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Correlates of content of training of private security guards and crime prevention in Nairobi County, Kenya

Malit Hillary Koros ^{1,*} and Peter Opiayo Mabubi ²

¹ Department of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Chuka University, Kenya.

² Department of Education, Faculty of Education, Chuka University, Kenya.

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Abstract

Crime rates in Kenya, particularly in Nairobi, have been steadily rising, surpassing those in other cities. To combat this, private security personnel have been hired to protect both private and public areas, yet crime continues to increase in Nairobi County. While the National Police Service offers rigorous training at the Kenya Police Training College, private security agencies often lack well-equipped facilities, leading to inconsistent training quality. The impact of these training variations on crime prevention remains unclear. Thus, this study aimed to investigate the relationship between training content quality and crime prevention among private security providers in Nairobi County. The primary objective was to evaluate how content of training of private security guards relate to crime prevention in the area. The target population included 2,817 security officers and instructors from 55 licensed private security firms, along with employees from regulatory bodies and associations. A sample of 350 respondents were surveyed, consisting of 283 security officers, 55 instructors, and 12 key informants from the Private Security Regulatory Authority (PSRA), Private Security Industry Association (PSIA), and Kenya Security Industry Association (KSIA). Instructors and regulatory employees were purposively selected, while security officers were chosen through random sampling. The study employed a correlational research design, combining quantitative analysis of crime data with qualitative insights from questionnaires and interviews. Data was analysed using SPSS version 25.0, with results presented as frequencies, percentages, and correlations. The analysis revealed no significant relationship between content of training and crime prevention in Nairobi County. The study recommends that stakeholders, including policymakers, develop effective strategies to enhance crime prevention through improved guard training, while also addressing underlying social and environmental factors.

Keywords: Training Content; Private Security Officers; Crime Prevention; Regulatory Bodies; Nairobi County; Instructors

1. Introduction

The commercialization of security, as discussed by Abrahamsen and Leander (2016), marks a departure from the state-funded social welfare model towards private sector involvement. This shift has led to debates surrounding the use of private military contractors and mercenaries, fueling the growth of private security industries globally. Dempsey (2010), describes private security as security services rendered by non-state actors, a phenomenon driven by governments' inadequate capacity and funding to ensure public safety. This trend underscores the evolving landscape of security provision, where non-state entities increasingly supplement or even replace traditional state-run security apparatuses. George and Kimber (2014), argue that private security predates modern governmental structures, tracing its origins to early attempts by individuals to safeguard their properties and loved ones. Despite the absence of formalized governance structures, early societies relied on private arrangements for security, highlighting the intrinsic human need for protection. Abrahamsen and Leander (2016), provides historical context, citing instances in British

* Corresponding author: Malit Hillary Koros

England where private individuals, primarily landowners, employed guards to protect their estates. This historical precedent laid the groundwork for the institutionalization of private security as a global phenomenon.

Private security has become an increasingly important industry in the United States over the past few decades. As public law enforcement resources have become strained, private security firms have taken on a larger role in protecting businesses, individuals, and infrastructure (Alrousan and Faqir, 2023). According to industry estimates, there are now over 1 million private security guards employed in the US, outnumbering public law enforcement officers by a ratio of over 3 to 1 (Dempsey, 2010). The private security industry in the US encompasses a wide range of services, including uniformed security guards, executive protection, cybersecurity, alarm monitoring, armored car transportation, and investigation and loss prevention (Miller and Russell-Brown, 2022). Private security companies range from large, national firms to small, local providers. Many corporations, retailers, healthcare facilities, and other organizations rely on private security to supplement or in some cases replace public law enforcement.

