Professional Conduct Reforms and Service Delivery by Kenya Police Service in Homa Bay County, Kenya

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Abstract- Unmet demands and expectations and poor service delivery in public entities, has pushed people to demand for reforms for improvement of service delivery by the Kenya police service. Thus, the study sought to assess the effect of professional conduct reforms on service delivery by the Kenya police service in Homa Bay County, Kenya. The study was anchored on core competence theory and adopted the cross-sectional research design. The target population was the 29 police stations in Homa Bay County and 77 police officers from different ranks. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected and analyzed through descriptive, correlation, regression and content analysis. Findings from descriptive analysis showed high scores for professional conduct reforms (M=3.84) and service delivery (M=4.065) an indication that respondents agreed to the association between the two variables. The correlation analysis results revealed positive and significant effects professional conduct reforms of (R =.755) to service delivery. Regression analysis revealed that professional conduct reforms had a strong effect to service delivery (β = 4.108). The study also found that 74.9% service delivery of the police officers in Homa Bay County was due to adopting professional conduct reforms. Based on these findings, the study concluded that improved service delivery was due to implementation of professional conduct reforms. The study recommends inclusion of all police officers, the general public and local communities in police reforms for enhanced quality service delivery.

Index Terms- Professional conduct reforms, Training programs, Performance reviews, Provision of equipment/machines, Service delivery.

I. INTRODUCTION

Services hold an integral part of the economy in many nations; hence governments and administrative units work hard to improve and deliver quality services to the masses. In market context, service delivery is about providing quality services that respond to the market and clientele needs and expectations. According to Wahida (2016) service delivery is viewed differently from the public sector as it is about social responsibility while in private sector it is profit maximization. YuSheng and Ibrahim (2019) define service delivery as creation of value to the consumers of a certain product such as to pique their interest which will lead them to make a purchase. Giri, Shakya and Pande (2018) share that services are intangible products offered to the public and its measure is based on feelings and perceptions hence the need to have qualified and competent staffs.

Delivery of services within public sector is important as shared by Steiner, Kaiser, Tapscott and Navarro (2018) since it involves utilization of taxes that are collected from all people. Basically, the government runs its functions using public funds hence the need for quality services delivered to the citizenry. Ndubai, Mbeche and Pokhariyal (2016) simply states that service delivery is the right of every citizen and its quality must be assured by the government agencies and departments. To attain quality service delivery, organizations and institutions have formulated and implemented strategies that align with the agenda (Obadha, 2018). The service delivery in developing countries and especially in the African public sector is reported as problematic despite the efforts by governing agencies to change the trend.

According to a study by Brinkerhoff, Wetterberg and Wibbels (2018) reports that service quality is still low and in its infant stages due to reasons such as poorly motivated staff, lack of skilled personnel and lack of tools and logistics among others. The observations that if developing countries are to efficiently deliver services, then it should strictly start with the government, political leaders, civil and public servants, and then individual citizens who should ensure that service delivery is implemented in a right way as planned by rightful/top authorities and according to their needs and right of way (Dabestani, Shahin, Shirouyehzad & Saljoughian, 2017). In most cases, the poor and rural communities are affected the most when it comes to services that are poorly delivered by public sector actors. This is mainly due to unfair and unequal distribution of public resources such as funds. The urban cities receive huge amounts of government resource allocation as compared to the small, rural, and marginalized areas.

To improve quality of services delivered to the public, Henry, Nantongo, Wagner, Embrey and Trap (2017) advocates for supportive supervision and public awareness, Molina, Carella, Pacheco, Cruces and Gasparini (2017) share on the need for local communities to monitor the progress of different projects and programs initiated by the government to curb cases of corruption and delivery of high-quality services. Poor service delivery

