

Effects of Occupational Hazards on Performance of Police Officers in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

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Abstract

According to a report released by the Kenyan National Human Rights Commission, there has been an increase in crime incidents that are related to occupational stress from low morale of police officers which influences performance. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of occupational hazards on the performance of police officers in Uasin Gishu County Kenya. The study area was within the jurisdictions of County Police Headquarters and police stations in Uasin Gishu County. The study was guided by the following specific objective; to determine the effect of occupational hazards on the performance of police officers in Uasin Gishu County Kenya. The study was anchored on the Social Exchange Theory by George Homans and Psychoanalytic Theory by Sigmund Freud. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population was 2,225 respondents. A total of 327 people were needed to reach the target sample size. The study employed purposeful, stratified, and basic random sampling approaches. Primary data was collected from respondents in the study utilizing questionnaires and interview guides, as well as other data gathering methods. Reports and publications were used to gather secondary data. The study findings revealed that there was a significant but negative relationship between occupational hazards and performance of police officers in Uasin Gishu County Kenya (p=0.000). The study concluded that working on shift and working overtime influences police officers' job performance. Based on the findings and concussions of the study, it was suggested that the National Police Service develop ways to reduce the sources of occupational stress and espouse a safe working environment and police officers' motivation.

Key Words: Occupational Hazards, Performance, Police Officer

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1.1 Background to the Study

Police officers are the agents of justice and they perform their duties well when they have a high level of psychological well-being at the workplace that fosters competency to face challenges in all spheres of life (Kolawole *et al.*, 2018:8). Determining the psychological well-being of police officers is important because it leads to understanding and the optimal functioning of police officers. Good health and contentment ensure that police officers can discharge their duties adequately (Magnavita & Sleep, 2017:20).

Reduced communication, strict disciplinary processes and regimentation, organizational structure pressure, and atmosphere all contribute to police personnel' psychological well-being and quality of life (Afil, Ogaboh and Thompson, 2018:9). These factors have a variety of effects on the situation of police in Uasin Gishu County.

Globally, police personnel all throughout the world are dealing with psychological and physical challenges (Nisar, Rasheed & Qiang, 2018:6). A research done in Australia looked at psychological symptoms and discovered that 42% of respondents reported regular sleep disruptions that corresponded to hazardous life experiences at peak job performance hours. As a result of the sleep problems connected with work performance, physical dangers were imposed on the body, resulting in higher hazardous experiences as a result of increased physical strain (Anderson, Litzenberger, & Plecas, 2012:399).



In Africa, in many nations, police personnel face societal issues that have harmed their social well-being and performance. The main cause of danger for police personnel was their perception of how they were handled by administrations (Spector, 2017:5). Administrative causes of risks were defined as ambiguous job performance criteria, poor management communication, regulations created by persons unfamiliar with the real work context, insufficient participation in decision-making and insufficient administrative assistance (Spector, 2017:7).

Police personnel in Kenya must make major changes to new workstations as a result of frequent moves (Jonyo, 2015: 70). Because of their limited number and the resulting work pressure, interpersonal connections and job performance are put under strain. Housing arrangements and lifestyle changes contribute to the risks faced, and police personnel also face risks due to the nature of their employment, support systems, and inefficient coping techniques (Ongoro, 2015; 286). Several police officers have recently been shot and murdered by their coworkers in mysterious situations. At Parklands Police Station, for example, a police constable shot and killed his immediate superior and a coworker before killing himself (Andvig & Barasa, 2011

When officers lose their capacity to deal in conventional ways, they may resort to suicide or murder to relieve the stress of dangerous situations that have resulted in unusual events. In July of this year, it was reported that police had murdered 21 men and boys in Nairobi's low-income neighborhoods. On the evenings of April 14 and 17, police in Mathare murdered seven men and boys. Witnesses say the victims were shot either while kneeling in front of police on the streets or while in police custody after being detained in all of the incidents (Kegoro, Otieno, & Akoyo, 2020; 12). Kenya's Police Service has often been accused by rights groups of using excessive force and carrying out unlawful killings especially in poor neighborhoods throughout the country including Uasin Gishu County. Police officers have shot and wounded people and even killed themselves in many instances (IPOA, 2019:15).

1.2 Problem Statement

A fully operational police force is essential for law enforcement, maintaining the peace, protecting property, and providing security. Police officers perform best when they have a high degree of psychological well-being at work, which leads to competence in dealing with obstacles (Nelson & Smith, 2016:18). Traditionally, the performance of duty by police officers has been characterized by corruption, extrajudicial killings, and other social injustices as reported in both print and electronic media worldwide (Angira, 2016:2). This has not only left a trail of destruction but also resulted in poor performance of police work raising endless complaints by the public and Human Rights Organizations (Karani, 2019). According to the National Police Service's annual police crime trends report for the year ending 2019, there was an increase in criminal acts such as murder, rape, and robbery in Kenya. The same survey revealed a declining trend in police officer morale, which is a crucial indicator of poor effectiveness in reducing these crimes (Hope, 2019: 100). The public and stakeholders are concerned about this poor performance. However, owing to constant labor over extended periods of time and exposure to all dangers, personal and organizational hazards, policing employment has been regarded one of the most dangerous vocations. The above studies have attempted to explain the causes of work-related hazards in the police force but did not link them to police performance. This study is an attempt to establish whether or not occupational hazards play a major part in influencing performance in the police service in Uasin Gishu County.

1.3 Research Objective

To investigate the effects of occupational hazards on the performance of police officers in Uasin Gishu County

1.4 Research Question

What is the effect of occupational hazards on the performance of police officers in Uasin Gishu County?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study contributes to the body of knowledge in the domain of study and creates opportunities for further research. The study contributes to theory, literature and act as a source of reference for future scholars and researchers. This study is an attempt to establish the influence of occupational stress on police performance. It's



crucial to figure out whether or not occupational stress has a role in bad police work performance. As a result, the study intended to fill a gap in knowledge on the impact of occupational risks on police officer performance. The research also aimed to create data that policymakers and stakeholders in the security and justice sectors could be interested in.