The private security industry continues to evolve rapidly, driven by factors such as technological advancements, emerging threats, and changing client demands. Some key trends include increased use of surveillance technology and smart surveillance systems, growing demand for cybersecurity and information security services, expanded use of remote/virtual security monitoring, and a focus on specialized services like executive protection and event security (Dempsey, 2010). These trends present both opportunities and challenges for private security training programs, as providers must continuously adapt curriculum and delivery methods to keep pace with industry changes and prepare guards for modern security work (Miller and Russell-Brown, 2022). Recruiting and retaining qualified personnel also remains a significant challenge for the industry in the United States. Generally, private security training in the US is a complex and dynamic field that warrants further research and analysis. Examining the regulatory environment, training standards, and emerging industry trends can provide important insights for policymakers, security companies, and the public.

The private security industry in Europe has seen significant growth and evolution in recent years, driven by factors such as heightened concerns over terrorism, cybercrime, and other emerging threats. Acampora *et al.* (2023), demonstrate that while the regulatory landscape varies across different European countries, there are some common trends and challenges that private security training programs must address. Many European nations have implemented national licensing or certification schemes for private security personnel, often requiring a minimum level of training and examination before individuals can work as guards, investigators, or in other security roles (Bambaradeniya *et al.*, 2023). These training programs typically cover topics like legal authorities, use of force, emergency response procedures, and specialized skills. However, the specific curriculum and competency standards can differ considerably between countries, and even between individual regions or municipalities within the same country.

The private security industry in Africa has experienced significant growth and transformation in recent decades, driven by a range of economic, political, and social factors. As public law enforcement resources have often been strained, many businesses, organizations, and high-net-worth individuals have turned to private security providers to fill critical gaps in safety and protection (Berg, 2010). The regulatory environment for private security training and operations varies widely across the African continent, with some countries having well-established licensing and certification frameworks, while others lack comprehensive national standards (Abrahamsen and Leander, 2016). This has led to a patchwork of training requirements and competency levels, with concerns over inconsistent quality and accountability of private security personnel. Despite these regulatory challenges, private security companies in Africa have had to adapt their training programs to address emerging threats, such as cybercrime, terrorism, and civil unrest. Staller *et al.* (2022), present an increasing demand for specialized skills, including surveillance, crisis management, and executive protection. Recruitment and retention of qualified security staff also remains a persistent issue, as private security firms compete with public sector jobs and struggle to offer competitive compensation and career development opportunities (Kasali, 2011). As the private security industry in Africa continues to evolve, there is a growing need for more comprehensive and standardized training frameworks to ensure the professionalization of the sector and the provision of high-quality services to clients.

The private security industry in East Africa has experienced significant growth and transformation in recent years (Staller *et al.*, 2022). The regulatory environment for private security training and operations varies across the East African region, with some countries, such as Kenya and Rwanda, having relatively well-established licensing and certification frameworks, while others, such as Tanzania and Uganda, lack comprehensive national standards (Bambaradeniya *et al.*, 2023). This has led to a patchwork of training requirements and competency levels, with concerns over inconsistent quality and accountability of private security personnel. Despite these regulatory challenges, private security companies in East Africa have had to adapt their training programs to address emerging threats, such as cybercrime, terrorism, and civil unrest (Ngari, 2015). Recruitment and retention of qualified security staff also

remains a persistent issue, as private security firms compete with public sector jobs and struggle to offer competitive compensation and career development opportunities (George and Kimber, 2014). As the private security industry in East Africa continues to evolve, there is a growing need for more comprehensive and standardized training frameworks to ensure the professionalization of the sector and the provision of high-quality services to clients.

In Kenya, private security has a rich history dating back to the pre-independence era, with companies like KK Security and Securicor Kenya operating since the 1960s (Abrahamsen and Williams, 2011). Despite the lack of comprehensive regulation, recent efforts by the Kenyan government, including the enactment of the Private Security Regulatory Act in 2016, signal a commitment to oversight and standardization. Ngari (2015), highlights ongoing regulatory reforms aimed at aligning the private security sector with international best practices, in line with the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime. Radić *et al.* (2021), allude that the evolution of private security reflects broader societal shifts towards privatization and commercialization. From historical antecedents to contemporary practices, private security has emerged as a vital component of global security frameworks (Bamigboye, 2022). While challenges persist, including regulatory oversight and accountability, private security entities continue to play integral roles in safeguarding individuals, institutions, and critical infrastructure. The dynamic nature of security necessitates ongoing collaboration between state and non-state actors to adapt to emerging threats and ensure public safety.

