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## **JULY 2021 UNRESTS IN SOUTH AFRICA'S KWAZULU-NATAL: THE FAILURE OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTELLIGENCE-LED POLICING IN CRIME PREVENTION**

**Abstract:** *This article dealt with the implementation of ILP in the research area. It links such implementation or non-implementation to July 2021 unrests. These unrests started in KwaZulu-Natal and escalated to Gauteng. The research was based in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The aim was to establish the implementation of ILP, and 8 participants were drawn between CIO and OPO stationed in four districts (Mkhanyakude, Zululand, uThukela and Amajuba). The participants included two former police officers (one former Commander of CI and a former Station Commander) who were used to validate information by active police officers. One District Commander was also interviewed. A qualitative research methodology was followed to conduct the research and a purposive method of data gathering was used targeting police officers who work in the crime intelligence unit and those who have authority over the operational members of the SAPS. They provided information that was used to determine the implementation of the ILP in crime prevention in the research area. The article found that this policing strategy has not been adopted in the research area. It also identified some challenges that make it hard for the implementation of the strategy as well as working relationship between CIO and OPO. The article is useful to police implementers to improve on the implementation of the strategy as well as assess the road that has been traveled in implementing ILP in preventing crime and unrest in the country.*

**Keywords:** *Unrests, Crime Prevention, Intelligence, Policing, Strategy*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In July 2021 on the eve of the arrest of the former president Jacob Zuma's arrest South Africa witnessed unrest in the country. This was due to the failure of the crime intelligence Section of the South African Police Service (SAPS) to provide necessary intelligence that was to be used to prevent unruly protests by the former president's supporters and other opportunists who used such failure to commit various crimes. The unrest was after the Constitutional Court sentenced Mr. Zuma to 15 months in prison for contempt of court based on the fact that he disobeyed the court order by refusing to appear before Judge Zondo's commission of inquiry on the state capture.

According to the KwaZulu-Natal Police Provincial Commissioner (Mr Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi), "Crime intelligence was incapable of providing police with information on the unfolding security threat". He further stated that police were caught off-guard because they focused their attention and planning to Nkandla protests. The Provincial Police Commissioner further argued that there was not a single district in the province that was not affected. The big question then is, how come such a big country's security threat was not picked up by crime intelligence? Another question that can be asked is what role did crime intelligence section of the SAPS played in providing information that was to be used to prevent this mayhem. The last question is: has South Africa succeeded in implementing Intelligence-led Policing (ILP)?

It is history now that 89 shopping malls were looted and 359 people lost their lives due to the lack of intelligence that could have been used to prevent such an attack on the democracy. According to Meyer and Swanepoel (2021), this criminal activity cost the country over 20 billion worth of infrastructure damage and the loss of thousands of jobs. This according to these authors was a setback to the recovery of South Africa's economy which was battling to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic's aftermath.

One can assume that the organizers of the unrest had more intelligence than SAPS. If this is correct, it indicates that the country is vulnerable to criminal activities because the police agency is not as informative of what is going on in the country. Criminals seem to be smarter than the police and can organize and implement any unruly behavior under the nose of the police. This is

regardless of the claim by the SAPS that the policing approach followed in preventing and fighting crime is intelligence-led policing. If this claim is correct, how did the country suffer 2021 July unrest? Why did the police fail to gather intelligence that was used to prevent such an attack on SA's democracy by some unruly thuggery behavior?

Meyer and Swanepoel (2021) posit that the state's inability to foresee this frightening and destructive series of events that occurred on such a mammoth scale pointed to a monumental failure by the intelligence services. While this statement is inclusive of the whole intelligence of the country, the aim of this article is only to identify the failure on the side of police crime intelligence. The effectiveness of this section of the police department means that the citizens will feel and be free from the threat of crime in the country.

The intelligence breakdown meant that the government failed to meet the uprising with an adequate response (Meyer and Swanepoel). KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Police Commissioner agreed with this argument by Meyer and Swanepoel when stating that when violence unleashed itself, he asked crime intelligence for information, but it goes without saying that his request did not yield any meaningful results because unrest continued beyond the control of the police in the province.