While these issues may be significant pressures in police officers' personal life, there appears to be much more than meets the eye. It is expected that those employed to serve as cops have the intellect and foresight to cope with potentially dangerous circumstances generated by criminals without destroying evidence or murdering suspects. The police are merely one aspect of the judicial system; they are not the entire system. Police mistakes cost a lot of money, not just to individuals but also to society. Nothing appears to have been done to investigate why the police would act in such a way that violated the law that they are sworn to uphold. Police officers confront several increased job-related pressures, while public standards for personal and professional behaviour appear to be growing.

1.6 Literature Review

The reviewed literature is presented in this section

1.6.1 The Influence of Occupational Hazards on Performance of Police Officers

Law enforcement, more than any other profession, is an emotionally and physically hazardous vocation (Lambert, Qureshi, Frank, Klahm & Smith, 2017). Officers are constantly confronted with the consequences of murder, violence, accidents, and natural calamities. Police officers and their families pay a high price for different shifts, long shifts, and exposures to life's traumas (Lambert et al., 2017). High divorce rates, suicide, domestic violence, heart attacks, cancer, depression, and drinking are among the disturbing findings (Lambert et al., 2017:32). Law enforcement, the press, and the general public perpetuate the illusion that police personnel are immune to pain and violence (Kula, 2017:26). Police officers around the country are suffering from stress, despite the fact that many agencies are unwilling to discuss the issue publicly. Every person's life, regardless of ethnicity or cultural origin, is filled with stress, and police officers are no exception (Kula, 2017:27). Unless police officers learn to handle it properly, it can have a negative impact on their physical health, mental well-being, and personal and social growth (Kula, 2017:29).

Policing is one of the most demanding jobs in the world, and it has been listed as one of the top five most stressful jobs in the world (Reiner, 2018:31). One reason for this is that while enforcing the law, police officers are required to preserve the integrity and uniqueness of individuals (Spector, 2017:6). This is the tension that the mission to safeguard and support the public represents, since it tries to protect and serve the community at the same time. A law enforcement workplace environment is more dangerous than other vocations, according to Wang and Zheng (2017:51), and is sometimes life-threatening. As a result, police is more demanding than most other service jobs. In addition, rather of making a profit, police officers work for organizations with distinct goals, such as reducing crime and improving public safety (Wang & Zheng, 2017:52).

Researchers have looked at both the hazardous and traumatic components of police employment, as well as the mundane aspects, while investigating job-related stress in law enforcement (Wang & Zheng, 2017:53). Meetings with aggressive individuals, the potential of being assaulted with a lethal weapon, and the prospect of being gravely harmed, if not murdered, are often regarded as the most stressful situations (Richardsen, Burke & Martinussen, and 2017:14). Similarly, when it comes to violent interactions, police officers face a variety of pressures, including being exposed to the impacts of situations similar to those faced by military personnel and emergency service employees (Richardsen et al., 2017:8). As emergency service professionals, police officers, for example, are confronted with dead corpses and victims of violent actions. At the same time, police officers, like military troops, may confront perilous conditions or death while doing normal police responsibilities (Richardsen et al., 2017:9). During their shifts, police officers come upon decomposing bodies, sexually molested youngsters, and coworkers who have been gravely harmed, either unintentionally or purposefully (Andersen, Papazoglou & Collins, 2016:10).

The American study on tiredness in police officers focuses on the prevalence of exhaustion in police departments, the causes of fatigue, the impact of fatigue on an officer, and solutions for reducing weariness in police officers. According to Vila et al. (2002), tiredness is a mental and/or physical state caused by insufficient quality sleep or lengthy or severe physical, emotional, or mental exertion, which reduces alertness, impairs



performance potential, worsens mood, and impairs decision-making. Excess weariness, according to this definition, has a negative impact on police officers' performance, health, and safety, as well as their public relations and the quality of their discretionary judgments (Vila et al., 2002). Vila et al. (2016) looked at physical signs of exhaustion in police officers from 12 of the country's major city police agencies, totaling over 2,000 sworn officers. The researchers did not specify where the departments were situated in the United States. They compared ocular performance metrics to their regular performance to determine a person's present fatigue-related impairment. They also weighed in on subjective data concerning the impact of fatigue on police, including as information gleaned from interviews about officers' sleep quality, weariness attitudes, and those of their colleagues. The information from these sources, when combined, offered substantial evidence concerning the impact of weariness on police officers' professional performance, physical and emotional well-being, and personal life.

Police personnel perceive the everyday characteristics of the police work environment as the second significant source of stress. The everyday administrative, bureaucratic, and organizational parts of police employment can be just as stressful as the inherent risks of the job (Maran, 2017:32). Courts, administrative policies, a lack of assistance, poor equipment, community connections, and fluctuating work schedules were all listed as stresses by Nelson and Smith (2016:42). Organizational variables, on the other hand, are more stressful than intrinsic elements (Nelson & Smith, 2016:19).

Working on a shift and working overtime have grown increasingly frequent in Africa's emerging countries, including Kenya. Only a portion of the association between work schedules and stress is understood (Kula, 2017:31). Working on shift, according to Spector (2017:9), is a possible occupational stressor linked to health problems such as higher risk of accidents, gastrointestinal complaints, disturbance of family and social lives, and mental illness. According to Qureshi and Lambert (2016:25), police officers perform poorly because they are always on duty and have little time to rest.

Despite the fact that police officers are allowed time off, they are frequently compelled to sacrifice their days off in order to attend court procedures, meetings in their spare time, and weekend volunteerism (Qureshi & Lambert, 2016:13). If you don't give yourself enough time to recover, you'll burn out. Furthermore, a police officer may experience occupational stress, particularly if they are required to work during their leisure time (Qureshi & Lambert, 2016:17).

Sleep, weariness, appetite loss, and constipation are among the main complaints. They also have familial and marital problems, which have an impact on their work productivity, wellness, and interpersonal interactions (Richardsen et al., 2017:7). Furthermore, work schedules are shifted around to distribute the load of working in shifts among police (Richardsen et al., 2017:14). Whether the police force rotates shifts weekly or every other week, personnel continue to face major health problems (Lo, 2016:12). Officers are compelled to re-adjust to sources of occupational stress about the amount of occupational stress among police constables sleeping at a different hour just as they begin to grow used to going to sleep at a given time. Officers' already hectic life might be made much more unpleasant by changing sleep patterns (Lo, 2016:22).