The Private Security Regulatory Act (2016) requires that Private Security Service providers without their own training facilities must provide evidence of a partnership with a licensed training institution (Jones, 2023). Failure to comply will result in the revocation of their operating licenses. This regulation underscores the importance of training in crime prevention. Ngari (2015), analyzes international regulatory frameworks for the private security industry, with a focus on quality of training in the United Kingdom. The British government has partnered with the Security in Complex Environments Group (SCEG), which operates within the private security sector. The partnerships aimed to ensure quality control by enforcing stringent standards for quality of training, recruitment, and service provision (Mazerolle *et al.*, 2021). This has greatly enhanced the quality of training for private security service providers in the UK, both domestically and internationally. This demonstrates that industry associations in Kenya, such as the Kenya Security Industry Association (KSIA), the Kenya National Private Security Workers Union (KNPSWU), and the Protective Security Industry Association (PSIA), could collaborate with the private security regulatory authority to create a national training manual in accordance with the Private Security Regulatory Act 2016 (Staller *et al.*, 2022).

Nairobi, has experienced significant growth in its private security industry, driven by rising concerns over crime, terrorism, and political instability. Private security companies operating in Nairobi provide a wide range of services, including guarding, surveillance, executive protection, and specialized crisis response (Bambaradeniya *et al.*, 2023). The regulation of private security training and operations in Nairobi is primarily governed by the Kenya Private Security Regulatory Authority (KPSRA), which oversees licensing, certification, and minimum training requirements for security personnel. However, the implementation and enforcement of these standards can vary, leading to concerns about inconsistent quality and competency levels among private security guards (Ngari, 2015). Recruitment and retention of qualified security staff also remains a challenge for private security firms in Nairobi, as they compete with the public sector and struggle to offer attractive compensation and career development opportunities (Jones, 2023). Addressing these workforce issues will be crucial for the continued professionalization of the private security industry in the city. Therefore, the study sought to evaluate how content of training relates with prevention of crime among private security guards in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Training content serves as the cornerstone of equipping security guards with the requisite knowledge and skills to effectively combat criminal activities (Coleman, 2024). This section embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the literature to delineate the intricate relationship between training content and its impact on crime prevention outcomes within private security firms. By meticulously examining the relevance, comprehensiveness, and applicability of training content, this review endeavors to shed light on its pivotal role in enhancing the capabilities of security guards in addressing and thwarting criminal threats (d'Amato and Hunter, 2024). By delving into scholarly works that scrutinize various aspects of training content, this review seeks to provide nuanced insights into how the quality and scope of training materials influence the efficacy of crime prevention efforts. Through this inquiry, a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which training content shapes the performance and effectiveness of security guards in mitigating criminal activities is sought, ultimately contributing to the development of more robust and tailored training programs within the private security sector.

The quality of training content in private security programs in the USA is crucial for effective crime prevention. White (2014), indicates that well-structured training manuals and comprehensive curricula significantly enhance the skills and knowledge of security personnel. Training that includes modules on threat identification, emergency response, and legal considerations equips officers with the necessary tools to manage various security challenges. A blend of

theoretical learning and practical applications, such as role-playing and scenario-based exercises, is essential for preparing personnel for real-world incidents (Groves and Nagy, 2022). Studies show that programs emphasizing ongoing education and regular updates to training materials lead to higher levels of competency and confidence among security officers. d'Amato and Hunter (2024), allude that inadequate or outdated training content can result in poor decision-making and increased vulnerability to crime. Moreover, the scheduling of training sessions plays a vital role; frequent, well-timed training opportunities reinforce learning and help security personnel stay current with best practices. Overall, the correlates of high-quality training content—such as structured manuals, effective curricula, and regular scheduling are critical for enhancing the crime prevention capabilities of private security forces in the USA (Groves and Nagy, 2022). This review succinctly outlines the relationship between training content quality and crime prevention in private security. Its strengths lie in its clear focus and logical structure, effectively emphasizing the importance of comprehensive curricula and practical training. However, the review could be improved by incorporating specific studies or examples that demonstrate successful training programs. Additionally, a discussion of potential challenges in implementing high-quality training content would provide a more balanced view.

