

THE STATE OF CORPORATE SECURITY MANAGEMENT IN KENYA TODAY AND THE POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER PROFESSIONALIZATION OF THE OCCUPATION

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Abstract: This paper aims to shed light on the current condition of corporate and industrial security in Kenya today and the potential for further professionalization through introduction of minimum standards, regulation as well as certifications institutions or organizations. Just like in most other economies, in Kenya, corporate security is just only recently gaining traction as a corporate function. Corporate security managers have always viewed the occupation as being afforded less status and even less rewards than other management functions. Historically, other professions have sought to harness their specialized skills as a commodity to raise their value. This paper suggests that corporate security practitioners in Kenya are enjoying divergent fortunes with some enjoying parity in status with peer functional managers with responsibilities far beyond the traditional remits while most are struggling to attract significant duties, responsibilities and resources to influence the course of business. The appreciation of the role of security in business continuity planning and the endeavour by security practitioners for regulation is slowly but surely leading towards professionalization of the occupation. The paper proposes steps that can be taken by the two associations: Association of Corporate and Industrial Security Managers Kenya and Protective and Security Association of Kenya individually or severally to professionalize the occupation in the country.

Keywords: Corporate, Security, Management, Professionalization, Kenya, Skills, Knowledge, Association, Certification.

I. INTRODUCTION

Security is a value that a corporation can chose to have more or less and which it can aspire to have in greater or lesser measure [1]. This is so, because the pursuit of security involves costs and therefore a corporation must aspire to a level whose costs make fiscal sense. Historically, security was centred on the physical security of equipment, people, products and infrastructure. This scope has however broadened to include; employee dishonesty, money laundering, fraud, corruption, information security, business continuity and response to disasters both natural and man-made. This widening scope has meant increased costs and therefore the strife to convert corporate security from a cost centre to creating value from security [2].

In the Kenya corporate scene today, corporate security significantly lags behind other corporate functions in terms of resources allocated and how their input is regarded and integrated into the business strategy. However, an academic research by Karanja an academic in business management [3], contradicted much of this anecdotal pessimism and argued that in fact, corporate security was much regarded in the Kenyan hotel industry. The regard with which corporate security

in the hotel industry is held may however, not reflect the general corporate industry in the country. This is because the pre-eminence it gained in the hotel industry had a direct causal relationship with the specific targeting of tourists by terrorists and other criminals.

With regard to professionalism in the context of corporate security, this paper will draw the theoretical framework from existing sociological material in relation to the study of professions. This paper will rely on the already existing body of work to establish the current state of corporate security in Kenya and the potential for further professionalization of the occupation.

This paper will major on the more manageable corporate security management as opposed to the broader aspect of corporate security practice. Wilson and Slater defined corporate security as the protection of assets, personnel and profitability of a given corporation against theft, fire, fraud, criminal damage or acts of terrorism. They also defined it as the Corporation's management of risk to their employees, property, information and liability [4].

The paper will also evaluate the route to professionalization of the corporate security management occupation in Kenya. The need, the ways and the benefits to the business community as well as the security management practitioners themselves.

II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

Ethical standards theory. This theory was postulated by Douglas College and David Black, professors of communication and culture at Chron University. They argued that professions develop to address ethical issues facing practitioners in a given industry which inform the formation or associations to guide members on reactions to the ethical issues. They stated that professional identity has two part; the technical skills side and the credentials, norms values and a code of conduct. Consequently, professionals live up to a code of ethics and principles outlined as an industry standard [5].

The Psychology of motivation theory formulated by Black and College infers that management styles are influenced by the backgrounds of specific managers as well as their upbringing and assumptions. The theory further states that the styles can be influenced by the organizational culture besides the assumption that managers are naturally either motivated or demotivated to work as per the management theory. As such, professionalism becomes critical to form a platform upon which organizational culture is learnt and appreciated without eroding the professional skills and at the same time management styles informed by backgrounds and the upbringing are aligned to professional standards [5].

Adaptation to the workplace theory. This theory postulated by Black and College states that professionals are expected to find themselves a niche where they feel empowered and comfortable. This is achieved through interaction with others and responding appropriately. Professionals adapt to surroundings biochemically, internally and socially resulting in various levels of acceptance and therefore adaptation to the demands of the work happens at individual pace [5].