He further argued that police were not controlling crime intelligence but lived at the receiving end of whatever was sent their way. This is confusing, to say the least, how come is SAPS not controlling crime intelligence? Is not the crime intelligence section part of the SAPS? This articulation by the Provincial Police Commissioner shows how risky are citizen's lives in the hands of the government.

The organization of the SAPS as an organization is not conducive to effective crime prevention. For the person outside the organization, one can assume that the Provincial Commissioner oversees every police section and their activities in the province. He is the one who must account for crime in the province, so, all sections should account for him. It is not conceivable that there will be a section that is not under his control, and he is at their mercy but has no control over them in terms of intelligence to control crime in his province. Police house is not in order and intervention to correct the structuring thereof is immediately essential to ensure the safety of the citizens of SA.

What was also noticeable regarding the unrest in the discussion is that different government departments (which are part of the security cluster) are not working together to provide safety for the citizenry. Such failure compromises the well-being of the citizens and gives criminals an upper hand to terrorize law-abiding citizens. As it was argued somewhere in the above paragraphs, consequently jeopardizes the already ailing economy of the country.

The above discussion is an indication that it is not the lack of resources that hinders the effective implementation of intelligence-led policing in particular and crime intelligence in general, but accuracy and effective gathering including working together of all involved in crime intelligence that can work in preventing crime and combat unrest in the country. Based on the above discussion, the problem with intelligence-led policing is that there is no study regarding the implementation of this policing approach in South Africa in general and in the research area in particular. Such studies would assist in improving how this approach can be enhanced and revamped to ensure that incidents such as 2021 July unrest are prevented.

## **2. OVERVIEW OF CRIME INTELLIGENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA**

According to Duncan (2018) the failure of effective crime intelligence has been there for a long time. An example is that, for instance, crime intelligence failed to detect Guptas and their criminal activities in the country. This is an indication that crime intelligence keeps on failing SAPS in achieving its mission of preventing and detecting crime and criminal activities in the country. It keeps on contributing to placing South Africa (SA) on shaky ground when it comes to crime which immensely contributes to crippling the economy of the country. Crimes that happen on a large scale and have a huge impact on the lives of SA citizens. Failing to deal with such crime contributed to the people of South Africa losing hope in the entire SAPS.

Duncan further states that “crime intelligence has little honor, no moral compass, a complete lack of integrity, as well as rudderless and dysfunctional”. He was quick to identify the problem regarding the failure of the Crime Intelligence Section to effectively discharge their duties and mandate. This according to this author can be based on the fact that crime intelligence in SA is unregulated. The reason for the division to be unregulated is deliberate political interference in the policing of the country. He argues that “It is impossible not to conclude that the political

class made a deliberate decision to keep regulation loose to make it more susceptible to manipulation” (Duncan, 2018).

Though SAPS is intelligence-led, SAPS Act 65 of 1995 is silent on Crime Intelligence. The problem with that according to Duncan (2018) is that there are some dangers in Crime Intelligence that can only be mitigated through regulating the functioning of this Section. This is because of the high level of secrecy under which Crime Intelligence operates. In addition to its powers and functions, the Act should spell out the operating principles of this Section.

According to NSIA which dates to 1994, the Section gathers, correlates, evaluates, coordinates, and uses crime intelligence in support of police’s objectives as set out in the Constitution. It can also institute counterintelligence measures within the SAPS and supply crime intelligence relating to national strategic intelligence to the coordinating body of intelligence, the National Intelligence Coordinating Committee (NICOC). There is an established intelligence cycle for strategic intelligence or intelligence about the longer-term threats of specific concern to strategic decision-makers. The NICOC sits at the apex of this process as it is responsible for coordinating intelligence and developing a national intelligence estimate. These are used to forewarn policymakers about possible threats and assist the Cabinet in developing national intelligence priorities (Duncan, 2018).

