHSS) **Assessing Community Policing Strategies Used to Reduce
Urban Crimes in Dodoma City, Tanzania**



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Assessing Community Policing Strategies Used to Reduce Urban Crimes in Dodoma City, Tanzania



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Abstract:

Purpose of the study: Global evidence shows that urban crime has become an increasingly serious issue as Rapid City population growth often surpasses the expansion of infrastructure and essential public services. In response, this study examined the community policing initiatives and strategies implemented to curb crime and enhance security in Dodoma City's urban areas.

Methodology: The study used a cross-sectional research design and a mixed-methods approach, the study carried out in Chang'ombe Ward, Dodoma City, and Tanzania. A total of 143 participants were selected through both random and purposive sampling techniques. Findings from Chang'ombe Ward revealed that community policing plays a significant role in improving security and reducing crime. However, most respondents considered certain strategies, such as volunteer policing models, to be less effective in urban contexts, suggesting a gap between these approaches and the realities of urban policing.

Findings: The research identified several community policing strategies currently in use in Dodoma City, with police visibility (61.6%), public awareness campaigns (63%), and multi-stakeholder collaboration (58%) showing strong effectiveness.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: The study concluded that well-implemented community policing promotes peace, safety, and urban development by strengthening cooperation between law enforcement and citizens, improving crime detection, and reducing public fear of crime. It further recommended institutionalizing community policing through formal policy frameworks, integrating it into urban safety plans, reforming volunteer policing systems, establishing community feedback channels, increasing police visibility, expanding youth-focused initiatives, and fostering partnerships among stakeholders to effectively enhance peace and reduce urban crime in cities such as Dodoma.

Keywords: *Community-Led Policing, Volunteer Policing, Urban Crimes, Police Visibility*

1. Introduction

Urban crime has emerged as a major global concern, particularly in cities experiencing rapid population growth. As urbanization intensifies and migration to cities increases, the likelihood of crime tends to rise. The World Bank (2022) reports that cities, which now accommodate over half of the world's population, bear a disproportionate burden of criminal activities, including both violent and property crimes. These offenses are often driven by underlying issues such as poverty, joblessness, and social inequality. Globally, crime patterns have evolved, with growing threats related to cybercrime, drug trafficking, and gang violence, all of which pose serious risks to urban safety, security, and stability. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2022) emphasizes that implementing effective crime prevention measures—particularly community policing—can play a crucial role in lowering crime rates by fostering cooperation between the public and law enforcement. Community policing, which is grounded in principles of collaboration, openness, and mutual respect, has gained recognition as a practical approach to combating urban crime. Studies from major cities such as New York and London have shown that these initiatives enhance community trust and strengthen crime prevention efforts by actively involving citizens in policing activities (Pelfrey, 2021).

Experience in Africa has also indicated that urban crime is increasingly becoming a pressing concern as cities experience rapid population growth, often outpacing the development of infrastructure and public services. The report provided by the African Development Bank (2021) indicated that African cities, though home to dynamic economies, are grappling with rising crime rates, including violent crimes, theft, and drug-related offenses. Factors such as unemployment, inadequate law enforcement, and weak governance structures aggravate crime in urban areas. In response, many African countries have started implementing community policing strategies to address these issues. The South African Police Service, for example, introduced community policing forums (CPF) as part of a broader strategy to engage local communities in crime prevention (De Klerk & Tisani, 2020). While these initiatives have had mixed results, evidences suggest that community policing can be effective in strengthening trust between the police and communities, leading to better crime reporting and prevention.

Tanzania, like many other African nations, is undergoing rapid urbanization, with cities such as Dodoma expanding at an unprecedented rate. However, this urban growth has been accompanied by a rise in crime across major urban centers. The National Crime Prevention Strategy (2020) identifies key drivers of urban crime in Tanzania, including youth unemployment, poverty, and limited policing resources. In response, the government has adopted community policing as a key approach to addressing crime, particularly in urban areas. The Tanzania Police Force introduced community policing initiatives in the late 1990s, focusing on strengthening partnerships between law enforcement officers and community members.

According to the Tanzania Police Force (2021), these initiatives have enhanced collaboration between the police and the public, leading to higher rates of crime reporting and a more

proactive stance on crime prevention. Despite these achievements, the effectiveness of community policing has been undermined by challenges such as insufficient officer training, inadequate funding, and lingering public mistrust of law enforcement. Nevertheless, research indicates that community policing remains a valuable tool in combating urban crime in Tanzania, particularly when tailored to local contexts and supported by sufficient resources (Mbaraka, 2022).

Dodoma, Tanzania's capital city, has experienced substantial population growth in recent years, which has coincided with an increase in crime, especially in urbanized areas like Chang'ombe Ward. The city's growing population density has also intensified social challenges, including unemployment, poverty, and inadequate housing. The Dodoma Municipal Council's Annual Report (2022) notes that crime levels have risen, particularly in peripheral areas such as Chang'ombe, where economic opportunities are scarce. This situation has prompted local authorities to promote community policing as a key strategy for enhancing urban security. However, despite some reported improvements, recurring incidents that threaten peace and safety continue to be reported, raising critical questions about the overall effectiveness of community policing in addressing urban crime in Dodoma City.