Simonsen criteria theory was postulated by Simonsen writing in 1996 about professionalism. The theory identified 5 critical elements necessary for an occupation to be regarded as a profession. He argued, professions cannot be viewed only from the context of the value assigned to the responsibilities of the members of that profession to the consumers of that service but also from the perspective of standards and the aspect of reliability. To this end, Simonsen identified the following as the most essential elements against which an occupation must be assessed for professional standards [6];

- A code of ethics and elaborate standards governing constituent members.
- Existence of professional knowledge and journals and historical perspective for guidance.
- A recognised association or institute as a forum for professional discourse.
- An examination system leading to certification for competence assurance amongst members.
- An educational discipline to prepare prospective members for specific functions in the profession.

III. IS SECURITY MANAGEMENT IN KENYA A PROFESSION?

Professionalism can be interpreted in bureaucratic or pragmatic scopes [7]. In bureaucratic terms, a professional tittle is presumed to have a specific academic standards and enrolment in a recognized institution and members governed by a code of ethics, standards and discipline. The pragmatic sense is based on the dictionary definition and has less stringent

requirements of institutional membership but more on the perception of intellectual, skilful and manual activity of the highest standard.

Simonsen writing specifically about private security stated the following as what he considered as key elements for the recognition of a profession; specific standards, a body of knowledge, a recognized association, a certification programme and an educational discipline [6]. These elements postulated by Simonsen constitute just a part of the criteria one would use to evaluate the corporate security management professionalism in Kenya.

In reviewing related literature, it is possible to see the debate has turned some writers weary of the topic with some arguing that the continued discussion undermines the cause. Writers like Garcia argue “other professions like medicine, law, criminology or even engineering don’t argue over whether they are professionals or not.” [8]. Axt states that it’s not upon the security professionals to determine when professionalism has been achieved but rather the consumers of the services they offer [1].

Despite the challenges, those in the occupation in Kenya have made progressive steps in tunnelling these restrictive challenges into turning corporate security management into a profession under the Simonsen criteria. In 2015 a group practitioners in the corporate security and safety profession in Kenya came together to form the protective and safety association of Kenya (PROSAK). In February 2018, another group of corporate security practitioners came together to form an association they named ‘Association of Corporate and Industrial Management Professionals Kenya (ACISMP-K) [9]. In their inaugural meeting, the founding membership laid ground for the introduction of a professional code of conduct, certification examination and a standard for all security management professionals in the country. The introduction of a local certification examination will now alleviate the need for certification of local security managers by foreign association like CSMP and ASIS to one that is tailored towards security challenges more specific to the Kenyan environment.

With PROSAK and ACISMP-K having not gained foothold in the security management circles and their ethos gained traction in the corporate world in Kenya as yet. It is not possible to consider the occupation a profession in Kenya under the strict interpretation of the Simonsen criteria as yet. Their establishment however, is signal of things moving in the right direction. This is so even though current practitioners have had to seek certification from the international security management institute (ISMI) in the UK and the American society for industrial security (ASIS International) in the US. A lot of what PROSAK and ACISMP-K come up with must borrow heavily from these two organizations but tailored to the Kenyan situation.

IV. THE SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

As groups of people to have attained significant privilege and autonomy in work, professions have attracted quite a significant interest from sociologists. Early work in the field brought about trait models which comprised of a list of characteristics common to a profession [10]. These traits, according to the sociologists should be used to evaluate an occupation for its suitability to become or be classified as a profession.

Johnson, a sociological perspective proponent identified the following as the most accepted traits amongst contemporaries in the field; skills based on theoretical knowledge, training and education, competence testing, organization, code of conduct and Altruistic service. These models however were criticized and later replaced by a functionalistic approach postulated by Everett Hughes [11]. Skills and theoretical knowledge among corporate security managers in Kenya are not contended for most of them even though there is no standard to evaluate them against and the same should be true for training and education, a code of conduct and organization that require a functional association or institute. Testing is currently being done through the certifications from other jurisdictions. Altruistic service is dependent of individuals’ commitment and demeanour and therefore variable across the industry.

It was argued by ethical approach proponents Mackay and Torrington [12] that greater emphasis should be placed on the selfless aspect of being a professional. Professions are profoundly characterized by altruistic motivation towards service and maintenance of standards. Consequently, Anderson postulated that a profession is made a profession by the sort of people practicing it. He argued, professional training should not be regarded as inculcation of knowledge but rather the development of a certain sort of people [12]. The general broadening and acceptance of corporate security management in Kenya is an indication of the appreciation of the fact that current practitioners have been formed in a certain way that is good for the practice and therefore bearing fruits for the corporations engaging them.