Quality training content in private security programs across Europe is crucial for effective crime prevention. Krykun *et al.* (2023), shows that comprehensive training manuals and structured curricula enhance the capabilities of security personnel. Programs that include modules on risk assessment, legal frameworks, and crisis management prepare officers to respond effectively to various situations. Practical training through simulations and scenario-based exercises reinforces theoretical knowledge. Furthermore, regularly updated training schedules ensure that personnel stay informed about emerging threats and best practices (Coleman, 2024). Conversely, inadequate training content can lead to poor preparedness and increased security vulnerabilities. Thus, high-quality training content encompassing structured materials and effective scheduling is vital for enhancing the crime prevention efforts of private security in Europe. Bellis *et al.* (2024), provide a thought-provoking framework analysis that delves into the commercial determinants of violence, offering valuable insights into potential avenues for violence prevention through a public health-based approach. While the study may not directly pertain to private security training, its findings are highly pertinent. By uncovering the underlying determinants of violence, such as socioeconomic disparities and environmental influences, the study underscores the importance of addressing root causes and societal factors contributing to crime (Coleman, 2024). This perspective highlights a crucial consideration for training content within private security firms to encompass a broader understanding of the social determinants of crime. Incorporating such insights enables security guards not only to react to criminal incidents but also to proactively address underlying societal issues to prevent crime proactively (d'Amato and Hunter, 2024). For instance, understanding how economic inequalities or community infrastructure impact crime rates can empower security personnel to implement strategies that address these issues at their roots, thereby enhancing overall crime prevention efforts.

Similarly, Groves and Nagy's (2022), discourse analysis on the criminalization of contract cheating services in Australia provides another lens through which to view effective crime prevention. Although their focus is on academic dishonesty, the study underscores the broader implications of aligning crime prevention strategies with societal norms and values (Corpuz *et al.*, 2023). This resonates deeply with the objectives of private security training, emphasizing the importance of ethical standards and professional conduct. By incorporating principles of integrity, honesty, and ethical behavior into training content, security guards can be empowered to uphold these values in their roles (Krykun *et al.*, 2023). This not only enhances the professionalism of security guards but also contributes to effective deterrence of criminal activities. For instance, embedding modules on ethical decision-making and the importance of community trust in training programs can significantly impact how security personnel approach their responsibilities.

These studies collectively highlight the importance of contextualizing training content within broader societal frameworks and ethical considerations (Alam and Mohanty, 2023). By integrating insights from research on the determinants of violence and societal norms, private security firms can develop training programs that not only equip security guards with technical skills but also foster a deeper understanding of the social and ethical dimensions of crime prevention. This holistic approach ensures that security guards are not just reactive responders but proactive agents in creating safer environments (d'Amato and Hunter, 2024). They become equipped to identify and address underlying societal factors that contribute to crime, thereby enhancing their effectiveness in crime prevention roles. Moreover, by emphasizing ethical conduct and aligning their practices with community values, security personnel can build trust and collaboration with the communities they serve, further strengthening crime prevention efforts.

De Moura *et al.* (2024) provide valuable insights into the adaptation and feasibility assessment of a dating violence prevention program, emphasizing the necessity of comprehensive interventions tailored to specific forms of violence. While their focus is on dating violence prevention for girls in foster care, the implications extend to the broader context of crime prevention within private security firms (Groves and Nagy, 2022). Their emphasis on tailored interventions underscores the importance of content of training within private security firms that encompasses a wide range of

criminal behaviors. This ensures that security guards are equipped not only with technical skills but also with the nuanced understanding required to identify and effectively respond to various types of threats. While De Moura *et al.* (2024) provide compelling insights into tailored interventions for specific forms of violence, the study could benefit from discussing potential specialized programs to the diverse operational contexts of private security firms. It would be insightful to explore how the principles of tailored interventions can be practically applied across different security environments, considering variations in organizational capacities and regulatory requirements.