2. Problem Statement

Although community policing was introduced in Tanzania to reduce crime rates, the country continues to face significant security challenges, particularly in Dodoma City, where numerous incidents disrupting peace and security have been reported (Municipal Council's Annual Report, 2022). Recent attacks targeting government officials, police officers, and religious institutions in Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, and Morogoro, as well as episodes of violence in Zanzibar, further highlight the persistent problem of urban crime. Moreover, official reports show a rise in criminal cases in Dodoma City—from 945 in 2020–2021 to 1,215 in 2022–2023—indicating a notable gap between community policing initiatives and the actual crime situation in urban areas. Despite existing studies on community policing and urban crime in Tanzania, there remains a significant shortage of detailed, context-specific evidence on its effectiveness in cities like Dodoma. This gap underscores the need for a closer examination of community policing programs and strategies employed to combat urban crime, with particular attention to Chang'ombe Ward.

3.0 Literature Review

3.1 Theoretical Literature Review

The study was guided by two theories, namely the routine activity theory and the Crime Prevention Theory, whose descriptions are provided below.

3.1.1 The Routine Activity Theory

The Routine Activity Theory, established by Cohen and Felson in 1979, proclaims that crime happens when a motivated offender, a suitable target, and an absence of capable guardianship converge. This theory highlights the impact of daily routines and societal structures on crime rates, thus influencing modern criminological research and crime prevention strategies. It

proposes practical applications by describing crime patterns based on visible elements like time, location, and opportunity, hence enabling effective design of targeted interventions designed to reduce crime opportunities. Nevertheless, the theory has limitations, including oversimplifying criminal behaviours and neglecting offenders' motivations and wider socio-economic factors. In Chang'ombe Ward, the theory aligns perfectly with community policing strategies by helping to analyze routine activities and the absence of guardianship in identifying high-crime areas and times, ultimately supporting interventions like increased police visibility and community collaboration for effective guardianship, thereby minimizing urban crime opportunities in cities such as Dodoma.

3.1.2 Crime Prevention Theory 1971

The theory was developed by C. Ray Jeffery in 1971 and later expanded by Oscar Newman (Jeffery, 1971). It posits that urban design and environmental modifications can reduce crimes by making spaces less attractive to offenders. The theory focuses on natural surveillance, access control, territorial reinforcement, and maintenance as key principles for crime prevention. The theory has significantly influenced urban planning and crime prevention policies worldwide. The strength lies in its practical approach to reducing crime through environmental modifications, such as improved lighting, security cameras, and strategic urban planning (Cozens & Love, 2015). However, its limitation is on dependency on infrastructure improvements, which may not always be feasible due to financial constraints (Armitage, 2021). The theory aligns with this study by helping to analyze how environmental modifications in Chang'ombe Ward influence crime prevention.

3.2 Empirical Literature Review

3.2.1 The National Strategy on Community Policing

Tanzania's National Strategy on Community Policing represents a purposeful shift from traditional, reactive law enforcement toward a collaborative model that actively engages citizens in maintaining security. The policy emphasizes three key principles, partnership, organizational transformation, and problem-solving, thereby redefining the role of police officers from that of mere enforcers to that of community partners. Since its introduction in 2006, the strategy has guided the Tanzania Police Force (TPF) in embedding community policing practices into its daily operations (Malisa, 2020). This transition is especially relevant to the present study titled "The Contribution of Community Policing in Reducing Urban Crimes in Dodoma City: A Case of Chang'ombe Ward," as it frames community members in Chang'ombe not as passive observers or victims, but as active participants in enhancing neighborhood safety.

In practice, this policy can be implemented in Chang'ombe Ward through the formation of community policing committees at the ward level and by establishing regular, structured forums where residents and police officers collaborate to identify crime hotspots, share local insights, and design effective crime prevention strategies. The value of such collaboration is supported by findings from other regions of Tanzania. For example, studies in Mkuranga District revealed that community policing initiatives—such as foot patrols, public awareness

campaigns, and community meetings—have contributed to strengthening crime prevention measures and fostering social cohesion (Mohamed, 2023; Salehe, 2024).

3.2.2 The Tanzania Police Force Reform Program (TPFRP)

The Tanzania Police Force Reform Program (TPFRP) was established to modernize and professionalize the police service by enhancing accountability, transparency, and responsiveness to community needs. The reform seeks to shift the police from a militarized, command-oriented structure to a service-driven institution that prioritizes community engagement and respect for human rights (URT, 2018). Within the context of Dodoma City, particularly in Chang’ombe Ward, the TPFRP plays a crucial role by providing the institutional and operational framework necessary for effective community policing. It ensures that police officers are adequately trained, equipped, and motivated to collaborate with residents in addressing and preventing urban crime.