occasioned by lengthy queues, delaying of services and bribery and making payments for services meant to be freely given (Ndubai, *et al.,* 2016). Which led to formulation of the Huduma centres – a one-stop shop for all public services given to Kenyans. For the police service, quality service delivery will involve accuracy in reporting incidences, tracking and tracing of an incidence during audits, handling issues as per the law, and proper recording of incidences (Steen, Teles & Torsteinsen, 2017). It is also about openness and transparency when making arrests, investigations, going through the legal process and charging suspects with the crimes that they have committed. This can be attained through strategic reforms such as professional conduct reforms. Which involve the behavior of people at the workplace based on their attitudes, appearances and conduct. Poppe (2021) assert that it covers the way one speaks, look, acts and make decisions concerning different aspects of the work assignments. Thompson and Payne (2019) stated that police officers must behave in a professional manner to legitimize their trade and also offer their services to the general public citizenry in a fair and equitable manner. The reforms to enhance professional conduct through trainings and its content must be relevant to societal issues. There is also need to learn on work-life balance aspects to motivate the policemen and women. Aywekanbe (2020) revealed that the police officers need equipment and tools of trade to ease their work roles.

The National police service is often rated poorly in terms of service delivery and also tops in corruption as based on the bribery index report in East Africa. There has been an increase in corruption index from 77.7% in 2011 to 81% in 2016. These challenges caused the push for reforms in the security docket that started back in 2009. The reforms also aim at changing the narrative of police officers serving the interests of the rich and political class in the country while neglecting the poor public. The reforms are expected to usher new spectrum in the NPS and are based on culture, people-management, partnership and linkage and addressing infrastructure gaps (Mageka, 2015). Thus, the study focus was on how professional conduct reforms impact on service delivery.

The study sought to answer this research question:

i. How do reforms in professional conduct affect the public service delivery at the police service in Homa Bay County, Kenya?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Literature Review
Core Competence Theory

It was forwarded by Hamel and Prahlad (1990) and it works to showcase the actions that organizations and business entities take to identified new opportunities to grow the business and gain competitive advantage. It also harmonizes the resources, skills, and capacities of the organization in such a manner to be unique and gain competitiveness. Ljungquist (2008) shared that the core competencies are based in three criteria potential for access to wider market options, contribute significantly to the customers and market benefits and inability to easily be imitated by other market players and competitors.

The theory has been critiqued for limiting the capability for firms to adapt to changing environments. Schaupp and Virkkunen

(2017) shared that the theory focuses on core competencies without consideration for other approaches that can be employed to improve performance and productivity. As such, it ignores the human element which can disastrous for service-based industries The core competencies that an organization can use is communication and Iornem and Adikpo (2020) share that it includes skills, knowledge and experiences that are shared to others in the organizations and leads to development of new ideas that help in satisfying the needs of the market. The second is thinking competency and according to Gupta (2013) that covers the knowledge, skills and processes we associate with intellectual development. It further includes cognitive awareness, specific thinking skills and mind and its thoughts to understand impact of competencies in improve service delivery. Improving competencies of the police officers can be done through professional conduct training to equip the officers with knowledge and skills.
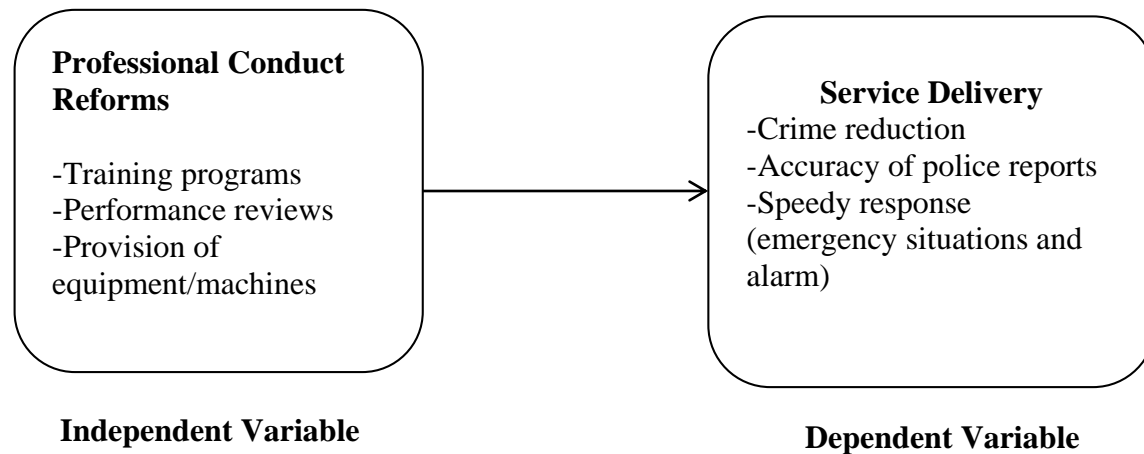
Empirical Literature Review