Annual in-service training helps police officers prepare for the problems of policing, but it doesn't address the anxieties that come with the job (Sundaram & Kumaran, 2012:18). When engaging with individuals, police work does not follow a set pattern, which causes emotional, physical, and psychological stress for officers (Sundaram & Kumaran, 2012:47). Officers often react to a steady stream of service requests, and this constant mental stimulation can lead to emotional stress. Among police officers, emotional stress associated to physiological responses to traumatic situations is prevalent. A 911 request to aid an old person with a flat tire, a domestic violence situation requiring medical treatment, or even supporting another law enforcement officer during a high-speed automobile pursuit are examples of challenges police officers may face on any given day. McCarty, Zhoa, and Garland (2007:35) conducted multivariate tests to investigate high levels of stress among police officers and discovered that regular interaction with suspects, as well as the unpredictable situations that come with policing, cause elevated levels of stress. Out of a total of 2,500 police officers, a convenience sample of 1,100 officers consented to participate in the study. They discovered that cops had significant levels of stress, anxiety, fear, sadness, and rage.

While the relationship between job demands and stress is widely established among police officers, research has revealed that within departmental disagreements are another cause of stress (Sundaram et al., 2012:112). Despite tremendous job demands such as regular management changes, intense public scrutiny, heavy workloads, and a lack of supportive resources, police personnel are expected to perform at a high level. According to Adu-Gyamfi



(2014:78), the demands placed on police officers might be harmful. Workplace demands, job difficulties, and organizational climate, according to Adu-Gyamfi, do not create a setting favorable to healthy work relationships in police contexts.

Workload has been recognized as a work-related stressor in several research on occupational stress, and the workload of a police officer is considerable (Sattar & Iqbal, 2017:2). According to a research done in the Netherlands, between 65 and 75 percent of police officers reported being stressed as a result of their severe workload. Rollinson (2012:8) performed research in Australia that found a link between workload and burnout (Sattar & Iqbal, 2017:7).

Psychological discomfort, job dissatisfaction, and greater physical complaints were reported by those with a heavy workload (Shane, 2016:33). Police officers in a South African research performed activities that were not part of their standard job description. They filled in for other employees when there was a staffing shortage. Work overload was one of four stressors identified in an Israeli research as having a substantial impact on police officers' performance (Suresh & Ganesan, 2016:17).

Kenya's police force now numbers 98,732 officers, resulting in a personnel-to-population ratio of 1:390 (one police officer for every 390 citizens) (Shiundu, 2017:22). This is better than the UN's recommended police-to-civilian ratio of 1:450. However, due to non-essential assignments such as protection of extremely important individuals (VIPs), such as members of parliament and top government officials, the existing policy establishment is overworked. It has been shown that having too much job causes the most stress (Shane, 2016:6). Many police officers have been stressed by the issue of insufficient staff and its consequences in carrying out their duties (Suresh & Ganesan, 2016:31). Staff shortages combined with increased workload generate worries about police officers' capacity to manage and provide acceptable service, resulting in a tense climate within the police force (Suresh & Ganesan, 2016). When police officers are given more tasks, they develop work overload (Shane, 2016:55).

According to Lambert (2017:6), policing include upholding the law, maintaining peace, defending people and property, and lastly investigating and questioning offenders. When on duty, police officers are expected to respond to any scenario that may develop. Furthermore, police personnel are required to preserve peace and order and, as a result, must report to higher authorities (Lambert, 2017:16). It's also widely known that the police force has grown increasingly stressful as a result of trying to satisfy a slew of near-impossible deadlines and duties. The nature of a cop's job is hard, and it's likely to be stressful (Lambert, 2017:16). Work overload causes stress, which has been linked to smoking, drinking, high cholesterol, a faster heart rate, as well as low self-esteem (McCreary & Thompson, 2016:24). This is an accurate portrayal of a deep-rooted system that includes unnoticed infringements of current structures as a result of contradictory laws and public expectations of the criminal justice agent (McCreary & Thompson, 2016:27).

Working under constant stress, according to McCreary and Thompson (2016:42), leads to unhappiness and tiredness among police officers. The stressful situations that police officers are subjected to can have an impact on both their profession and their physical health (McCreary & Thompson, 2016:5). Because of its exponential influence on professional relationships, burnout has been identified as one of the repercussions of work-related stress. This concept illustrates a subjective rather than objective atmosphere for a police operation with a warped view on its excesses (Gershon, Barocas & Canton, 2016:9).

If police officers are to thrive in their work performance, a modest amount of stress is a common occurrence (Gershon et al., 2016:8). Longer-serving police officers had much higher stress levels on average. Various factors of life, such as psychosocial and behavioral changes, financial and housing challenges, work pressures, and the unique needs of job performance, all contribute to stress. When professional and personal needs intersect, the balance is thrown off, resulting in disequilibrium and undue stress (Gershon et al., 2016:12). Several theories have been suggested in Kenya to explain the high number of suicides in the disciplined services, including widespread harassment of subordinate officers by their superiors, as revealed by the Independent Police Oversight Authority (IPOA, 2018:7). Inadequate facilities have resulted from the excessive recruitment of police personnel (Terrill & Ingram, 2016:10). Due to a decline in the amount of privacy as well as deprivation in putting up with one's family on the one hand, and an overwhelming population of criminals on the other, these resulted in poor work performance and increased stress among police officers (Terrill & Ingram, 2016:11).

The working environment of today is vastly different from that of thirty years ago. Longer work hours are common, as are frequent changes in the work environment and organization, all of which contribute to a larger



presence and degree of stress. (Fotinatos, Ventouratos & Cooper 2015:22). Because of the quantity of time spent in the location, the workplace sticks out as a source of stress (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2016:99). Stress is an inescapable byproduct of contemporary life, and it has a direct impact on a person's emotions, thinking processes, health, as well as physical well-being. Stress is far more prevalent in employees at lower levels of corporate hierarchies, where they have less influence over their work circumstances, according to Beheshtifar & Nazarian (2013:37). Over time, stress has been described in a variety of ways. Initially, it was conceived as a result of external pressure, then as a result of internal strain (Kazmi, Amjad & Khan, and 2018:33).