Strategic intelligence is the highest form of the end-product of the intelligence process. It is a blending of facts and analysis to produce an informed judgment on a major aspect of a law enforcement agency’s objectives. An example of strategic intelligence is a report to a Station Commander about the growth of crime in a particular section of the police station area. It might also be an analysis of the development of a certain phenomenon in the neighboring station’s area with some suggestions as to how quickly the station area can be affected.

Strategic intelligence differs from tactical in that it deals with the larger issues with which the decision-makers of the agency are concerned, not the nuts and bolts of intelligence support that the investigator or patrol officer on the street must have to do their job (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010).

This document further argues that the effective use of intelligence is crucial to law enforcement agency’s ability to combat criminal groups. These groups formed part of the July 2021 unrest in

South Africa. If crime intelligence, especially strategic intelligence, was effective, the police were going to be able to combat such unrest. Crime intelligence analysis permits law enforcement authorities to establish a proactive response to crime. It also assists in developing strategic plans to tackle current problems and prepare for future anticipated problems.

This means that crime intelligence makes police organizations to be always aware and prepared for the criminal movement in the country thus not taken by surprise when criminals strike in a given period. What happened in South Africa was an indication that SAPS' crime intelligence needs a proper shake-up and attention to prevent the country from being dominated by criminal activities and unruly behaviors.

What was witnessed in KZN, and Gauteng was a sign that the country was not well protected, and the government was not doing enough to protect the country. Some police writers and analysts have argued that crime is not the only sign that the government is not securing the country from criminals but the ESKOM load-shedding is also another sign of a country not well protected from various attacks. Loadshedding also to an extent contributes to crime in the country. This is because both these incidents (July unrests and load-shedding) have a huge impact on the economy of the country. Others argue that the problem that manifests in the government emanates from the problems within the African National Congress (ANC) as a ruling party. Chinua Achebe once said that things fall apart when the center cannot hold (Achebe, 1958).

As part of strengthening the regulation of crime intelligence in the country, the Civilian Secretariat for the Police made amendments to the Police Act by including a section on Crime Intelligence. The section of the draft Bill covers the reporting lines of the Division, its functions, and the process of obtaining security clearance (Draft South African Police Service Amendment Bill, 2021).

## **2.1 The state of the Crime Intelligence Division in South Africa**

According to the 2020/21 report by Acting Divisional Commissioner, of Protection and Security Services, Major-General Ngcobo, SAPS was a key player in the intelligence environment with a specific mandate to combat and prevent crime. Needless to say, this is in direct contrast to what the KZN Provincial Commissioner, as quoted on page one of this article. He stated that during

unrest in that province, SAPS was not in control of crime intelligence but relied on what they were given. This is a sign of how unserious the agency is in protecting the citizens from criminal activities. Two Commissioners from the same agency are disputing each other.

Major-General Ngcobo further states that in aid of this, the collective intelligence community would have to be able to leverage qualitative expertise and capability from SAPS. The vision of the SAPS was to utilize an intelligence-driven environment to neutralize crime. In essence, Crime Intelligence served to heighten SAPS's effectiveness. Looking at the introduction for this article, these are just baseless statements and aimless sentences. Both the SAPS as an organization and Crime Intelligence as a Division are not effective in either combating or preventing crime in the country.

The report presented the budget for the two components that are part of the Crime Intelligence Division. Covert and Overt operations. The total budget was R240 463 736, split into 32.75% to overt and 62.25% to covert operations. A graph displaying Crime Intelligence employment equity: 5868 Africans, 813 Coloureds, 596 Whites, and 360 Indians, Total=8637. Resources allocation: 2102 vehicles. There were 2140 vacancies, which is, 20% of the total posts in the Division. Eighty-eight percent of the personnel was at the provincial level with 12% at Head Office. Seventy-four percent of the personnel are under SAPS Act and 26% under the Public Service Act.

When one considers that Crime Intelligence is struggling with its objectives, it is not clear why the vacancies are not filled. Filling vacancies will ensure that there are more intelligence officers on the ground which might increase intelligence gathering. This will ensure that criminal activities are prevented before manifesting. This will increase arrests and inform crime prevention programs. The more crime intelligence gathers on the ground, SAPS can be able to prevent crime that is escalating in the country.