Kennedy, Reast, Morrow, Bourke, Murphy, Arnett, and Bradley (2019) conducted a study that sought to improve professional conduct and competencies of Irish pharmacists. The findings showed that from almost 3,000 pharmacists who had enrolled in ePortfolio and participated in ePortfolio Review by April of 2019 in the first three years, 96.2% showed an increased and improved engagement in continuous professional development and those who did their reviews in the last two years, 97.5% showed the required standards of competence and professional development. It was concluded that engagement in continuous professional development through continuing education led to improved competency for the professionals.

Njuguna, Ndung'u and Achilles (2015) study was on institutionalizing the Kenyan police professional reforms and what lessons are learned from the 2012-2015 period. This brief from the three-year program reveals that collaboration between the partners (program partners, local community members and national police service) led to improved service delivery. It also revealed that community security approach led to safer world for locals and community and police engagement and consultation of improved service delivery.

A study by Thompson and Payne (2019) examined how to increase professionalism and legitimacy in the Ireland police forces and through education and training of the police officers. The study revealed that when the police service members have professional learning up to university level, this led to increased legitimacy of the police and service and helped their professional conduct. Findings also showed that education and training led to better police culture and helped to build collaborative structures with public for enhanced community policing. The conclusions showed that police ethics and culture were still lacking and thus recommendation for increased professional learning and education was called upon to improve police service delivery.

A study by Gajić (2017) investigated professional conduct and capacity building reforms in the Kosovo security sector, by analyzing the security sector in the country for two decades and evaluating the approaches that international communities have taken in elevating activities for public service deliveries. The study revealed that professional conduct and capacity building in the security forces should be based on conditions and issues in the

society; the public should help the security actors to respond accordingly to the present concerns and situations.

Conceptual Framework

Professional Conduct Reforms

-Training programs
-Performance reviews
-Provision of equipment/machines

Service Delivery
-Crime reduction
-Accuracy of police reports
-Speedy response (emergency situations and alarm)

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Cross- sectional descriptive research design was employed in the study for providing a guideline in conducting all research activities. According to Bryman and Bell (2015) the design enabled the study to count, classify and compare results from across elements and descriptively report things as accurately as they occurred. The target population was the 29 police stations spread across the 8 sub-counties in Homa Bay County. This was the unit of analysis, while the unit of observation included 77 members distributed as 1 County Commander from Kenya Police and Administration Police; 1 Deputy County Commander of Kenya Police; 8 Sub-County Commanders of Administration Police and the Officer(s) and Deputy Officer (s) in charge of the 29 police stations.

Primary data was collected using self-administered semi-structured questionnaires that enabled the researcher obtain both qualitative and quantitative data. The data was collected using the drop and pick later method to increase response rate and avoid interfering with the work schedules of the police officers. All the data was then coded and entered into SPSS version 25.0 for analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive format to obtain averages, frequencies and variances and inferentially through multiple linear regression and correlation to indicate the relations, direction and strength between the study variables. Content analysis was done on the qualitative data by arranging the information as per themes.