Research has shown that police reforms supporting community policing contribute to building trust and fostering cooperation between law enforcement and citizens, key elements for effective crime prevention in densely populated urban areas facing social and economic challenges (Makoye & Kibona, 2021; Mshana, 2022). These improvements often result in greater crime reporting, quicker police responses, and enhanced joint problem-solving efforts, all of which can significantly reduce urban crime levels in areas such as Chang’ombe Ward.

The TPFRP also promotes the adoption of modern technologies and improved logistical support to increase police efficiency and accountability. In Chang’ombe Ward, this has translated to the introduction of communication tools, data management systems, and patrol resources that enable police to monitor crime trends more effectively and engage with the community through digital platforms (URT, 2019; Nchimbi, 2023). The reform program has strengthened the police’s ability to act proactively, not just reactively, creating safer urban environments and fostering sustained collaboration between the police and residents.

3.2.3 The Crime and Violence Prevention Strategy (CVPS)

The Crime and Violence Prevention Strategy (CVPS) in Tanzania serves as a comprehensive national framework designed to reduce crime and violence through multisectoral collaboration, preventive interventions, and active community participation. The strategy recognizes that lasting crime reduction depends on tackling underlying causes such as poverty, unemployment, and social inequality, while simultaneously reinforcing law enforcement systems (URT, 2020). Within the context of Dodoma City—and particularly in Chang’ombe Ward—the CVPS offers a foundation for aligning community policing initiatives with broader social development programs to foster safer and more resilient urban communities.

At the ward level, such as in Chang’ombe, the CVPS promotes coordinated action among police officers, local government authorities, civil society organizations, and community members to implement focused interventions, including youth empowerment programs, conflict resolution efforts, and public education campaigns. Studies have shown that these integrated, community-centered approaches not only contribute to lowering crime rates but

also enhance social cohesion and strengthen communities' capacity to resist and recover from violence (Mwakyusa & Mbwana, 2022; Simba, 2023).

3.2.4 Community policing strategies in reducing urban crimes

Sampson and Raudenbush (2021) conducted a study in the United States examining the core dimensions of effective community policing. Their findings revealed that neighborhoods with higher levels of public participation in policing experienced lower crime rates and stronger social cohesion compared to those with minimal community involvement. The researchers concluded that social networks and collective efficacy—enhanced through community policing—play a crucial role in crime prevention, emphasizing the value of community engagement in addressing urban crime challenges.

Similarly, Tuffin et al. (2020), in a study published in *Policing & Society*, found that community policing significantly reduced disorderly behavior and the fear of crime within neighborhoods. Their research underscored that active citizen participation in identifying and solving local problems was essential for effective crime reduction. Mhlanga's (2019) study in Johannesburg, South Africa, also demonstrated that community policing strategies improved cooperation between law enforcement officers and residents, leading to a notable decline in property crimes.

Supporting evidence from Dugan and Roberts (2020) in Los Angeles, USA, revealed that community policing programs involving residents in patrols and neighborhood watch initiatives contributed to a 20% decrease in burglary incidents. The researchers attributed this improvement to enhanced community vigilance and awareness fostered by close police collaboration. Similarly, Jiao (2023), in a study conducted in Kenya, reported that regular community meetings and police-led crime prevention training reduced crime rates by 15% over two years. The study highlighted that police transparency and accountability were critical factors in sustaining these positive outcomes.

The Association of Chiefs of Police (2023) further emphasized that community policing models, which are flexible, adaptive, and responsive to local needs, tend to achieve greater crime reduction. The report also noted that incorporating technology—such as crime mapping and social media communication—enhances the effectiveness of community policing, particularly in tackling property and drug-related crimes in urban settings.

In Tanzania, Samwel (2022) found that community policing fosters trust between the police and citizens, thereby strengthening intelligence gathering and crime prevention efforts. Similarly, Mussa (2019), in the *African Journal of Criminology*, documented a notable decline in crime rates due to improved police-community partnerships, while Musuguri (2016), writing in the *Tanzania Journal of Sociology*, observed that community policing enhances information sharing, making crime prevention more effective.

Recent international experiences also support these conclusions. For example, Reynolds (2024), in a study published in the *New Haven Register*, reported an 8% decline in crime rates in Hamden following the introduction of community engagement initiatives. Likewise, Davis (2024), in the *Houston Chronicle*, found that collaboration between police officers and

pastors in Houston effectively reduced youth-related crimes. In Ireland, Cleary (2024) reported that a combination of visible policing and a proactive arrest policy significantly improved public safety in Dublin.

3.2.5 Effects of community policing in reducing urban crimes

Several studies have examined the impact of community policing within the African context. For example, Okoth (2021) conducted research in Nairobi, Kenya, and found that community policing programs led to a 22% reduction in crime rates. The study concluded that neighborhood watch initiatives and active community participation enhanced intelligence gathering, thereby improving overall crime prevention efforts.