South Africa is experiencing a number of crimes that occur in large numbers and affect a lot of people at the same time. An example is the killing of 15 tavern patrons in Soweto (Magome, 2022). This happened while SA was reeling from the July 2021 unrest. This is an indication of the absence of crime intelligence in the country that could have been used to prevent crime in the country.

Crime intelligence can also be used as a tool for crime combating. Gathered intelligence can be used to inform strategies to be used in fighting the escalation of crime. Shortage thereof means that the police are guessing when developing strategies to combat crime. Such strategies lack sufficient information that can be of use in dealing with crime escalation in the country. It looks like SA is under-sieged by criminals who seem to be always a step ahead of the police. For the police to effectively combat crime, they must be able to access qualitative expertise, knowledge, and effective intelligence-gathering capability so that any challenge or contingency may be addressed appropriately as the need arises (Scheepers and Schultz, 2019). Accurate intelligence gathering is an important factor in enhancing the effectiveness of the police in executing and fulfilling its functions and obligations.

According to Scheepers and Schultz (2019) Crime Intelligence Division of SAPS is supposed to track criminal elements within the Republic of South Africa. Crime intelligence is the result of the collection, analysis, and interpretation of all available information concerning known and potential criminal threats and the vulnerability of supported organizations. The advent of criminal intelligence analysis is linked to the transformation of individual crime into organized or group crime. If crime intelligence is used effectively, it can assist in the combating of criminal groups. It enables the police to identify and understand criminal groups operating in a particular area. It was going to assist the police in controlling/combating criminal groups during the July 2021 unrest if it was gathered and provided to the leadership of the SAPS in the affected provinces.

Once criminal groups are identified and their operation is known, police can assess current trends in crime to forecast and hamper the development of perceived future criminal activities (UNODC, 2010). Lacking crime intelligence as seen in the turn of events in the South African policing environment results in the police agency struggling with crime that is organised by the groups. The emphasis must be made that such crime has a huge impact on the lives of citizens and depicts police as failing to control crime in the country. Such crimes draw much attention to the performance of the police and to the safety of the community.

### **3. IMPLEMENTATION OF INTELLIGENCE-LED POLICING MODEL IN SOUTH AFRICA**



South African Police Services adopted this policing model to direct policing in SA. The model is based on assessing and managing risk and assisting in predicting and responding to crime before it occurs. According to Duncan (2018) this model makes sense because it allows the police to deploy scarce resources strategically to areas of high risk. The only shortfall identified by this author is that it can also lead to policing in the absence of a criminal predicate, which makes room for speculative policing of nebulous, ill-defined threats.

Ratcliffe (2016) stated that intelligence-led policing emphasizes analysis and intelligence as pivotal to an objective, decision-making framework that prioritizes crime hot-spots, repeat victims, prolific offenders, and criminal groups. It facilitates crime and harm reduction, disruption and prevention through strategic and tactical management, deployment, and enforcement. In other words, crime intelligence-led policing is also important in informing the tactical operations of a police agency. It means that it can be used in day-to-day crime prevention or combat operations. If crime intelligence is produced and used efficiently it can provide an informed approach to fighting criminals and criminal groups and ensure the safety of law-abiding citizens.

This policing approach ensures that criminal activities are analyzed, and strategies devised to counter such activities. Police can learn from previous criminal behaviors in a particular area, to prevent such behavior from being transferred to another area. If one considers that 2021 July unrest started in KZN and increased to other provinces, particularly Gauteng is a clear indication of the failure of properly implemented intelligence-led policing in South Africa.

Kelling and Bratton (2006) provided a proper explanation of how intelligence-led policing can be perceived. They post that intelligence-led policing includes making the appropriate decisions on operational police work and actions. They further argue that intelligence-led policing refers to a management framework for criminal intelligence and planned operational police work, in which intelligence is the foundation for defining priorities, and strategic and operational objectives in the prevention and suppression of crime and other security threats.