Occupational stress has an impact on the quality of work performed by people and the organizations for which they work (Maslach, 2013:27). According to Perez-Rodriguez, Topa, and Belendez (2019:151), not all stress is harmful to an organism; at a modest level, it may be beneficial, but at a larger level, it can be a liability. Stress may aid in the development and evolution of human potential, making it vital in our everyday actions. To be fully stress-free is to be dead.

Occupational stress cannot be prevented, according to Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright, Donald, Taylor, and Millet(2005), but understanding the elements that lead to stress increases the potential of restructuring employment and adopting stress management strategies. Work overload is one element that contributes to high levels of workplace stress. Workers who are obliged to work too long, too hard, and at a variety of duties are more stressed, and their health is jeopardized. Police officers that are always on duty are a good example. Even when they are not on duty, they are on high alert, which takes a toll on the officer's resiliency. Inadequate vocational growth has also been linked to mental health issues and the onset of sickness. Insecurity and a lack of job advancement are two more sources of workplace stress. Employees who believe they are being promoted too slowly, who are uncertain about their employment prospects, or who believe their objectives are being hindered are more likely to be stressed (Davis, 2012:55).

External controls from superiors, according to Erkutlu and Chafra (2006:25), are another source of stress at work. A chief commandant, for example, may produce stress for a member of his organization since he or she is the only one who takes choices.

Job discontent, according to Greenberg (2010:88), is another source of stress. Motivational variables are a type of work-related component that might impact job satisfaction. The number of challenging duties involved, the amount of acknowledgment for a job well done, the interaction with coworkers, and the level of motivation to accept responsibility are all elements to consider. Law enforcement, for example, is a difficult, tiresome, and risky vocation. Police officers are exposed to a variety of stressful life conditions, which have a detrimental influence on their health and performance. Night patrols, inspections, and incident attendance, as well as scene of the crime and internal disturbances such as riots, are all part of the police duties (Sollie, Kop & Euwema, and 2017:1580). Violent and unexpected situations that occur in the course of police employment are often regarded as a major cause of psychological and physical stress for officers. Emotionally stressful scenarios include alerting a relative of a loved one's abrupt death, dealing with suicide as well as sexual offenses against kids, the elderly, and animals, to name a few. Natural catastrophes may sometimes be stressful life situations. Law enforcement officers from throughout the world are among the organizations anticipated to respond to a crisis. Many studies show that these situations are extremely stressful and upsetting.

Police work has been rated as one of the most mentally difficult and crucial professions in the world by several studies. According to Malach-Pines and Keinan (2017:12), police employment is likely to be one of the most stressful jobs in the world owing to the nature of the job. Morash (2010:74) noted a wide range of employment issues faced by US police officers of all genders, races, and ethnicities, including Hispanic as well as non-Hispanic. Lack of control over job activities, mocking and set-ups by other officers, linguistic harassing, inappropriate touching (for women only), and overestimates of physical skills were shown to be the most predictive of stress in a study of 2010 data collected from twenty-four US departments.

Lack of control over job activities and bias towards one's race, gender, or ethnic group were also found to be substantial predictors of stress in a replication of the research with eleven of the original United States departments (Morash, Haarr, and Kwak, 2016:45). According to Sollie, Kop, and Euwema (2017:1580), police employment is likely to be one of the most stressful careers in the world owing to the fundamental nature of the job. Hazards connected with professional stress, according to Water and Ussery (2017:85). They blamed the nature of police for the stress. As a result of the hazards and stress connected with policing, it is distinct from other vocations.



Occupational stress, according to Clair (2006:56), is caused by dealing with bothersome and unclean persons such as drug users and drunkards, as well as the use of violence by police, the hazards linked with the violence, and hostility towards officers. According to Ongoro and Oloko (2015:104), police officers in Migori endure professional stress as a result of lengthy shifts, horrific accident scenes, and a lack of privacy. They blamed it on insufficient accommodation, poor communication, and ineffective staff development, all of which have disastrous consequences such as anxiety, sadness, and wrath. In Kenya, police personnel are seeing an upsurge in occupational stress. The nature of their employment, inadequate housing arrangements, support systems, and insufficient coping methods, according to Hall (2012:112), have all contributed to a rise in police officer stress. Increased violence, rising crime rates, and the killing of police officers on and off duty characterize the working environment for cops. As a result, they regard the environment as a source of stresses.

Medical professionals and police officers, for example, may be more stressed than those in other professions since they are expected to deal with the issues of others (Schaible & Six, 2016). Overload, conflict, and ambiguity, according to Baheshtifar and Nazarian (2013), are work-related characteristics that lead to occupational stress. Work-related stress was traditionally assumed to affect mainly those in senior positions; however, it is now recognized that individuals at all levels can feel occupational stress. Employees' persistent exposure to job stressors has a negative impact on the quality of their work, their physical and mental health, and the success of the organisation where they work if it is not well managed (Maslach, 2013).

Agolla (2019) examined occupational stress in police personnel, focusing on the Botswana police force. The study's findings suggest that police work stresses include being hurt while on duty and using force when the job requires it, among other things. Exercising, networking, eating healthy or dieting, career planning, and staff training were listed as coping mechanisms. This treatise was not without flaws. The sample size & geographic coverage were limited to Gaborone and its environs.

As a result, a bigger sample size and the inclusion of more areas are required. Because the study used a survey technique and solely used quantitative methods, it is recommended that the study be duplicated utilizing triangulation approaches to confirm the findings. However, it is hoped that these findings will lead to a better understanding of the nature of police job stress by adding to the current body of research.