Similarly, Zhang *et al.* (2023), delve into the intricate interaction of crime risk across different crime types in hotspot areas, highlighting the complex and interconnected nature of criminal activities. Their study underscores the importance of providing security guards with a comprehensive understanding of crime dynamics and risk factors to enable them to proactively assess and mitigate potential threats in diverse environments. By incorporating insights from research on crime dynamics and hotspot analysis into training content, private security firms can ensure that their guards are well-prepared to navigate complex security challenges and respond effectively to emerging threats (Coleman, 2024). This underscores the significance of training content that goes beyond basic skills training to provide security guards with a deep understanding of the environments in which they operate and the factors that influence crime patterns. Ultimately, by incorporating insights from studies such as De Moura *et al.* and Zhang *et al.*, private security firms can develop training programs that empower their guards to effectively prevent and respond to a wide range of criminal activities. While this contributes valuable insights into crime dynamics, a deeper examination into how security firms can systematically incorporate ongoing research findings into their training curricula to keep pace with evolving crime trends would enrich the discussion.

The synthesis of this reviewed literature highlights the crucial role of training content in shaping crime prevention outcomes among private security providers (Alam and Mohanty, 2023). By developing relevant and comprehensive training, security firms can equip guards with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively mitigate criminal activities. Training that aligns with the specific challenges faced by security personnel enables informed decision-making in response to threats (Corpuz *et al.*, 2023). While the importance of comprehensive training is well-argued, there is a need to address potential barriers to developing such standards across firms. Additionally, exploring the role of technology and innovative training methods could provide valuable insights for future practices. A deeper understanding of the factors influencing violence and crime is essential for creating targeted interventions that tackle root causes (Stager *et al.*, 2024). By integrating research on these determinants, security firms can tailor their training to address specific risks, enhancing crime prevention efforts. This holistic approach not only imparts practical skills but also deepens understanding of the socio-economic factors influencing criminal behavior, contributing to more effective and sustainable crime prevention strategies (Corpuz *et al.*, 2023). Providing examples of successful targeted training interventions would further strengthen this argument.

In Kenya, however, there have been alarming instances of private security officers being implicated in criminal activities, despite their primary role being the prevention and condemnation of crime (Zhang *et al.*, 2023). For instance, allegations of theft involving employees of leading firms like G4S raise concerns about the adequacy of training provided to security personnel (Groves and Nagy, 2022). These incidents underscore the need for comprehensive and effective training programs within the private security sector to address emerging challenges and uphold professional standards. Krykun *et al.* (2023) and Zhang *et al.* (2023) effectively highlights challenges within the Kenyan private security sector, but it could benefit from exploring potential root causes behind inadequate training and regulatory enforcement. Analyzing systemic factors such as economic pressures, insufficient oversight, or gaps in training curricula that contribute to misconduct among security personnel would provide deeper insights into addressing these issues. Koech (2020), argues that current training programs for private security personnel in Kenya may be inadequate to meet the evolving demands of the security market. While security officers are entrusted with complex tasks such as cash-in-transit operations, they often lack the necessary training and resources to handle such responsibilities effectively (Buzatu, 2015). This highlights a gap in training focusing primarily on basic security aspects like access control, neglecting crucial areas such as professional ethics, public relations, crime prevention strategies, and weapon handling skills (Chinwokwu, 2018). Exploring case studies or incidents where insufficient training has led to security breaches or compromised public trust would provide empirical evidence. Furthermore, discussing strategies or policy recommendations to address these gaps in training, such as curriculum reforms or enhanced regulatory oversight, would offer actionable insights for stakeholders in the private security sector and policymakers.