This policing model is crime-fighting in that, it is guided by effective intelligence gathering and analysis, and it has the potential to be the most important law enforcement innovation of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Kelling and Bratton, 2006). One though should argue that the impact of intelligence-led

policing in SA is yet to be seen. The occurrence of crime that has a huge large-scale impact is an indication of either the failure of this model or the ineffective implementation thereof. The model might be a good model but if it is not implemented effectively by either policy makers or policy executors, the model will not produce the required results.

Like many other policing approaches and strategies, the implementation of intelligence-led policing might lack monitoring and evaluation. Such a lack might cause a good policing innovation to fail. This was the case with sector policing, National Crime Prevention Strategy, and other policing and crime prevention strategies employed before them, they all failed and dropped without examining the causes for such failure. Intelligence-led policing is an innovative model because it is a business model for policing in that it can incorporate areas of policing activity that are not related to crime per se but are significant problems for communities and police agencies. With this evolution, intelligence-led policing is moving to become the ‘all-crimes, all-hazards, and all-harms’ business approach that is sought by many in policing (Ratcliffe, 2016).

According to Kelling and Bratton (2006) this policing model incorporates the 4-i model, that is, intent, interpret, influence and impact which is helpful in explaining the roles and relationship between key actors of the intelligence-led policing concept. These actors are the criminal environment, the criminal intelligence analyst, and the police decision-makers. All four “i” components must be in place and function properly if intelligence-led policing is to work to its potential. The model places emphasis on the relationship between criminal intelligence analysts and decision-makers. The analyst interprets the criminal environment and influences the decision-makers with analysis findings. Based on these findings, the decision-makers impact the criminal environment through strategic management, action plans, investigations, and operations.

Taking the above discussion that explains what intelligence-led policing is all about, it is therefore important that some advantages of this policing model can be highlighted. European External Action Service (2013) states that this model allows for a forward-looking and proactive approach to policing management. The model has been successfully applied in a number of countries around the world to address serious crime and transnational threats. This has encouraged the development of the intelligence-led policing concept from being applied to counter organized crime to a more generic strategic business model to address a wide variety of

policing problems at local, regional, and national levels. This development is directly related to the search for law enforcement methods that will allow the police to have a greater impact on crime, crime developments and the social harm of criminality which leads to increased demand for police accountability.

Political and public expectations of police accountability have been heightened especially by the occurrence of crimes that impact many people at the same time, civil unrest which leads to the death of many people and the destruction of infrastructure being an example of such crimes. Intelligence-led policing therefore presented an option to address such crimes and provide police accountability. This is because intelligence-led policing provides the rationale and the tools to analyze and assess threats to the public, allowing for more documented, transparent, and accountable decision-making procedures to direct existing resources where they are most needed (EEAS, 2013).

To assist in prioritizing, decisions must be made based on facts and intelligence, the basis of all of which is the information. Intelligence-led policing contributes to the optimization of the allocation of resources and concentrates efforts in a structured manner. This helps to cope with the increased sophistication and operation agility of criminals to subvert the law and order.

According to Ratcliffe (2016) studies suggest that while in general increasing the number of police officers can be effective, it is useful to consider how these police officers are deployed. Random patrols are not an effective tactic to reduce crime but focused tactics that are drawn an evidence base (a fundamental component of intelligence-led policing) can have crime prevention benefits beyond the amount of time officers spend at a crime hotspot.

In trying to explain the implementation of ILP, it is important to highlight the advantages of that policing model. This is done so that one can decide if embarking on such implementation can benefit policing in the country or if it is just another pointless approach in a country like SA where crime continues to rise and it is not clear if decision-makers are implementing necessary strategies and approaches to address, combat, and prevent crime. The next discussion is based on the research methodology followed in this article.

## **4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Literature review**

Literature that was reviewed includes books, journals, articles, newspapers, annual reports, enabling legislation and articles. These form part of the secondary sources of information. Primary sources comprised all transcripts of the interviews.

### **4.2 Research method**

This is qualitative research and assesses if the implementation of ILP had an impact on the July 2021 unrest that took place in KZN and Gauteng provinces. A qualitative research method was also followed to collect qualitative data, and such information was only collected in the northern part of KZN. A qualitative approach was followed because the research is premised on a social constructivist paradigm. This paradigm holds the assumption that individuals seek to understand the world in which they live and work (Creswell, 2012).