One of the biggest challenges of a corporate security professional project is the fact that most of the corporate security practitioners end up there as a second career after working security in the public sector. A study by Cavanagh and Whiting in 2003 among the corporate security management practitioners in the United States established that 47.2 and 37.7 percent of security managers interviewed had prior careers in the police and the military respectively. A study by Hearnden in 1989 revealed that 42.5 and 31 percent of corporate security managers interviewed had prior careers in the police and the military respectively and a further 12.5 percent had prior careers in both [13]. This also affects the determination of the occupation as a profession as any failure to see the corporate security manager from the former person who worked for the government in the security services and without some form of formal training and institutions, this will continue to curtail the perception of the security management occupation as profession.

Evaluating the practice of corporate security management in Kenya today against the Simonsen criteria and the sociological perspective. Corporate security occupation in Kenya does not meet the strict definition of a profession but clearly, something seems to be in the process with the registration of the two associations and their plans for the occupation.

V. IS THERE NEED TO PROFESSIONALIZE CORPORATE SECURITY IN KENYA TODAY?

Corporate security traces its roots back to the role of the night watchman back in the 1960s but since then both the roles and responsibilities have grown in leaps and bounds. As globalization opened up the businesses to a myriad of threats, the task of ensuring security became more complicated and the divergence of skills needed to do so broadened towards the end of the last century. Even more recently, the responsibilities have broadened further to include protection of intellectual property, responsibility for auditing and ethical policies, export control compliance, oversight of the business divestiture and due diligence besides cyber security in this digital age as a result, even more technical and knowledge skills have incrementally been expected of a security manager [14]. The emergence of global terrorism; the propensity of terrorists to attack civilian targets and economic infrastructure has made the role of security managers even more critical.

In Kenya specifically, the practice of corporate security management only begun gaining traction around the beginning of this decade as terror related attacks intensified in the country targeting both government and private infrastructure [3]. This development brought to the fore the need for professional security for egress control and employee protection. This however, only necessitated the setup of the classical model of corporate security management. The inception of the classical model led to the appreciation of the role of corporate security even further and this led to an increase in the responsibilities it was assigned.

The broadening of the scope of corporate security has had it encompass business continuity as a function. This is the aspect of business risk management that involves identifying potential threats to the corporation and analysing how they could impact the business and then establishing a framework for the corporation's resilience [14]. The sheer degree of importance this new responsibility has to the longevity of the business requires that the responsibility be vested on someone whose abilities, knowledge and skills can be verified.

In 2006, Briggs and Edwards came up with a project known as the 'resilience agenda for the future of security'. This project was predicated on the shift of corporate security management responsibility from protecting companies from risk to being the new source of competitive advantage [14]. While this project was not tailored for the Kenyan market, corporations in Kenya are bound to flow with the new trend across the world.

With the increasing responsibilities for the security managers, it is expected that their vertical positioning in the organizations will also change but for this to happen and achieve the required results, it is imperative that a certain level of professionalism be achieved. According to a security director for a retail firm in the UK and a member of the security association, none of their members occupied a position on the board but approximately half were appointed into positions just a step from the board level reporting directly to a member of the board who in turn reported to the board [15]. Corporations in Kenya are unlikely to trust one with such high level access and influence to an individual they don't consider a professional in his field.

The globalization trend and the increased exposure of Kenyan corporations to insecurity locally and from across the borders has impacted profits of some firms making security an issue of concern to boards. In the UK for instance, it was established that 97 percent of business leaders questioned in a poll conducted by MORI a research firm in the UK on behalf of the Confederation of British Industry in 2004, felt that security was a concern and over 50 percent saying it was

of great concern in their corporate decision making. 80 percent also said that they had discussed corporate security at the board level [16].

The essence of corporate security in Kenya is further exemplified by looking at financial figures shelled out by some select corporations in the country. For example, losses due to theft and vandalism of Kenya Power and Lighting Company (KPLC) infrastructure between July 2011 and March 2012, cost the company Kenya Shillings 353 million in replacement costs and in excess of 1 billion in lost sales revenue. The same was approximated to have cost the Kenyan economy up to Kshs 3 billion in lost business [17]. During the same year, KPLC had total revenues of 74.05 billion and approximately 1.7 million customers. These numbers steadily rose to 92 billion in revenue and number of customers grew to 6.18 million by the year 2017. This growth meant that the exposure factor also rose leading to an even higher annualized loss expectancy.

The cybercrime investigations Unit in Kenya estimated that Kenya lost up to 17 billion shillings in the year 2016 to cybercrime and a large proportion of the losses was from the business community majorly banks. It was also estimated that by mid-2018, Kenyan banks were losing up to 500 million shillings a month through unethical practices and fraud by own staff. Professional corporate security management when diligently employed can limit these losses by employing cyber security through technical security measures of firewalls, data encryption and antivirus software and the administrative measures that include user account management, change management and physical and logical access controls, inter-departmental counter-fraud control systems and vetting of employees and staff [18].