White (2014), further emphasizes the evolving role of private security service providers, who are increasingly tasked with quasi-policing duties in many developed nations. To fulfill these responsibilities effectively, security personnel must receive comprehensive training in relevant areas such as arrest procedures, contraband seizure, and incident reporting. This shift in responsibilities necessitates a corresponding adaptation in training programs to equip security officers with the requisite skills and knowledge to meet modern policing needs (Fielding, 2023). The effectiveness of

private security service providers in preventing and addressing crime hinges on the quality and comprehensiveness of their training. The experiences in Kenya and insights from international regulatory frameworks underscore the importance of robust training programs that encompass a wide range of skills and competencies. By prioritizing training and collaboration with industry stakeholders, policymakers can ensure that private security personnel are adequately prepared to meet the dynamic challenges of contemporary security environments.

Objective

The main objective of the study was to evaluate the relationship between content of training of private security guards and crime prevention in Nairobi County in Kenya.

2. Methodology

The study employed a correlational research design. The target population included 2,817 security officers and instructors from 55 licensed private security firms, along with employees from regulatory bodies and associations. A sample of 350 respondents were surveyed, consisting of 283 security officers, 55 instructors, and 12 key informants from the Private Security Regulatory Authority (PSRA), Private Security Industry Association (PSIA), and Kenya Security Industry Association (KSIA). Instructors and regulatory employees were purposively selected, while security officers were chosen through random sampling. Questionnaires were used to collect data from instructors and guards while an interview guide was used to collect data from key informants who included regulatory body and associations employees within Nairobi County. The reliability of the research instruments was determined using Cronbach Alpha coefficient whose reliability coefficient value was 0.763 thus considered reliable. Data was analysed using SPSS version 25.0. The hypothesis testing applied a significance level of $\alpha=0.05$, with results presented in frequencies, percentages, and correlations.

3. Results and Discussion

The results of the study were discussed and presented as follows

3.1. Demographic information of the respondents

The study respondents were required to provide information on their gender, age, education level, and marital status. Data analysis revealed that 55.1% of the respondents were female, while 44.9% were male. The age distribution indicated that 51.2% of respondents were aged between 20-40 years, 14% were aged 51 and above, and 13.7% were in the 36-40 age range. The results regarding education levels revealed that most respondents had completed at least primary education, with a fairly equal representation among those who completed secondary and tertiary education. The marital status analysis showed that 52% of the respondents were married, while 48% were single. Understanding these demographic characteristics is crucial, as they influence perspectives on content of training and crime prevention efforts within the private security sector.

3.2. Content of Training and Crime Prevention

The study aimed to examine the various training content and its effectiveness on crime prevention among private security guards in Nairobi County. The training content sort were; introduction to security industry, legal and regulatory framework, self-defense skills, crime detection skills, security risk training content, training in threats and hazards, investigative skills training, basic security procedures, security equipment training, kitting and turnout, effective communication, counter terrorism, training in ethics and integrity, physical fitness and foot drills and undertaking industrial attachment. Descriptive statistics was employed to establish the effectiveness of quality of training content on crime prevention among private security guards in Nairobi County. The analysis revealed that while the training content is generally perceived as moderately effective, with mean scores ranging from 2.76 to 3.17, there are notable strengths and weaknesses across different modules. Specifically, high-performing modules like Kitting and Turnout Training indicated practical relevance, while lower scores for Investigative Skills Training highlighted areas needing improvement, suggesting that targeted enhancements could significantly elevate the overall effectiveness of the training programs for private security personnel.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics on Content of Training and Crime Prevention

Respondent ID	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
Introduction to security industry	2.99	3.00	1.30
Legal and regulatory framework	2.87	3.00	1.40
Self-defense skills	2.85	3.00	1.46
Crime detection skills	2.82	3.00	1.40
Security risks training content	2.96	3.00	1.40
Training in threats and hazards	3.13	3.00	1.46
Investigative skills training	2.76	3.00	1.42
Basic security procedures	2.97	3.00	1.39
Security equipment training	3.00	3.00	1.35
Kitting and turnout training	3.17	3.00	1.45
Effective communication training	3.07	3.00	1.36
Counterterrorism training content	3.05	3.00	1.48
Training in ethics and integrity	3.09	3.00	1.41
Training in physical fitness and foot drills	3.10	3.00	1.47
Undertaking industrial attachment	3.00	3.00	1.38
Training Content Averages	2.99	3.00	1.41