An interview guide was developed, and it guided the data collection to ensure that research questions were answered, objectives were achieved and cover the aim of the research. The interview guide ensured that there was a structure in the way data was collected whilst ensuring that new concepts that arose during interviews were also captured.

To assist with the compilation of questions that form part of the guide, two people/experts who are in a crime intelligence environment were used. The interview guide contained a mixture of questions, and those questions were phrased in the third person to allow participants to speak freely, especially about negative experiences or situations. One-on-one semi-structured, open-ended question interviews were conducted with police officers in Crime Intelligence Units.

These police officers were, Crime Intelligence Branch Commanders and other members were information gathers and handlers. One former Station Commander, one former Branch Commander in two different areas that were part of the research area, and a District Commander were also interviewed to triangulate information gathered from the officers stationed at crime intelligence branches.

Due to the non-willingness of members of Crime Intelligence to participate in the research even after permission by the SAPS was granted, no person from Ladysmith was interviewed or formed part of the research. The Branch Commander from Newcastle also did not agree to form part of the research.

All interviews were conducted by the author at a time and place convenient to the participants. Handwritten notes were made at the end of each interview to record emergent thoughts and ideas. Interviews ran for approximately one hour and were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim by an audio typist. All participants answered all interview questions. Transcripts were checked against the tape recordings for accuracy and errors by the researcher who conducted the interviews.

### **4.3 Population**

The population of the research was police officers involved in intelligence-led policing in the research area, that is, Branch commanders, Station commanders, and District commanders. Purposive sampling was used because units/branches that were used for data gathering were identified prior to the process taking place. The aim was to involve people with experience and who were part of crime intelligence in the research area.

Their views can be used to influence policies aimed at improving crime intelligence, provisioning crime prevention and crime combating as well as implementation of ILP. According to Bowen (2005), purposive sampling is used to ensure that quality information about the topic is obtained from the case study. It is not used to maximize numbers but to become saturated with information on the topic.

### **4.4 Data collection**

A standardized semi-structured interview schedule was used to gather qualitative data from participants. An interview guide was used to bring structure to the interviews, even though interviews were treated as conversations during which the interviewer drew out detailed information and comments from the respondents. According to Patton (in Rubin and Babbie, 2001), one way to provide more structure to a completely unstructured, informal conversational

interview, while maintaining a relative degree of flexibility, is to use the interview guide strategy.

#### **4.5 Data analysis**

A thematic method was followed to analyze the data. In thematic analysis, one looks for patterns that emerge within transcripts (Lebese, 2009). In this article, the themes were formulated before interviews were conducted, while the new themes that emerged from the interviews were also added to the predetermined themes. To ensure that sufficient information was gathered, a set of questions was also formulated although respondents were at liberty to give information beyond the scope of the formulated questions. According to Green and Thorogood (2009), by using data such as discussion notes or transcripts, the researcher can categorize respondents' accounts in ways that can be summarized.

Data analysis started during the interview stage. Interviews were conducted by the author himself which enabled him to gain an understanding of the meaning of the data. The information on the data recording instrument was transcribed by him, thus assisting him in obtaining more insight and understanding of the recorded data. The author then read the transcript several times to familiarise himself with the data.

### **5. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

There were four themes that were identified during data analysis that assisted with assessing the failure/success of the implementation of intelligence-led policing in crime prevention in the research area. These themes are the handling of crime intelligence (information), the Relationship between crime intelligence police officers and operational police officers (Crime prevention officers), and The role of ILP in crime prevention.

#### **5.1 Handling of crime intelligence (information)**

To ascertain how intelligence is handled and communicated between Crime Intelligence Officers (CIO) and Operational Police Officers (OPO) the interviewees for CI were asked who is the person that they work with and give information to in the stations that they serve. It was established that there is no established process/procedure to be followed on how intelligence is communicated/handled between CIU and the Police station. There is no specific person to whom

such information is given at the police station. Other CIO prefer to give information to the Station Commander as it will be expected but others argue that they do not trust Station Commanders and cannot trust them with the information.