In 2002, Nalla and Morash surveyed security directors in the fortune 1000 companies in America. They sought to analyse the remit of corporate security in the corporations as well as its relationship with other functional branches of the organizations. The examination found out that it was generally positioned very high in the hierarchy of the organizations and it was integrated within the daily running of the business working on cross-function basis [19]. This level of coordination and cross-functional working relationship needs trusted and reliable hands.

Taking a sneak-peak through the top managements of the 10 most valuable companies by market capitalization at the Nairobi Securities Exchange for security representatives in the top management, the following is clear. Safaricom PLC has a director in charge of risk management and responsible to the board for risk management functions of the company that include, enterprise risk management, ethics and compliance, revenue Assurance, Security and anti-money laundering. However, the director has his background in accounting rather than security [20]. The East African Breweries Ltd has not listed any one in charge of security in its senior management team on their website [21]. Equity Group Holdings also has no security officer in the senior management positions as listed on the group's senior management list on their website [22]. BAT Kenya also has no listed security officer on their senior management roll published on their website [23]. The Kenya Commercial Bank does not publicly list its senior management on the corporate website and therefore it couldn't be verified of the existence or lack thereof of a security manager in their senior management [24]. Co-operative Bank of Kenya has a chief risk officer listed among the company's senior management, however, the current holder's background and education is in Internal banking [25]. Bamburi's list of the top management team does not consist of a manager in charge of security [26]. The Barclays Bank of Kenya does not publicly list their top management lists on their corporate website. KenGen does not have a manager in charge of security amongst its publicly listed senior management team [27].

VI. PROFESSIONALIZATION OF CORPORATE SECURITY IN KENYA: THE WAY FORWARD

The question as to whether corporate security management is a profession is one that has lingered in security and study of professions literature for so long but the little has been done on the sociological aspect of professionalism with regard to this occupation [28]. In retrospect, it may, and for a good reason, not be considered as a profession in Kenya today but it is on course to be one in the near future. The following are steps informed by the sociological approach to professions that will lead Corporate Security management in Kenya today into a Profession. The criteria as listed below is an intellectual tool and heuristic device rather than an effort to lay down the ideal approach to professionalism.

McDonalds a sociological perspective proponent asserted that a profession is an occupation based on advanced, complex, esoteric and arcane knowledge. While Scruton in his 1982 work argued that knowledge alone should not be used as a determinant of professions, saying that criminals may have that arcane knowledge but still lack the social legitimacy and acceptance for it to be considered a profession, he however, agrees that it is a key ingredient [29]. To attain this, the Kenya chapter of corporate security management professionals must find and build a body of knowledge with restricted access to satisfy this specific requirement. This must be done in a way that ensures it's socially acceptable.

O'Regan in his 2001 work on the nature of professions, identified a laid down institutional framework governing and restricting access to a profession through a constitution and a system of examinations for licensing members as a key characteristic of a profession [30]. With the coming to life of the ACISMP-K and PROSAK, there seems to be a framework in place for the regulation of those in the occupation. However, a lot still needs to be done to come up with relevant licensing exams besides developing the material for the knowledge and examination and the acceptance of the associations as the licensing body(s) across all the practitioners in the corporate security management.

In arguing against considering a body of knowledge as the only criteria for qualifying an occupation as a profession, Scruton asserted that the existence of a discernible institution and an ethical basis are also key. The credibility of a profession must also find its social legitimacy on ethical basis. The ethical basis upon which this profession can be grounded can be thought of in two broad streams described by Johnson in 1972 as 'functionalist' and 'Interactionalist'. Under the Functionalist school of thought, Barber postulated that, a profession possesses a high degree of general and systematic knowledge employed in a naturally occurring primary orientation to the community interest rather to an individual [31]. The interactionalists view professions as a rise of institutional self-interest meant to put some people at a place of advantage and not meant for the interest of the larger community which inevitably leads to social stratification. For social acceptance, the approach to professionalization of the corporate security in Kenya must be guided by both views.