Evidence from Tanzania corroborates these findings. Mussa (2022), in *The Tanzania Law Review*, reported an 18% decline in crime rates in Dar es Salaam following the introduction of community-led security patrols. Similarly, Kweka (2023), in *The Tanzania Journal of Law and Justice*, observed a 19% reduction in crime rates in Mwanza, attributing the decrease to strengthened collaboration between law enforcement agencies and local leaders.

Comparable results have been reported in international contexts. Weisburd et al. (2021), in New York City, found that sustained officer engagement with residents through meetings and workshops contributed to lower neighborhood crime rates by fostering trust and encouraging crime reporting. In London, Cleary (2023) noted that community policing reduced youth crime through mentorship programs and enhanced police accountability. Tilley and Sidebottom (2022) concluded that proactive, prevention-focused community policing strategies led to a 10–20% reduction in crimes across several cities, emphasizing that effective crime reduction depends on active public participation, transparency, and police responsiveness to community concerns. Skogan (2022) further reported that U.S. cities with well-established community policing initiatives experienced a 25% decrease in property crimes and a 12% drop in violent crimes.

Several studies have also highlighted the importance of linking community policing with broader social development initiatives. Sampson and Raudenbush (2023) found that cities combining community policing with interventions such as youth employment programs recorded the most significant crime reductions. Piza and Welsh (2023) reported an 18% decline in burglary rates in Chicago and Los Angeles, concluding that sustained police-community interactions, supported by data-driven strategies, effectively deterred criminal activity and improved neighborhood safety. Similarly, Muthoni (2021) found that Kampala neighborhoods practicing community policing experienced a 21% reduction in robbery incidents.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2023) emphasized that integrating community policing with technological innovations—such as crime mapping tools and mobile police applications—substantially improved crime reduction outcomes. Cities that adopted digital platforms for reporting crimes observed a 30% increase in case resolution rates, highlighting the growing role of technology in enhancing the effectiveness of community policing initiatives.

2.3 Knowledge Gap

Despite extensive evidence highlighting the effectiveness of community policing, problem-oriented policing, and technology-driven approaches in addressing urban crime (Weisburd & Eck, 2021; Braga et al., 2022; Tilley & Sidebottom, 2022), significant gaps remain in the literature. Research in the United States and Europe has extensively examined strategies such as hot-spot policing, Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), and intelligence-led policing (Braga et al., 2022; Cleary, 2023; Sherman & Eck, 2023). In contrast, studies in Sub-Saharan Africa remain relatively limited, fragmented, and often context-specific.

Existing research in Tanzania (Kimaro, 2022; Nyerere & Lema, 2023; Kweka, 2023) and in neighboring countries such as Kenya and Uganda (Okoth, 2021; Muthoni, 2021) provides valuable insights but is largely confined to case studies, lacking broader comparative or longitudinal analyses. Although substantial work has been conducted on community policing in cities like Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, and Dodoma (Kimaro, 2022; Nuru, 2020; Kweka, 2023), no study has specifically focused on Chang'ombe Ward. This ward possesses unique characteristics—including high population density, vibrant marketplaces, and a predominantly youth population—that may distinctly influence crime patterns and the effectiveness of community policing interventions, yet micro-level data are absent.

Furthermore, most existing studies give limited attention to community attitudes and trust. The majority rely heavily on police records and institutional data, with minimal incorporation of residents' lived experiences. This gap leaves critical questions unanswered regarding perceptions of safety, community empowerment, and citizen participation in crime prevention under current policing strategies. Addressing these gaps, the present study specifically investigates the contribution of community policing in reducing urban crime in Dodoma City, using Chang'ombe Ward as a focused case study.

4. Study Methodology

4.1 Research Design

The study employed a cross-sectional design to determine the relation between variables. Cross-sectional studies are normally carried out at one time point over a short period, hence the data is collected at one place (Kate, 2006). The study used this method to mitigate the time limitation while ensuring that the research achieves its key objectives.

4.2 Study Location

The study was carried out in Chang'ombe Ward, situated near the center of Dodoma City, Tanzania. This ward was chosen due to its relatively high incidence of criminal activities, including robbery, theft, and physical assaults, making it suitable for effective sampling and the collection of detailed research data. Official reports on crime in Dodoma City indicate that in 2020, the area recorded 119 killings, 358 cases of rape, 11 armed robberies, 83 forceful robberies, 637 incidents of house break-ins, and numerous thefts. When compared to 2019, these figures show variations across several crime categories, underscoring persistent

safety challenges despite the implementation of community policing initiatives in the city's urban districts.

4.3. Study's Target Population

The study targeted representatives of households receiving community policing services in Chang'ombe Ward, Dodoma City. The ward comprises 1,785 households benefiting from such services. Additionally, the study included ward police officers, who are responsible for collaborating with local government leaders to organize civilian groups known as "Polisi Jamii." These groups assist in the early identification and reporting of potential criminal activities within the community.

4.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

The total sample size of this study was 143 respondents, which included Ward Executive Officers (WEOs), social workers, police desks, Ward police officers, police officers, street chairperson, and the household heads. The sample was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula.