Patrols, investigations, traffic, accident attendance, crime scene investigation, and internal disturbances such as rioting are all part of the police activity. Other studies, like Kelwon, Were, and Getuno (2020) and Gomez (2018), have classified them as external police officer duties. The nature of the external work environment varies by location, in the sense that various areas may not have the same level of criminality. The first main source of stress cited in law enforcement job is related to the unique task, which is generally mentioned in most surveys of law enforcement officers and ranked-in-order as possible stressors. Among the top stresses mentioned by police are the death of a spouse or having to take a life in the line of duty, which is unsurprising. Making violent arrests and seeing terrible situations are two more sources of stress cited in the literature.

Overall, violent and unpredictable situations that occur in the course of police employment are often regarded as the major source of both psychologically and physically stress among officers. For example, Sollie, Kop, and Euwema (2017) support external environment stress in the content of police work as follows: emotionally demanding situations such as informing relatives of an unexpected death, trying to deal with suicide, fatal accidents, criminal or sexual offenses with children are all stressors. Dealing with obnoxious or filthy persons, such as drug addicts or drunkards, as well as the use of violence by police and the hazards linked with the study, such as violence aggressiveness against officers or illness risks, are all part of it.

Physiological, emotional, and behavioral reactions to job stress are always defined as physiological, emotional, and behavioral reactions in police officers (Verhage, Noppe, Feys, & Ledegen, 2018). Physiological responses can be defined as having a greater than usual risk of dying from certain illnesses, such as heart attack and a variety of other health issues like headaches, high blood pressure, and gastrointestinal problems. Emotional responses, on the other hand, might include sadness and even suicide in extreme circumstances (Violanti et al., 2018). Posttraumatic stress disorder (PSTD) is a word used to describe a significant emotional reaction (Violanti and Paton, 2019). After one exposure to a sequence of traumatic experiences, PSTD is invariably linked with severe and protracted symptoms. Job discontent, indifference, and cynicism may result as a result of this. At the organizational level, behavioral reactions may include reduced job performance, errors in judgment, irresponsibility, low morale, absenteeism, tardiness, early retirement, and quitting the police force altogether; however, at the individual level, behavioral reactions may include aggression, violence, isolation, excessive drinking and smoking, alcoholism, and drug abuse (Sigler & Thweatt, 2017).



One of the origins of police stress is the work environment. It can happen both within and outside the company. Internal work environments include factors such as organizational structure and climate, shift schedules that disrupt normal sleep patterns and social life, authoritarian management styles, poor interpersonal relationships with supervisors, inter - departmental politics, absence of sufficient planning and resources, and a lack of promotion and transfer opportunities (Violanti & Aron, 2014; Kirkcaldy et al., 2015; Waters and Ussery, 2017; Stotland & Pendleton, 2019).

Purba and Demou (2019: 102) investigated the link between organizational pressures and police personnel' mental health: Officer mental health morbidity is increased by occupational pressures in the police force. Officers' poor mental health is damaging to them personally and can have an impact on their professionalism, organizational performance, and public safety. While the influence of operational pressures on officers' mental health has been extensively established, no comprehensive study has looked at the effects of organizational stressors.

The goal of this research was to perform a systematic review to determine the link between organizational pressures and police officer mental health. Organizational stressors were shown to have strong evidence of substantial correlations with the outcomes of occupational stress, mental symptoms/psychological discomfort, emotional tiredness, and personal accomplishment. Lack of concern, pressure, job pressure, administrative/organizational stress, and long working hours were among the organizational stressors that consistently showed significant relationships with mental health outcomes.

Male and female police officers were evaluated for professional stress and burnout by McCarty and Garland (2017). Male and female cops did not report substantially different degrees of work stress and burnout, according to the data. The results of the separate multivariate analyses show that, while male and female officers have comparable predictors of stress and burnout, there are differences in the models, supporting the theory that female officers may face specific stressors in the police force. Female cops report much greater degrees of burnout than male officers, according to the multivariate data. The study's findings have ramifications for programs and policies aimed at preventing stress and burnout among cops. The findings of this study suggest that a one-size-fits-all strategy to helping police cope with stress and burnout may not be the ideal method for departments to assist officers deal with these difficulties, because male and female officers may not experience or deal with these issues in the same manner.

Gatiria (2012) examined the elements that influence Kenya Police Service delivery in Nairobi County, Kenya. In today's competitive market, businesses strive to provide services that satisfy customers' expectations. While acknowledging that a wide range of factors influence service delivery, the researcher looked at training, employee wellbeing, occupational stress, and management style in the service and how these influence service delivery.

The findings indicated that these critical service delivery characteristics have been overlooked to some extent. The service's training should be comprehensive, allowing for the learners' perspectives and experiences. This will allow them to enjoy the learning, since they are adult learners. Employee welfare must be addressed since employees cannot be expected to please the public if they lack proper equipment, transportation, uniform, and salary that is inadequate for the people they are expected to serve.

Adegoke (2014) investigated the impact of work risks on police officers' psychological well-being in Nigeria's Ibadan Metropolis. The findings of this study revealed that work-related stress, frustration, and sadness had a substantial impact on the psychological well-being of police officers in the Ibadan metropolitan. Based on the finding, it was suggested that the government and law enforcement agencies seek to identify ways to manage psychological characteristics such as emotional labor, psychological well-being, job-stress, and their employers' social networks.

Kerubo (2018) investigated the impact of occupational stresses on police officers' work performance in Nairobi County, Kenya. According to her research, employment stressors have an impact on work performance, thus companies should try to alleviate stress by creating a pleasant working atmosphere. The study's conclusions have far-reaching implications for academics, top policymakers, and the National Police Service: Organizations should concentrate their efforts to increase work performance on the role of workplace stressors, which is favorably associated to work performance.



True, a police officer's working environment is dangerous. Numerous zones of Bangkok are the most hazardous in terms of crime incidence in Thailand, since they contain the main primary workplaces of politics, government economy, and many executive government employees and politicians (Tengpongsthorn, 2016). According to Akerale (1991), a good employee appreciates the worth of the organization they work for since their personal well-being is taken care of by winning perks like medical coverage, retirement benefits, and paid vacations. This greatly improves a police officer's performance.