This is a serious problem, it means that CIO can have useful intelligence that could be used to prevent crime but such information cannot be communicated to the Station Commander. One interviewee when asked if he had any information regarding the July 2021 unrest, stated that “...*the information was there but it was not communicated because it was not confirmed*” When asked why such a piece of valuable information was not communicated with OPO he stated that “*sometimes even if you give them information, they ignore it*”.

Another interviewee stated that “*Sometimes they are not informed because of the fear that they can leak information*”. The issue here is, then what? What happens to such information? Can that information be useful in planning crime prevention operations that in the long run can help prevent and combat crime in respective station areas?

The availability of intelligence to prevent the July 2021 unrest question was also posed to a senior CIO who posits that “*the information was always there but the problem was, who do you give information to without fear of reprisal*”. He argued that some senior police officers are appointed because of their relationship with some politicians. The fact that it is assumed that these unrests were the result of a former president being sentenced to jail and his supporters retaliating to that, means that some senior police officers who might have been there because of their relationship with him, even when given intelligence, they would not have acted on it. Also, the information gathered might have been afraid because their careers might have been in danger if they appeared like they were against the supporters of the former president, including their senior colleagues.

This was also concurred by another police officer who is not a CIO. He argued that it was difficult to deal with the July 2021 unrest because, amongst the senior officers, one is not aware of who is handled by whom. The police therefore decided to play it safe. For a non-police officer, this information was damning! It indicates political interference in policing that puts the lives of the citizens in danger to advance political gains. What makes this situation difficult is

that in Crime Intelligence Section at the Provincial Level does not account to the Provincial Commissioner.

This is the case with CIO at the station level, they do not account to either the Station or District Commander but the Provincial Commander. This makes them to be untouchable, they only act if instructed by the province. Because of the confusion as the result of such an arrangement, a former station commander was asked how he managed to work with CIO during his tenure. He stated, *“I did not know what their work was. The members did not trust them also because they always regarded them to be spies. They had all fancy cars that we did not have”*. He was then asked how he assign them to carry on different tasks, he argued that *“You sometimes have to use the rank because you are their senior but as a person you also fear for your life...”*. This was also affirmed by the District Commander who stated that he also uses his rank for the CIO to do what he wants them to do.

## **5.2 Relationship between crime intelligence police officers and operational police officers (Crime prevention officers)**

The next important question based on the previous one was the relationship between CIO and OPO in the research area. The answers to this question vary and the reality of the situation could not be established. For instance, one CIO stated that the relationship was good, and another one argued that the relationship was not good because when OPO sees a CIO, they will think that he/she is there to spy on them. This was confirmed by the former station commander who stated that *“even when we have a brief before operations when a CIO arrives, the member will stop talking because the members do not trust CIOs”*.

Another CIO agreed to that submission when stating that *“There is no relationship between CIO and OPO. If CI comes with information but POP does not work on it, such information is useless”*. The former CIO highlighted factor that affects the relationship between these two units, he posits that *“Policing can be improved if there is trust between these two units. If intelligence says there is a gang or syndicate operating in a particular place, OPO must trust you. When OPO conducts an operation and does not find anything, they say that CIO was lying. They do not want to get closer to CI because there is this misconception that CI is investigating them”*.



Based on the previous discussion on how crime intelligence information is handled, it is clear that the working relationship between CIO and OPO needs to be improved to ensure that services are rendered to the community. If no attention is paid to this matter, incidents such as the July 2021 unrest cannot be prevented thus exposing the community to acts of anarchy and disruptive criminal behaviors. Improving the relationship between these two units will also ensure the successful implementation of ILP. It is also important to state that the role of the crime intelligence unit be clarified so that OPO will have an understanding of what they are doing and remove suspicion that CIO are spying on OPO.

It will also be important to confirm intelligence information that they give to OPO that can be used to inform crime prevention operations. If that is done, there will be trust between the two units and OPO will take CIO seriously and which will deepen the relationship and understanding between these units.