Diagnostic tests were conducted to check for any violations made based on assumptions in the regression model. This was done through test of multicollinearity and using the Variance of Inflation Factor (VIF) and the test of autocorrelation with the use of Durbin Watson statistics for detecting lag 1 in the regression analysis residual.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The researcher conducted a descriptive analysis and obtained means and standard deviations. The analysis applied a five-point likert scale with ranges 1 to 5, where 1=not at all; 2=strongly disagree; 3=disagree; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree. These are the results

Table 1: Professional Conduct Reforms

Professional conduct reforms	Mean	Std. Dev.
The police officers are offered trainings on acceptable professional conduct	3.84	1
The police officers are trained on handling the situation during operations	4.043	0.628
There is improvement in the general outlook of the police officers	4	0.804
The police officers follow the direct orders given by their superiors	3.971	0.727
The police officers operate as per the standards of operations	3.927	0.828
There is professional development for the Kenya police officers	3.754	0.976
The legitimacy attained by police officer is through education and training programs	3.956	0.991
The current ethics at the police stations has greatly improved	3.884	0.899
The work culture at the police station has improved	4.028	0.803
Aggregate Scores	**3.84**	**0.851**

Table 1 indicates that respondents agreed to a great extent that professional conduct reforms affected service delivery of police officers in Homa Bay County based on aggregate scores of M = 3.84 and SD = 0.851. Poppe (2021) asserted that professional

conduct reforms worked on the attitudes, appearance and displayed manners of people at the workplace. While Thompson and Payne (2019) revealed that police officers must behave in a professional manner for legitimacy of their trade and offer fair and equitable services to the public. Furthermore, Gajić (2017) noted that enhanced capacity building improved approaches in handling public issues and Obadha (2018) shared that trainings provided to the officers should cover the prevailing societal problems. There is also need for constant reviews, as shared Kennedy, *et al.* (2019) is needed for checking that police officers adhere to the standard operating procedures. In addition, Njuguna, *et al.* (2015) shared that professional reforms at the Kenyan police through collaborations with local partners improved service delivery to the general public.

Table 2: Service Delivery

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Police fairly handle issues raised by the public	3.841	0.778
Police service quickly responds to public issues	4	0.874
The police handle the public with dignity	4.014	1.007
Police ensure maintenance of the lawful	4.333	0.779
Police protects both life and properties of the people	4.42	0.774
Police are honest in carrying out their duties	3.783	1.082
Aggregate Scores	**4.065**	**0.882**

Table 2 shows that there was improved service delivery in the police stations across Homa Bay County, based on the high aggregate scores of M = 4.065 and SD = 0.882. Just as Obadha (2018) revealed that reforms made at the National Police Service has led to openness, transparency and collaboration with the citizens that has improved investigations, legal proceedings and crime rates. In addition, Njue and Ongoto (2018) noted that reforms improved performance outcome through changing the leadership, culture and empowering employees. YuSheng and Ibrahim (2019) noted that police reduce crime by collaboratively working with local communities and community policing units. The police with involvement of the communities protect life and property. Dabestani, *et al.* (2017) talks of fast response to emergencies while Steen, *et al.* (2017) noted the need for accurate reporting of incidences and Topister (2021) argues for formulation and implementation of reforms in the police service.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis Results

		Service Delivery	Professional Conduct Reforms
Service Delivery	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	69	
Professional Conduct Reforms	Pearson Correlation	.755*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	69	69

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 imply that there was positive and significant effects were found for professional conduct reforms and service delivery in police stations in Homa Bay County at R = 0.755 and p-values of 0.00 < 0.05. The findings can be interpreted to mean that improvement in service deliver was largely influenced by reforms on professional conduct of the police officers. Similar to what Kennedy, *et al.* (2019) shared that continuous professional development programs for staffs, increases their competencies and capabilities that is reflected in quality of service delivery.

Diagnostic tests were conducted to check that the assumptions made do not violate the model and it also ensures the suitability of the data set in regression modeling.