1.6.2Theoretical Framework

This section presents the theories that were used to anchor the study. The study was based on the social exchange theory and the psychoanalytic theory as discussed below.

1.6.2.1 Social Exchange Theory

With the publication of his book Social Behavior as Exchange in 1958, sociologist George Homans established social exchange theory (Ekeh, 1974:21). He defined social exchange as the interchange of action between at least two people, whether material or intangible, rewarding or expensive. Other theorists continued to publish on the idea after Homans (1974), especially Peter M. Blau & Richard M. Emerson, who, along with Homans, are often regarded as the key developers of the exchange viewpoint within sociology (Ekeh, 1974:24).

Homans (1974) stressed the unique behavior of actors in their interactions. Despite the fact that there are many other types of interaction, Homans focused his research on dyadic exchange. John Thibaut as well as Harold Kelley are known for concentrating their research on the psychological notions of the dyad and the small group within the theory. From his research on anthropology focusing on systems of extended trade, such as family systems and gift exchange, Lévi-Strauss is credited with contributing to the creation of this theoretical paradigm (Ekeh, 1974:22).

The system is summarized in three principles by Homan: success, stimulation, and deprivation—satiation. When people are compensated for their acts, they are more likely to repeat them. Stimulus proposition: The more times a stimulus has previously resulted in a reward, the more likely a person is to respond to it. The deprivation—satiation hypothesis states that the more frequently a person has gotten a certain reward in the recent past, the less valued every additional unit of that reward becomes.

In this study, social interaction may be used extensively in the domain of interpersonal connections among police personnel. The notion of exchanging resources to improve one's well-being is at the heart of social exchange theory, which manifests itself in a variety of scenarios. Self-interest can motivate cops to make actions that are beneficial to their overall well-being. Social activity entails the trade of products, both tangible and intangible, such as approbation or prestige symbols. People who give a lot to others attempt to gain a lot from them, and people who get a lot from others feel pressured to give a lot to them. This impact process tends to settle into a state of equilibrium, resulting in an equilibrium in the exchanges. In a transaction, what a police officer delivers is an expense to him, just as what he receives is a reward, and his conduct varies less as the disparity between the two, profit, approaches a maximum.

1.6.2.2 Psychoanalytic Theory

Sigmund Freud established this hypothesis. Psychoanalysis, according to Nelson-Jones (2015), is considered as a theory of personality development that has affected other theories such as behavioral and humanistic approaches, as well as a therapy strategy utilized by psychoanalytic counselors or psychiatrists. According to the notion, feelings of powerlessness, of something terrible happening, and of overpowering terror influence later experiences (Corey, 2016:6). The unconscious, which contains all things that are not immediately accessible to awareness, particularly emotions related with trauma, is the foundation of Freudian thought. The unconscious, according to Freud, is the root of human drives for activity. Stress can be caused by uncontrollable cravings from infancy. The officers' views, recollections, thoughts, fantasies, and sentiments concerning their job conditions, family backgrounds, and other stress-related experiences and emotions will be used in this study. The goal was for the respondents to be able to access memories they weren't thinking about at the time but could easily recall as they went through the surveys.

The id, ego, and super-ego are the three systems or agencies that Freud divided the mental apparatus into. The id functions in accordance with the need to meet biological demands as soon as possible. When police officers' unfulfilled demands, such as rest, food, or sex, these begin to demand more and more of their concentration, until they can't think about anything else. Their focus has shifted away from their task, resulting in poor work performance. Some of the ids develop into ego.



Reality, society, as represented by the superego, and biology, as represented by the id, are all services that the ego provides. Officers may feel frightened, overwhelmed, or as if they are ready to collapse beneath the weight of it all when these make competing demands on the poor ego. This sensation is known as anxiety, and it acts as a warning to the ego that its own existence, as well as the survival of the entire body, is in peril. Officers must consider the incentives and penalties they may get from their superiors as well as the larger law of the nation, regardless of the needs they are attempting to address. Mistakes made on the job might result in significant consequences such as interdiction, legal action, or even termination, which causes officers a great deal of concern. Sigmund Freud distinguished three types of anxieties: realistic, moral, and neurotic. Realistic anxiety in police officers might include fears of injury/death and other hazards that come with the job. Moral anxiety can include sentiments such as shame about being a cop, regret about mistakes made on the job, fear of retribution, injury/death, retrenchment, and taking bribes, which officers may suffer when the public accuses and criticizes them of being ineffective and slack. When officers feel as if they are going to lose control, anger, reason, or even their mind, they experience neurotic anxiety. The goal of this study is to examine if police officer occupational stress has an impact on their performance. There appears to be a wide range of life events among police officers that result in some sort of stress, dread, anxiety, or psychosomatic disease.

The superego symbolizes society, which imposes a variety of rules. The consciousness, which is an absorption of penalties and warnings, and the ego ideal, which is generated from rewards as well as positive models provided to the individual, are both parts of the superego (Nelson-Jones, 2015). Officers get extensive training and drill in the material and abilities they are expected to demonstrate in the field. The officers' superego expects that they be nice and efficient; otherwise, they would experience guilt, humiliation, and worry. Ego protection mechanisms are the terms for the procedures. All defenses entail reality distortions; they are strategies for individuals to feel better by deceiving them. The idea describes how people's previous experiences, such as professional stress, might influence their subsequent experiences, such as performance changes.

1.7 Research Methodology

A descriptive survey research approach was used in this study. The best way for characterizing a population big enough to observe firsthand is a descriptive survey study (Mugenda, 2011). The descriptive design, according to Kothari (2014:26), is concerned with explaining, recording, and assessing situations that exist or existed. Information was gathered from a sample of the population rather than the complete population at one moment in time, which might be anywhere from one day to many weeks. According to the police officers, surveys are engaged with existing circumstances or connections, held attitudes, ongoing procedures, visible impacts, or growing trends. The methodology was adopted since the goal of the study was to determine the frequency, features, and types of occupational stress on police officer performance.