### **5.3 The role of ILP in crime prevention**

To find out the role of ILP in preventing crime in the research area participants were asked if they know what ILP is and its role in crime prevention. Another question was if this policing approach could succeed in preventing July 2021 unrest. Apart from two police officials involved in the research, all struggled to explain the role of ILP in crime prevention. This indicates without a doubt that this police approach has no role in crime prevention in the research area. What was also discovered is that no document regulates the implementation of ILP. This problem is not unique to ILP but is a common problem faced by most police approaches in SA, they are not regulated, and they lack implementation guidelines.

When they understood what ILP is, the following responses were provided, *“It is confirmed information which can be followed until it leads to justice whosoever must be led to justice. I believe our office is trying to implement it but we struggle with the station. It is therefore partially implemented. We don’t understand our different roles in the implementation of ILP”*. Another participant stated *“We as CI give them guidelines to say how can a priority crime at that time be neutralized”*. The retired CIO argued that *“The police must be led by intelligence. Intelligence clarifies who is involved, groups or individuals. It helps the police to follow*

*according to what intelligence has told them. CI must provide information and OPO must act on that information". This posit is not far from the role of ILP in crime prevention so this explanation made by the retired Station Commander says "Crime Intelligence provides information that could be used in crime prevention".*

Currently, crime prevention operations in the research area are not intelligence-led. This approach is not adopted and it does not even seem that it will be implemented because there is no instruction that regulates the implementation thereof. The police are still doing things the old way and each working in silos. There is no improvement in how crime prevention is conducted. One can also argue that the organization is struggling to implement strategies that are adopted from other countries like ILP. Those who are supposed to implement these strategies struggle to conceptualize them. Some strategies are understood at the highest level of the organization but implementers are not equipped on how to implement some strategies.

It becomes difficult to implement something that they cannot define or understand. It could have assisted if both units were workshopped about this strategy and its implementation. Such a workshop would have also assisted in ironing out differences that these units have about each other.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings discussed above, the following recommendations can be made:

- Because there is no trust between the OPO and CIO, there must be an identified person/s at the police station level who can be used to handle crime intelligence information. That person must sign a sworn secrecy of information form that they cannot disclose intelligence information to unauthorised sources. Information at their disposal will only be used for operational purposes. This will increase trust and improve the working relationship between CIO and OPO.

If the working relationship between these units is improved, incidents such as the July 2021 unrest can be prevented. This will also assist in improving the implementation of ILP in the research area and the country.

- Some measures such as regular workshops to ensure that each unit is aware of what the other unit is doing are important. This will ensure the improvement of the trust between the two police officers from different units. It might assist also if different units and their functions are introduced as part of police training. This will ensure that police officers are aware of what is going on in other units as early as possible in their police careers.
- Crime intelligence offices in a station area, regional area, and provincial area need to account for the areas where they are located other than units at the station and regional levels accounting to the Provincial office. Provincial crime intelligence must not account at the National office but to the Provincial Commander. This will hasten the utilization of intelligence information to prevent crime. The activities of the CIOs will be well controlled by the Provincial Commander who is responsible for preventing crime and unrest in the province.
- The role that ILP can play in crime prevention must also be clarified to both units. Each unit must understand the role they must play. It is also recommended that implementation guidelines must be provided to assist the implementation thereof. Facilitators must be appointed to coordinate the implementation of this policing strategy.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

This article succeeded in bringing to light challenges that led to crime intelligence failing to provide necessary information that might have been used to prevent the July 2021 unrest in KZN and part of Gauteng provinces. How crime intelligence is handled is one of the major causes that led to the unrest. The working relationship between CIO and OPO is a major cause of concern when police officers from the same institution cannot work harmoniously together. This needs an intervention from the Senior offices of the SAPS. Crime intelligence need not be treated better than other police units within an organization because this creates hostility between CIO and OPO. For ILP to be properly implemented, some measures must be put in place by the SAPS, and all involved be familiarised with their roles in the implementation of the strategy.

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