4.4.1 Purposive sampling

The study purposively selected specific categories of participants, including 1 Ward Executive Officer, 2 social workers, 3 police desk officers, and 2 general police officers. These participants were chosen because they represent a population with diverse experiences, knowledge, perspectives, and insights regarding the role of community policing in crime reduction in Tanzania. Their involvement provided detailed and valuable information about crime patterns within their jurisdictions and facilitated the deployment of ward community policing volunteer officers. These volunteers, drawn from the local community, conducted street patrols and fostered safety and security interactions across neighborhoods, thereby supporting broader community policing initiatives.

4.4.2 Simple random sampling

Simple random sampling was employed in this study to select household heads, ensuring that every potential respondent had an equal chance of participation. This approach allowed the researcher to obtain a representative view of the community, supporting accurate generalizations. By minimizing selection bias, simple random sampling effectively contributed to achieving the study's primary objective of assessing the contributions of community policing to reducing urban crime in Chang'ombe Ward, providing reliable data on community perspectives and the outcomes of police-community interactions.

4.5 Data collection tools

The study employed a combination of survey questionnaires, researcher observations, and document reviews to collect data. Each questionnaire item was carefully designed to correspond with one of the study's research questions. Both closed- and open-ended questions were included to gather comprehensive primary data. The questions addressed areas such as respondents' demographic information, the effectiveness of community

policing in reducing crime, preventive strategies, crime problem-solving techniques, and general trends and patterns of criminal incidents. This approach ensured that the collected data effectively captured information relevant to both the independent and dependent variables, providing meaningful responses aligned with the study's specific objectives and research questions.

4.6 Methods for Ensuring Validity and Reliability

4.6.1 Validity of the study

The study used a mixed methods approach and collected data using interview surveys, documentary reviews, and personal observation, which, in summary, ensured the triangulation of the data and was well affirmed by researchers for guaranteeing the study's reliability. Besides, confirmatory factor analysis was used to validate the data. This is a statistical method used to confirm or validate the internal structure of survey data.

4.6.2 Reliability of the study

Pilot-testing of the questionnaire was conducted with a sample size of 10% of respondents, as recommended by Shaheen and Pradhan (2019). The reliability coefficient was calculated to be 0.86. Cronbach's alpha coefficient levels of at least 0.71 were obtained as recommended (Schrepp, 2020), which confirmed that this study's data collection instruments were reliable. Cross-referencing data from various methods also assisted the general reliability and credibility of the study process.

4.7 Data Analysis Methods

The quantitative data gathered through the survey questionnaire were thoroughly analyzed using SPSS Version 21, summarized, and presented via descriptive statistics, with tables assisting the results' presentation. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis, whereby key themes obtained from the data obtained were identified and thoroughly analyzed. The findings were also augmented by various quotations made by the respondents while responding to the interview's questions to enrich the study's findings and discussion.

4.8 Ethical Consideration

The researcher complied with essential research ethics, including respect for respondents involved and upholding the principles of beneficence and fairness. A formal permit was acquired from the Regional Administrative Secretary of Dodoma City before data collection, which facilitated the introduction of the research to the community and officials. Participants were all informed about the study's purposes, methodologies, and results, and informed consent was obtained in order to guarantee voluntary participation. It also permitted respondents to withdraw at any moment without repercussions. The researcher prevented the respondents from any physical, psychological, or social harm. Confidentiality and anonymity were thoroughly preserved during the research process, with personal identifiers omitted from data analysis and final reporting to protect privacy. The research received ethical approval from the St. John's University of Tanzania Research and Ethics Committee, hence adhering to institutional and national regulations.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Community Policing Strategies in Reducing Urban Crimes in Chang'ombe Ward

This study evaluated the respondents' views on various community policing strategies currently employed to reduce urban crime while improving security in Dodoma City, focusing on Chang'ombe Ward. The comments demonstrate divergent opinions across several strategic aspects, reflecting both achievements and deficiencies in the practical implementation of community policing within an urban Tanzanian setting. The research used the Likert Scale in gathering respondents' views, which are presented in Table 1 and are elaborately discussed.

Table 1: Respondents' views on the existing community policing strategies in Chang'ombe Ward (n=143)

Community Policing Strategies	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Enhanced police visibility and accessibility	40.60%	21.00%	4.10%	16.80%	17.50%
Promoting community and youth engagement programs	27.90%	22.40%	13.90%	15.40%	20.30%
Promoting community policing awareness and education	42.00%	21.00%	7.00%	20.00%	10.00%
Multi-stakeholder collaboration	24.00%	34.00%	16.00%	18.00%	8.00%
Supporting volunteer community police officers	8.40%	6.30%	7.70%	37.00%	40.60%
Addressing socio-economic drivers of crime	27.30%	19.50%	6.30%	25.20%	21.70%