The descriptive statistics on table 1 above for the training content, based on a 1 to 5 scale, provided critical insights into the perceived effectiveness and consistency of various modules. The mean scores ranged from 2.76 to 3.17, indicating moderate to relatively high effectiveness across the modules. Kitting and Turnout Training achieved the highest mean score of 3.17, followed by Training in Physical Fitness and Foot Drills (3.10) and Training in Ethics and Integrity (3.09). These modules were highly regarded, reflecting their practical relevance and strong alignment with the needs of private security guards. Conversely, Investigative skills training received the lowest mean score of 2.76, suggesting a potential gap in the curriculum or a need for more emphasis in this area.

The median scores across all modules were uniformly 3.00, indicating a centralized perception of moderate effectiveness among respondents. This consistency showed that the training content generally met expectations, though not exceptionally. The standard deviations ranged from 1.30 to 1.48, highlighting variability in perceptions across different modules. Counterterrorism training Content and Kitting and Turnout Training exhibited higher standard deviations (1.48 and 1.45, respectively), indicating differing levels of acceptance or perceived relevance among participants. On the other hand, Introduction to Security Industry (1.30) and Security Equipment Training (1.35) showed lower variability, reflecting more uniform feedback. These findings suggested opportunities for targeted improvement. While modules like kitting and turnout training and training in physical fitness and foot drills served as benchmarks, areas like investigative skills training and modules with higher variability, such as counterterrorism, benefited from enhanced content and delivery methods. By addressing these gaps, the training programs achieved greater consistency and effectiveness in preparing private security personnel for their roles.

The key informants acknowledged the relevance of current training content to the real-world scenarios faced by private security guards, though improvements were necessary. PSRA officers stated, "The content is relevant but needs regular updates to address emerging security threats," emphasizing the importance of keeping training materials current. They also affirmed that "continuous feedback from guards is necessary." A study by Johnson (2023) suggested that input from those on the front lines is vital for adapting the curriculum effectively. PSIA representatives added that "while the content covers basic skills, more emphasis on technology and intelligence gathering would enhance relevance." This indicated a growing need for guards to be proficient with modern tools and methods in a rapidly changing landscape. KSIA officers highlighted that "some aspects are helpful, but we need more training on handling emergencies and dealing with aggressive individuals," pointing to specific areas where additional focus could greatly improve readiness.

These insights underlined the necessity for ongoing evaluation and enhancement of training programs to ensure they effectively prepared security personnel for the challenges they face in the field.

The findings of this study regarding effectiveness of training content agree with Smith (2022) who established that quality of training content plays a vital role in the effectiveness of private security personnel, with key informants providing insights into what worked well and what needed improvement. PSRA officers revealed that "conflict resolution and crowd management modules have been effective," showcasing essential skills for maintaining order in various situations. However, they noted that "cybersecurity training is still lacking," indicating a significant gap in preparing guards for modern threats. PSIA representatives emphasized that "emergency response drills and surveillance techniques are highly effective," pointing to practical skills that enhance readiness. They also mentioned that "theoretical modules without practical application are less helpful." This observation is supported by Johnson (2023) who suggested that real-world practice is crucial for effective learning. KSIA officers noted that "practical simulations and self-defence training have improved our skills," which underscored the importance of hands-on experience in building competence. Yet, they expressed concern that "outdated first aid training needs improvement," highlighting the necessity for keeping all training content current. These findings illustrated the mixed effectiveness of training content and the ongoing need for enhancements to ensure guards are fully equipped for their roles.