Table 4: Test of Multicollinearity

	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Professional Conduct Reforms	.431	2.320
Mean VIF	**.431**	**2.320**

Table 4 indicates that the obtained VIF is below 4 and within the standard range of 0-10. The tolerance value averaged at .4 and based on stipulations made by Kothari (2011) such that tolerance values closer to 1 imply little multicollinearity and those closer to 0 sugest presence of multicollinearity. From the findings of the VIF and tolerance indicate absence of multicollinearity and hence the data set is ideal for regression modeling.

Table 5: Autocorrelation Test

Model	Durbin-Watson
1	1.874

Table 5 gives a summary of the results from the conducted autocorrelation test with the Durbin-Watson statistical findings found to be 1.874. When the figure is rounded off to the nearest whole number, then it will be 2 and indication of positive autocorrelation. These results indicate that there was absence of serial correlation and imply that the data set is suitable for conducting regression analysis.

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.874a	.763	.749	0.22058

a. Predictors: (Constant), Professional Conduct Reforms

Table 6 show that correlation coefficient of R is at 0.874, implying strong and positive relations between professional conduct reforms and service delivery by the Kenya police service in Homa Bay County. The coefficient of determination is presented by R square at 0.763 showing that the overall regression model is fit. The adjusted R square is given at 0.749 meaning that

74.9% change in service delivery by the police officers in Homa Bay County is explained by professional conduct reforms.

Table 7: Goodness of Fit

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	213.540	1	213.540	141.51	.001[b]
	Residual	101.134	67	1.509		
	Total	**314.674**	**68**			

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery
b. Predictors: (Constant), Professional Conduct Reforms

The ANOVA test was done at 0.05 significance level where the F calculated was found to be 141.51 and F critical found to be 3.984. The results showed that F calculated is greater than F critical (141.51 > 3.984), which is an indication that the adopted regression model is ideal and fit for use in the current research study. The p-value is $0.01 < 0.05$ implying that professional conduct reforms had significant effects to service delivery by the police officers in Homa Bay County.

Table 8: Regression Coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
1 (Constant)	6.833	.704		9.705	.000
Professional Conduct Reforms	4.108	1.348	.078	3.047	.016

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery

The Resulting Equation takes this form:
$Y = 6.833 + 4.108X_1$

Professional conduct reforms had positive and significant effects to service delivery of the police officers in Homa Bay County; the results were Kenya ($\beta = 4.108$, $p = 0.016 < 0.05$). The police officers are trained on the acceptable professional conduct, handling different situations during operations, ethics and work culture. These trainings have led to improvements when handling work tasks and adhering to direct orders, which results in better service delivery to public. The police officers currently handle the public with dignity, quickly respond to public issues and protect the life and property of the masses.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings indicate that professional conduct reforms had a high effect to service delivery of the police officers in Homa Bay County. Therefore, this study concludes that offering trainings on professional conduct and handling of situations, following direct orders and the stated standard operating procedures and adjustments on the work culture and ethics; improved the quality of services delivered to the people of Homa Bay County. The study concludes that reforms on professional conduct led to

improved service delivery in the police officers in Homa Bay County. The police officers are behaving in an acceptable professional conduct and they are handing their work duties as per the standard operation procedures and direct orders from senior officers. The adopted work culture and ethical conduct has improved quality of services delivered by the police officers to the general public.

Service delivery in this study was based on elements such as fair and quick response to issues, handling the public with dignity and maintaining law and order. It was also measured using aspects of protection of life and property of the people and police officers being honest while carrying out their duties. To achieve quality service delivery by the police officers, they adopted professional conduct reform practices. The study concluded that professional conduct reforms led to improved service delivery of the Kenya police service in Homa Bay County.

This study recommended that all police officers to be given trainings on professional conduct, on how to handle operations, ethics and work culture. Offering professional development courses and trainings will enhance legitimacy of the service and improve service delivery. To enhance service quality, then all the police officers must behave and conduct their duties in a professional manner. Since professional conduct reforms had a high effect on service delivery, this study recommend improvements made on professional development, educational and training programs for the police officers. Improving the knowledge base of the police officers will keep enhancing service quality offered to the general public.

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