5.1.1 Enhanced police visibility and accessibility

The majority of the respondents (61.60%) either strongly agreed or agreed that Enhanced Police Visibility and Accessibility is among the community policing strategies witnessed in Chang'ombe Ward. Respondents testified during the administered interviews that there has been improved visibility and accessibility of police personnel within their community. This reflects a positive opinion of police presence in public spaces in the Chang'ombe Ward, which acts as a visible deterrent to criminal behaviours and improves individuals' sense of safety and security. However, a significant percentage of the respondents (34.30%) expressed disagreement or strong disagreement, which demonstrates that accessibility remains uneven across neighborhood, which could be attributed to population density, geographical wideness of the area, and limited patrol resources. These differing responses demonstrate that, although

improvements have occurred, the visibility of law enforcement personnel needs further enhancement through increasing systematic patrol scheduling and the deployment of volunteer police officers (known as Polisi Jamii) in underserved areas of Chang'ombe Ward. This is also substantiated by the opinions provided by one of the interviewed key informants, who stated the following:

“While we recognize that law enforcement visibility is present in our ward and it plays a substantial role in dropping crime, it still needs to be further boosted. For instance, in some areas of the communities, we do not observe sufficient police patrols, nor do we see volunteer community police officers frequently patrolling streets. In addition, there is only one police present in the area for reporting crimes, which is insufficient given the actual size of Chang'ombe Ward, which weakens the effectiveness of the strategy”. (Interview with Key informant, June 2024).

Overall, the results indicate that enhancement of the *law enforcement visibility* is among the community policing strategies present in Chang'ombe Ward, and its effectiveness is well acknowledged by the respondents. The researcher observed that the strategy is well acknowledged for its strength in fostering trust and communication between law enforcement and the community, hence making residents more vigilant and cooperative. Likewise, the strategy also focuses on community engagement, promoting collaboration to identify and address crime hotspots. This underlines the fact that the active involvement of residents helps to strengthen the community's resilience against criminal activities. However, a sizeable section of the respondents feels its presence is not adequate and therefore needs to be further increased to achieve its full potential of reducing crimes in the area. This implies that, for effective implementation of this strategy, police departments should expand patrol coverage, strengthen the volunteer policing scheme with proper regulations, and increase police posts.

The research conducted in Kenya by Mwaura (2020) supports the benefits of increasing law enforcement visibility, having found that increased law enforcement visibility enhances public trust, leading to better cooperation in crime prevention efforts. Similarly, a study by Olayiwola (2021) conducted in Nigeria highlighted that community engagement initiatives, such as neighborhood watch programs and public safety forums, significantly reduce crime rates by fostering collective responsibility.

5.1.2 Promoting police, community, and youth engagement programs

Based on the analyzed data and presented in Table 1, a cumulative total of 50.30% of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the youth and community engagement is among the strategies implemented as part of community policing components in the Chang'ombe Ward. Based on the researchers' observations, these programs include public awareness campaigns, sports initiatives, and participatory dialogues on crime prevention. However, a cumulative total of 35.70% of respondents expressed strong disagreement or disagreement regarding the existence of this strategy in the area, suggesting that these programs may lack an inclusivity aspect, may not be consistent, or may lack adequate resources. However, the significant youth demographic in the Chang'ombe Ward underlines

the necessity for focused interventions that promote civic responsibility and prevent crimes through positive social involvement.

Overall, the findings suggest that, while youth and community engagement initiatives are present, there is still room for improvement in promoting stronger participation and cooperation from Chango'mbe's residents. Enhanced collaboration, awareness, and targeted outreach efforts could help strengthen these strategies' role in crime prevention within the Ward. The findings are similar to what Mwaura (2020) found in Kenya, having observed that, although community engagement programs were recognized as valuable, they were less effective when there was weak communication between residents and law enforcement. Additionally, Skogan (2018) and Bennett's (2019) studies have shown that consistent community engagement, enhanced by regular outreach and awareness campaigns, can significantly improve the effectiveness of crime prevention efforts. One of the Social workers involved as a key informant had the following to say during the interview:

“We have been organizing various community engagement initiatives, specifically aimed at youngsters who are vulnerable to criminal conduct, as well as other community members at risk of victimization. The activities include sporting events and public awareness campaigns concentrating on community engagement in public safety in Chang'ombe Ward. These initiatives are meant to sensitize locals and encourage their active participation in community policing programs. The efforts have demonstrated efficiency in cultivating trust, facilitating communication, and improving collaboration between the community and law enforcement organs. However, their sustainability is a challenge, hence requiring more support in financial, material, and human resources to widen their reach and guarantee lasting influence.” (Social worker 1, June 24, 2024).

The effectiveness of this strategy is also acknowledged by a study undertaken by Olayiwola (2021) in Nigeria, which observed that a lack of trust between police and local communities leads to disengagement with residents, hence making them less likely to report crimes or cooperate with law enforcement. Similarly, a study by Mwaura (2020) conducted in Kenya highlighted that negative perceptions of police, often due to corruption or abuse of power, hinder effective community policing. Therefore, promoting police and community engagement is quite essential in addressing these shortcomings.