Specialized work grounded on a body of theoretically based, discretionary knowledge and skills is a key indicator of an occupation that has grown into a profession [32]. According to Friedson, professional status is bestowed upon those deemed capable of controlling themselves because their work is specialized and beyond standardization. According to Dietrich and Roberts [34], managers face complexity of magnitude so high that they are in-capable of pre-thinking all issues and this leads to the need for professional knowledge and skills to fill this knowledge and skill gap. It is this continued filling of the gap that leads to the development of a profession. In order to be trusted to fill this gap, Kenyan corporate security management practitioners must build a robust argument for their case. This robustness must also be founded on clear definitions and reliable information. To achieve this, the practitioners must develop a code of principles upon which decisions are made. The knowledge and skill sets they possess must also be competent enough to fill the knowledge gap in the managers as well as consistently good enough to be considered reliable.

Exclusive jurisdiction in a particular division of labour controlled through occupational negotiation is very essential for an occupation to become a profession [28]. Professionals can claim specialization in their work and are therefore entitled to define their boundaries. Sociological literature opines that occupations must use their collective monopoly of a given knowledge form and skill sets to dialogue for further autonomy and legal entrenchment of entry requirements. To achieve this, the corporate security management practitioners in Kenya must avoid proliferation: the pitfall that has befallen the occupation in developed economies like the UK and the US. Proliferation of institutes and associations weaken the professionalism of an occupation as variance in standards, codes and their enforcement waters down their certainty and dependability. As it is in Kenya today, two organization; ACISMP-K and PROSAK have laid claim to the organization of corporate security managers in Kenya. Kenya security managers needs to avoid further proliferation of the associations and institutes in order to facilitate ease of occupational negotiation.

To make occupational negotiation credible, corporate security management practitioners in Kenya must establish a single coherent framework on the negotiation based on institutional structures with the ability to advocate for and represent on the matter. Through history, occupations have taken the route of associations or institutes in the journey to professionalization. According to Abbott, the coming up of a single, identifiable national association is usually a step towards claiming for professional recognition [33].

Shelter from the labour markets based on qualification. Shelter from the labour market is one feature of professions that makes them attractive for aspiring occupations. This ensures that the supply of services can be controlled and professional services manipulated and offered at a premium. This shielding can only be done by raising the standard of the knowledge and skills sets required for one to join the profession and controlled through a certification process. This helps to farther raise the standard of knowledge and skillsets of the given profession. The Kenyan chapter of the corporate security management professionals must endeavour to achieve this through the ACISMP-K and PROSAK and in so doing, they will raise the reliability of the practitioners. The individuals and processes involved will serve as a factory where new theory is incepted and new knowledge produced.

Occupational closure entails to locking of all but one entrance into a given occupation. The most potent tool for occupational closure are attendant examinations. According to McDonald, to successfully monopolize a market, there must be demonstrable evidence to consumers of a specific service that all members of a given closed occupation are sufficiently knowledgeable and skilled enough for the intended work and therefore more assured success rate than those from outside, whose knowledge cannot be assured. At the beginning of a professional project, this specific measure becomes tricky as the founders try to find a balance between gaining widespread acceptance of the association or institute and setting a standard high enough that the reliability of those that make the cut can be relied upon by the service consumers. To achieve occupational closure through this time-tested way of qualifications and general acceptance by the security management practitioners will be a tough balance that both ACISMP-K and PROSAK must find and find soon. The qualifications also, however, must not only be used to curtail the number of the people joining the occupation but must also lead to a process to systemize, refine and expand the body of knowledge in the specific field of corporate security management practice in Kenya.

The biggest challenge will be to develop a system of identifying a single core knowledge on which to base a professional credential. This so because competence is required in two core areas of security and management all at the same time.

VII. CONCLUSION

Kenyan firms continue to suffer multi-billion security related losses annually and the threat is only increasing as theft and vandalism cases reporting rate increase. Most of the firms however, do not report figures of security related losses publicly. The security managers in most of the corporations in the country don't seem to have been given or rather taken preeminent positions amongst the senior management of the corporations in the country. This is in spite of the broadening of the scope of the duties and responsibilities of corporate security managers and the increasing threat terror related losses.

The question as to whether security management is a profession seems of less consequence. In any case, professionalism is not a socio-specific absolute construct but a historically changing socially defined concept. It is also, not a portrayer of the qualities inherent in a given job but rather the value of that service to its consumers. On closer analysis, the argument is more about when the term professional should be used and less about the level of sophistication security management has managed to achieve instead of how far the occupation has come and perhaps even more importantly, how much more needs to be done.

Security management in Kenya today is not yet *fait accompli* to the standards of a profession but the pieces are falling in place for the occupation to be a fully-fledged profession even in its strict sense. With both ACISMP-K and PROSAK still struggling find their feet, corporate security managers in the country continue to seek certifications from associations and institutes both in the UK and the US which, while tailored for the international market may still need some fine-tuning to address some challenges specific to Kenya.

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