In response to the frequency of reviewing and updating training content, the finding revealed varied update and review among organizations, reflecting different challenges and practices. PSRA officers stated that "we aim to review the content every two years, but budget constraints sometimes delay the process," indicating that financial limitations impacted their ability to keep materials current. In contrast, PSIA representatives mentioned, "We update content based on security trends and incidents," demonstrating a proactive approach to adapting training in response to real-world developments. They also highlighted that "regular reviews are conducted in collaboration with trainers," emphasizing the importance of involving experienced personnel in the revision process. However, KSIA officers expressed concern that "updates are infrequent, and we often rely on our experience to fill the gaps," which pointed to a reliance on practical knowledge rather than systematic updates. They concluded that "more regular reviews would be beneficial," underscoring a common desire for improved training content management (Williams, 2023). These insights jointly illustrated the need for more consistent and proactive approaches to reviewing training materials in the private security sector.

The relationship between the quality of training content and effective crime prevention was critical, as highlighted by various experts in the field. High-quality training content directly enhanced the ability of security personnel to manage and prevent security threats. For instance, PSRA officers emphasized that "high-quality training content directly enhances guards' ability to prevent and manage security threats," indicating that equipping guards with the right skills can significantly improve their performance and overall security outcomes (Beato and Silveira, 2014). Moreover, training that focused on real-life scenarios and proactive strategies was particularly effective. PSIA representatives noted that "training content that focuses on real-life scenarios and proactive strategies improves guards' effectiveness," suggesting that practical training makes guards more alert and capable of identifying potential threats (Oyibokure *et al.*, 2023). This approach not only prepared guards for the challenges they faced but also fosters a proactive mindset essential for effective crime prevention.

Additionally, KSIA officers pointed out that "relevant and practical content prepares us to handle different security situations and reduce crime rates." This established the importance of comprehensive training in building confidence and efficiency in responses to various security challenges (Mofokeng *et al.*, 2023). When guards receive thorough training, they feel more prepared to act decisively, which can lead to a reduction in crime rates. Therefore, the quality of training content was fundamentally linked to the effectiveness of crime prevention efforts. High-quality, relevant, and practical training equipped security personnel with the necessary skills and confidence to address security threats effectively.

3.3. Correlation

The results from the correlation analysis revealed that there were no significant relationships between the quality of training programs and crime prevention outcomes in Nairobi County. Specifically, the Training Content exhibited a correlation coefficient of ($r = -0.022$, $p = 0.686$), suggesting a negligible negative influence on crime prevention effectiveness that is not statistically significant. This result supported the null hypothesis (H_0), indicating that the training content does not significantly relate to crime prevention outcomes. Although the coefficient's direction implied that improved training content could not enhance crime prevention efforts, the lack of significance indicated that this effect may not be strong or reliable.

Table 2 Correlational analysis between Content of Training and Crime Prevention

		Content of Training	Crime Prevention
Content of Training	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.022
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.686
	N	325	325
Crime Prevention	Pearson Correlation	-0.022	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.686	
	N	325	325

4. Conclusion

Results revealed that there was no significant relationship between content of training and crime prevention in Nairobi County. The analysis highlighted the need for a comprehensive crime prevention strategy that integrates effective training with broader policy initiatives to address social inequities and build community trust. Training must encompass not only technical skills but also the socio-economic contexts in which security personnel operate. A holistic framework that combines practical skills development with ongoing assessments can significantly enhance security capabilities. Collaboration among policymakers, security organizations, and training institutions is essential to create integrated strategies that improve training quality while addressing root causes of crime, such as poverty and unemployment. Engaging community stakeholders will strengthen these initiatives, ensuring training relevance and effectiveness, ultimately fostering safer communities in Nairobi County and beyond.

Recommendations

- The Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Administration may standardize training durations to ensure all personnel receive adequate preparation before deployment.
- The policy makers in the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Administration may develop customized training modules that cater to the specific needs of both new recruits and experienced personnel.
- The Private Security Regulatory Authority and security firms may consider establishing structured post-training programs to provide ongoing skill enhancement opportunities for guards.
- The national Police Service and the Private Security Regulatory Authority may encourage collaboration between private security firms and local law enforcement agencies to enhance crime prevention strategies.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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