However, Kiprono and Karungari, (2016), noticed that, the effectiveness of these community engagement activities in fostering community development (including crime reduction) is affected by a lot of factors, including; a low level of knowledge on participatory planning, which can partly be attributed to limited resources for designing robust awareness campaigns, also existing bureaucracy, and central-level politicians who refuse to devolve power to lower levels.

5.1.3 Promoting community policing awareness and education

This component received the strongest agreement, with 63.00% of respondents confirming that awareness and education initiatives have been practically and effectively promoted as part of community policing strategies in the Chang'ombe area. These programs, as current

researchers observed, involve sensitization campaigns on community policing efforts, convening public meetings, and forging strong collaboration with community leaders as well as civic organizations, i.e., FBOs, CBOs, and NGOs. These programs help to clarify the role of community policing and the importance of residents' involvement, ultimately promoting a sense of ownership and accountability among residents. Nevertheless, about 30% of the respondents, cumulatively, remained neutral or disagreed, which suggests that constant provision of awareness and education is essential in order to maintain residents' participation and adapt messages to changing urban security dynamics.

This is supported by research undertaken by Muthoni (2021) in Kampala, Uganda, and published in *The East African Journal of Public Safety*, which reported that, Kampala neighborhoods which practiced community policing had experienced a 21% drop in robbery incidents, and generally highlighted the effectiveness of police-led community awareness campaigns and patrols involving community members in preventing crimes and improving residents' perceptions of security. Besides, according to the report produced by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2023), integrating social programs, including awareness campaigns, with policing helped significantly in reducing crime rates, specifically by up to 30% in developing countries. Following these results, the report recommended increasing government investments in community awareness and education, employment creation, and the provision of mental health services in order to address the root causes of crimes.

These findings relate to the Routine Activity Theory developed by Cohen and Felson (1979), which posits that crime principally occurs when three elements come together: a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian. Based on these assumptions, the findings from Chang'ombe align strongly with this framework. Since offering awareness campaigns helps to alert community members, especially on the need to be responsible parents and guardians for the youths in this poverty-stricken area, where the influence of the peer group can be huge in sensitizing youngsters to engage in crimes.

5.1.4 Promoting multi-stakeholders' collaboration

Furthermore, the findings indicated that, cumulatively estimated 58.00% of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the enhancement of the partnership between police, community leaders, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders is among the existing strategies found in the area. This demonstrated the acknowledgment of multi-stakeholders' efforts in addressing the challenge of urban crimes through shared multiple agencies. Nevertheless, about 26% of the respondents either strongly disagreed or disagreed cumulatively with the existence of this strategy, reflecting challenges indicating that, although effective collaboration though essential for sustainable policing and crime prevention in urban areas, yet needs further boosting in Chang'ombe Ward in order to make it effectively operative as expected.

The findings suggest that multi-stakeholder collaborations involving local organizations play a crucial role in crime prevention by fostering community involvement and providing support

services. Despite some areas of disagreement, these collaborations appear to significantly contribute to enhancing safety and reducing crimes in the Chang'ombe Ward, hence showing strong potential for further development. This is supported by Mwaura (2020), who found that partnerships between police, local NGOs, and community groups helped to enhance crime prevention efforts, as these collaborations provided essential resources and support for victims. Similarly, research conducted in South Africa (Tshabalala, 2019) emphasized the positive role that a strong partnership between police and community-based organizations plays in promoting safety and trust, as they often serve as intermediaries between residents and law enforcement. This was testified by Chang'ombe Ward Police Officer, who stated the following:

“Multi-stakeholders’ collaborations involving civic organizations, development partners, community leaders, police officers, and socio-welfare officers are currently increasing. This helps not only to improve trust between community members and law enforcement agents, but also to mobilize resources, which otherwise, we would not be able to manage as policing authorities alone. For instance, this collaboration has strengthened resource availability for programs such as awareness campaigns and community volunteer police trainings. Likewise, the involvement of religious leaders has helped us a lot to use religious platforms such as churches and mosques to provide education, for instance, on gender-based violence, incitement to social chaos, and promoting inter-religious tolerance among citizens” (Chang'ombe Ward police officer, June 21, 2024).

These findings are supported by the research conducted by Kaito and Njoroge (2023) in Taveta, Kenya, which indicated that multi-stakeholders’ involvement had a positive and significant relationship with the implementation of community policing. Likewise, a study by Ojo (2023), which examined crime reduction strategies in Lagos, Nigeria, strongly recommended the implementation of multi-stakeholder strategies that comprise both law enforcement agencies, civic organizations, and community members to effectively fight urban crimes.

5.1.5 Presence of Volunteer Community Police Officers (Sungusungu)

Regarding the presence of Volunteer Community Police Officers, this strategy recorded the lowest approval, with 77.60% of respondents cumulating, indicating their disagreement that volunteer policing units remain active or effective in the area. Historically, Tanzania's Sungusungu and volunteer or auxiliary police played a significant role in community security, especially in rural settings. Nevertheless, their effectiveness has significantly declined in the urban areas, including in Chang'ombe Ward, due to a lack of motivation, insufficient support, unclear legal frameworks, and some cases, perceived misconduct. The data obtained has highlighted the urgent need to reform and reinvigorate volunteer policing structures to complement formal police operations.