The research region was within the authority of Uasin Gishu County's County Police Headquarters and police stations. This research attempted to collect data from a few selected sub-counties in order to obtain useful information. Because of the broad interest in the impact of occupational risks on police officer performance, the sub-counties were purposefully chosen, based primarily on key informant interviews. The wider group to whom the researcher would like to extrapolate the study's findings is referred to as the target population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013:22). Thus, the complete collection of individuals, events, or objects with similar observable features, that is, the research population, is surveyed (Kothari, 2014:28). According to police data, Uasin Gishu County in Kenya has roughly 2,134 police officers. As illustrated below, the target population was 2,225 people, which included the County Commander, Sub-county police commanders, ward commanders, junior police officers, IPOA officials, KNCHR officers, and Nyumba Kumi Community leaders Sampling is the act of picking units (such as individuals or organizations) from a population of interest such that we may reasonably generalize our findings back to the population from which they were chosen by analyzing the sample.

Fisher et al. (2018:7) formula was used to calculate the appropriate sample size.

- $n = Z^2pq/d^2$ Where;
- n =The desired sample size (if the target population is more than 10,000).
- z = The standard normal deviation at the required confidence level of 1.96.
- d = The level of statistical significance set.
- p = The proportion of the characteristics being measured.
- q = 1-p

According to Fisher *et al.* (2018:14), if there is no estimate available of the proportion in the target population assumed to have the same characteristics, the researcher may use 50% of the given sample. The desired sample size thus comprised of 327 respondents.



The study employed stratified and simple random sampling approaches. The sampling error is reduced when the sample size is big. When the number of people to be selected is limited, stratified sampling is a random sampling process used to pick individuals with distinct features (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2011:7).

Apart from junior officers, the rest of the officers were sampled using a purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling is the only appropriate method since there are a limited number of senior officers who can contribute to the study. A simple random sampling technique was used to select the junior officers from each of the police stations in Uasin Gishu County.

The study collected and utilised both primary and secondary data. The study's respondents provided primary data via questionnaires and interviews, which were developed as data gathering methods. Reports and publications provided secondary data.

To meet the study's goals, the analysis employed both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Data was examined quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistics (mean, standard error, frequency, and percentages) (correlation and regression analysis). Data from questionnaires as well as interview guides were categorized, themes, or patterns for coding reasons, and then content analysis was used to examine them. Descriptive statistics were calculated using the Statistical Tool for Social Sciences (SPSS) package, which has a wide range of data-handling capabilities and statistical analysis methods that can handle small to big datasets (Muijis, 2011:17). Multiple regressions were used to analyze the data in this study.

Multiple regression analysis, in its most basic form, is determining the optimal straight-line connection to describe how variation in an outcome (or dependent) variable, Y, is influenced by variation in a predictor (or independent or explanatory) variable, X. It is feasible to utilize the equation once the connection has been estimated:

$$Y = B_0 + B_1 X_1 + B_2 X_2 + B_3 X_3 + e$$

Where:

X = the independent variables

 $B_0 = Constant$

 X_1 = Family life

 $X_2 = Occupational hazards$

 $X_3 = Social Relations$

Y = the dependent variable (Performance of Police Officers)

 B_1 , B_2 , B_3 = Independent Variable Coefficients

e = Error margin

1.8 Findings of the Study

1.8.1 Respondents' Sex Composition

Table 1 (Below) shows the sex composition of the sampled respondents. The proportion of female respondents was 156 (or 51.8 per cent) while that of males was 145 (or 48.2 per cent). The study almost elicited an equal number of responses; and by extension minimizing bias of possible responses from all the members of the police force in Uasin Gishu County.

Table 1: Respondents' Sex Composition in Uasin Gishu County

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
Male	145	48.2	
Female	156	51.8	
Total	301	100	

Source: Researchers primary data (2019).



1.8.2 Respondents' Age in Uasin Gishu County

Age is an important factor whenever job performance is under discussion. As per the present study; a predominant proportion of respondents (i.e. 135 or 44.9 per cent) were youthful (junior officers) or slightly older while the age bracket between 41-50 years were 94 (or 31.2 per cent) (Table 2 Below). This category of police officers has accumulated considerable experience in their chosen disciplines in the police force. The last group was those of officers aged over 51 years who were 72 (or 23.9 per cent), being the most experienced police officers in Uasin Gishu County. This agrees with (Maran *et al*, 2017:9).

Table 2: Respondents' Age in Uasin Gishu County

Age	Frequency	Percent
31-40 years	135	44.9
41-50 years	94	31.2
Over 51 years	72	23.9
Total	301	100

Source: Researchers primary data (2019).

1.8.3 Respondents' Level of Education in Uasin Gishu County

According to the sampled respondents 153 (or 50.8 per cent) had attained college education; 75 (or 24.9 per cent) secondary level formal education and 73 or (24.3 per cent) were university graduates (Table 3 Below). Therefore, majority of the police officers at Uasin Gishu County were college graduates during the current study. This is quite significant for the current inquiry as the police officers at Uasin Gishu County were able to provide valid responses from an informed view point regarding occupational stress on the performance of police officers.

Table 3: Respondents' Educational Level in Uasin Gishu County

Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
College	153	50.8
Secondary	75	24.9
University	73	24.3
Total	301	100

Source: Researchers primary data (2019).

1.8.4 Respondents' Length of Service in Uasin Gishu County

Respondents' were asked to indicate for how long they had served in the national police service and their responses were captured as follows (Table 4 Below); 51 or (16.9 per cent) had served three years; 106 or (35.2 per cent) had served 5 years, 119 or (39.5 per cent) had served 8 years while 25 or (8.3 per cent) had done over 9 years. This findings show that majority of police officers interviewed had a working experience of between 5 to 8 years by the time this study was carried out. This level of experience places these police officers at a fairly good position in understanding and coping with occupational stress in the line of duty. This agrees with (Gershon *et al.*, 2016:12), Bouteyre, Maurel, and Bernaud, (2007:88).

Table 4: Respondents' Length of Service in Uasin Gishu County

Length of Service	Frequency	Percent
Below 3 years	51	16.9
3-5 years	106	35.2
5-8 years	119	39.5
Over 9 years	25	8.3
Total	301	100

Source: Researcher's primary data (2019).