Several studies have been conducted in the African context that support these findings. For instance, a study by Okoth (2021), conducted in Kenya, observed that community policing programs resulted in a 22% reduction in crime rates. The study emphasized that

neighborhood watch programs and active community engagement in policing the community contributed to the enhancement of intelligence gathering and ultimately improved crime prevention.

Besides, the respondents interviewed in Chang'ombe area affirmed the importance of volunteer community policing but complained about the lack of motivational strategies to sensitize community members' participation in implementing this strategy, as one of the respondents lamented:

“If you ask anyone in the area whether the Sungusungu program helps to reduce crimes in the area, the answer will be yes. However, the big challenge we encounter is the lack of residents' motivation to actively participate in the scheme. This is mainly contributed to by the absence of incentives and proper organization and administration of the scheme. For instance, if each of the households were convinced to contribute even T/Shillings 5000/= per month, and this money was used to compensate those who spend a night protecting them, the program would be sustainable. But very few people are willing to sacrifice their night's sleep for nothing. And this is what makes this program ineffective”. (Interview with Resident A from Chang'ombe Ward, 2024).

Furthermore, one of the key respondents added the following during the administered interview in relation to this strategy.

“Fostering safer neighborhoods through Sungusungu requires collective responsibility, and community readiness to participate and contribute their time and finances. Unfortunately, the dilemma we are facing as community leaders is that those who are willing to stay awake and participate in this scheme need to be motivated at least by a small compensation, which is not happening because of a lack of financial resources. And those who are unwilling to sacrifice their night-time are very rigid and mostly unwilling to contribute financially, which undermines the sustainability of this program”. (Interview with Community Leader, from Chang'ombe Ward, 2024).

These findings imply that, although the establishment of neighborhood watch programs through street security committees and forming neighborhood patrol groups is viewed favorably by many respondents, such grassroots efforts help to promote trust, encourage vigilance, and strengthen informal social control, hence contributing to the overall reduction in crime incidence. Still, to make this initiative sustainable and meaningful, community leaders and local government authorities need to formulate robust incentive programs and resource mobilization strategies to support this effort.

This suggests that, while some residents participate in neighborhood watch initiatives, their presence is very limited. Therefore, the community may require additional support or improvements in coordination and engagement to make these programs more effective in enhancing safety and reducing crime in the area. A study by Olayiwola (2021) found that weak coordination, lack of training, and insufficient resources contributed to the ineffectiveness of neighborhood watch programs in crime prevention. Similarly, research by Mwaura (2020) conducted in Kenya highlighted that, without strong law enforcement

collaboration and community trust, such initiatives struggle to yield meaningful results.

5.1.6 Addressing Socio-Economic Drivers of Crimes

Based on the data obtained, only 46.80% of respondents cumulatively agreed that addressing socio-economic drivers of crimes (such as unemployment, poverty, and drug abuse) is among the community policing strategies present in Chang'ombe Ward. This implies that community policing strategies in the area remain principally reactive rather than preventive in addressing the root causes of crimes. Given the socio-economic realities of Chang'ombe Ward's urbanizing population, combining livelihood programs and youth empowerment into community policing initiatives could help produce longer-term security outcomes.

A study undertaken by Muthoni (2021) in Uganda, which focused on youth rehabilitation centres in Kampala, Uganda, indicated that the provision of vocational training and employment opportunities for at-risk youth contributed significantly to reducing their involvement in crimes. Muthoni's study stressed that addressing socioeconomic drivers of crime is quite essential for maintaining urban safety. Besides, according to the report produced by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2023), integrating socio-economic empowerment programs with policing helped significantly to reduce crime rates, specifically by up to 30% in developing countries. Following these results, the report recommended increasing government investments in education, employment creation, and the provision of mental health services in order to address the root causes of crimes.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

The study concluded that community policing is a vital mechanism for enhancing peace, safety, and sustainable development in urban areas, including Chang'ombe Ward. Findings indicated that community policing strengthens collaboration between law enforcement and citizens, enables early detection of criminal activities, and reduces residents' fear of crime. The study identified persistent challenges, such as limited resources leading to insufficient police visibility and weak accountability structures, overall, the findings suggested that community policing should be viewed not merely as a law enforcement approach but as a broader framework for community empowerment and participatory governance.

6.2 Recommendations

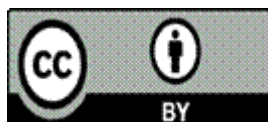
The government, through the Tanzania Police Force and Local Government Authorities (LGAs), should strengthen the institutional framework that oversees community policing. This can be attained by establishing formal policy directives. Community policing must be integrated into broader urban safety and development strategies for it to be effective, as well as aligning the strategy with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities; and SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). Existing volunteer policing groups, such as *sungusungu*, must be reviewed and modernized to make them appropriate for current urban contexts.

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