1.8.5 Occupational Hazards and Performance of Police Officers in Uasin Gishu County

The first objective was to assess the contribution of occupational hazards to the performance of police officers. By use of a Linkert scale respondents were asked a number of questions to rate the extent to which occupational hazards affected police performance. The responses for each item asked are shown in Table 5 (Below). Heavy workload and working for long hours with little rest; poor pay and lack of welfare support responses each scored a mean of 4.46 (or 89.2 per cent) which agrees with (Sattar & Iqbal, 2017:2); Rollinson, (2012:8) and (Sattar & Iqbal, 2017:7). Exposure to risks at all times and poor medical cover had a mean score of 4.32 (or 86.4 per cent). Dealing with traumatic events in the course of duty and inadequate training and equipment each elicited a mean score of 4.31 (or 86.2 per cent) of all the responses. This agrees with Tengpongssthorn, W. (2016) and Akerale (1991).

Inadequate resources needed for work had response mean score of 4.44 (or 88.8 per cent). This agrees with (Terrill & Ingram, 2016:10), (Gitonga, 2015). Therefore; from the foregone analysis heavy workload and working for long hours with little rest and poor pay and lack of welfare support were highest occupational hazards faced by police officers in Uasin Gishu County.

Table 5: Occupational Hazards Faced by Police Officers in Uasin Gishu County

Responses		SD	D	U	A	SA	Total	Mean
Heavy workload and working for long hours with little rest	F	0	0	7	150	144	301	4.46
long nours with fittle rest	%	0	0	2.3	49.8	47.8	100	89.2
Exposure to risks at all times and poor medical cover	F	0	7	0	150	144	301	4.32
poor medical cover	%	0	2.3	0.0	49.8	47.8	100	86.4
Dealing with traumatic events in the course of duty	F	0	9	16	148	128	301	4.31
course of duty	%	0	3.0	5.3	49.2	42.5	100	86.2
Inadequate resources needed for work	F	0	0	9	151	141	301	4.44
	%	0	0.0	3.0	50.2	46.8	100	88.8
Poor pay and inadequate welfare support	F	0	0	7	150	144	301	4.46
	%	0	0.0	2.3	49.8	47.8	100	89.2
Inadequate training and equipment		0	9	16	148	128	301	4.31
		0	3.0	5.3	49.2	42.5	100	86.2

Source: Researcher's primary data (2019).

In (Table 6) (Below) the goodness of fit model indicates the coefficient of determination (R Square) = 0.876 and R= -0.936. The correlation (R) value of -0.936 is an indication that there is a significant but negative relationship between occupational stress and performance of police officers in Uasin Gishu County. This shows that occupational stress explains 87.6 percent of the dependent variable. That is, 87.6 percentage points of the variations of the data from the average find explanation in the model. Therefore, the study assumes that the difference of 12.4 percentage points of the variations is a result of other or extraneous factors such as; shift work, unexpected overtime, anxiety about safety, and lost holidays; which agrees with Mutai and Kirui (2017:22).



Table 6: Model Goodness of Fit

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
1	-0.936ª	0.876	0.868	0.0868	99.676	$0.000^{\rm b}$

Source: Researcher's primary data (2019).

In (Table 7) (Below) the analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics was conducted to determine the difference in the means of the dependent and independent variables to show whether a relationship exists between the two. Based on the findings of this study, the p-value for the model was determined to be 0.004 which implies that in Uasin Gishu County; Performance of police officers has a significant relationship with Occupational Hazards, Family Life and social relations.

Table 7: Analysis of Variance

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.851	3	1.283	2.304	.004ª
	Residual	15.616	28	.557		
	Total	19.467	31			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Occupational Hazards, Family Life, Social Relations

Source: Researcher's primary data (2019).

The regression coefficients estimates were used to perform the regression equation to describe the relationship between a predictor variable and the response to measure the average functional relationship between variables for the performance of police officers in Uasin Gishu County as follows;

Performance of police officers = 0.369 + (-0.534) Occupational hazards + (-0.319) Family life + (-0.476) Social relations + 0.224.

These results reveal regression coefficient for Occupational hazards is -0.534 which shows that an increase of one unit for this variable decreases performance of police officers by a significant 0.534. Regression coefficient for social relations is -0.476 which shows that an increase of one unit for this variable decreases performance of police officers by a significant 0.476. Similarly, regression coefficient for family life is -0.319 which shows that an increase of one unit for this variable decreases performance of police officers by a significant 0.319 with the regression analysis done at 95 per cent confidence level. This indicated that compared to the other variables of the current study, occupational hazards were more significantly related to performance of police officers followed by social relations and family life in that order.

An increase in occupational hazards resulted in a greater decrease in performance of police officers than effect of social relations and family life. The implication of the results is that there is a negative relationship between the dependent and independent variables as the work performance of a police officer deteriorates as he or she is exposed to higher levels of occupational stress. Greenberg and Baron (2000) found the same results whereby occupational stress causes reduction in efficiency, capacity to perform and interest in working and initiative. Occupational stress also increases thought rigidity, a dearth in concern for the organization and decreased

b. Dependent Variable: Performance of Police Officers



responsibility. Therefore, occupational stress has a negative effect on the work performance of police officers in Uasin Gishu County.

1.9 Conclusion

There is a link between occupational dangers and police officer performance in Uasin Gishu County, according to the current study. Occupational stress among police officers in Uasin Gishu County manifests itself in a variety of ways, including stress-related diseases, a high percentage of policemen misusing alcoholic drinks and other narcotics, and a high rate of killings. These occurrences raise worries about the safety of police officers. They reveal that the security sector would be impacted unless enough action is made to address the problem of police officer stress. The provision of security services may deteriorate, allowing for the spread of instability. Strain at work is recognized as a crucial issue that affects security service effectiveness at both the management and community levels, according to the findings of this study.

1.10 Recommendation

The government, the National Police Service Commission, and other security sector stakeholders should address concerns about police personnel' welfare and resource allocation in order to reduce stress among Kenyan police officers, according to this study. The National Police Service Commission should address job-related sources of stress such as lengthy working hours, nature of work, and transfers.

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