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INFLUENCE OF STRESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE OF POLICE SERVICE IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Employees coping with work-related stress, lack of creativity, as well as inspiration result in poor organizational performance. Very strong opinions suggest that Police Officers' (POs) welfare is insufficient. Most of the police officers who were interviewed observed that they were not sufficiently remunerated for their services. The POs also do not have enough insurance covering their hazardous situations they continually encounter as they reinforce law and order. According to the Kenya police service satisfaction and needs analysis report of 2016, the Police Officers live under very poor conditions which hamper their job performance. The mentioned aspects, lower the level of Emotional Intelligence in the Police Service since they spend much time thinking about their problems other than looking for solutions. Bungoma County though has well committed police officers; their service delivery has been hampered by factors linked to emotional intelligence among these disciplined service providers. The study sought to investigate the influence of stress management skills on employee performance of police service in Kenya. The study was anchored on the Systemic Stress, Selye's Theory, Trait Model and Mixed Model.

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The research design adopted by the study was descriptive design. The target population consisted of 1,517 police officers in Bungoma County. Purposive, simple random and stratified sampling techniques were used to obtain a sample of 317 respondents from the population of 1,517 police officers. A questionnaire was used as the data collection instrument. This study employed the Cronbach alpha coefficient as an indicator of test instrument reliability, at a threshold of 0.7 and beyond. The data was analyzed and interpreted primarily using descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS version 22. The results illustrated a positive, linear and significant association between stress management skills and performance of Police Officers in Bungoma County. It was concluded that stress management skills in police service was a significant factor in relation to employee performance.

Key Words: *Stress Management Skills, Employee Performance, Police Service, Kenya*

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The term 'Emotional Intelligence (EI)' has been used by various authors and notably by Mayer and Salovey (1990) who described EI as the process of perceiving and regulating one's emotions in order to control the feelings and actions and at the same time effect the emotions and actions of others. Emotional intelligence can provide a platform for one to have satisfied by applying principles of EI. Changes at workplace require the human resource that can be able to cope with these changes at workplace. Stressful situations require individuals with greater levels of emotional intelligence and who are able to manage and handle stressors effectively. This will enable workers to pursue businesses with lots of objectivity (Houston, 2020). The workplace is consistently changing quickly, comparable to the organizations and human resource who work for them. Globally, organizations are experiencing advancement in technological, globalization, competition, war of talents, improvement in service industry and delivery speed. These developments have brought about competitive advantage in the firms. Human resource is a key to the success of any industry. No wonder organizations nowadays have continued to invest heavily in this type of resource. When individuals are emotionally stable, their EI levels are high and are able to be productive at job (Jacques, 2009).

Thus, to stay afloat and to experience competitive advantage, workers are constantly getting a lot of pressures from the management of the organizations. Emotions do influence persons' opinions, behavior and psychological changes. Quite a number of studies have recorded those feelings or emotions have had adverse effects and mental capacity of human resources despite being crucial to rational thinking. Goleman (2001) viewed emotional intelligence as positive and important contributor to wise decisions making. Conflict, leadership, engagement, community and esteem, happiness, education, overall quality control, skill and competencies are quite a number of studies that have been studied in relation to the impact of factors that moderate stress. Further research should have focused on how these variables moderate and their outcomes given. These results would have helped to know which variables had more effects on stress. These studies have talked little about the contribution of EI to EP in organizations. As such, the purpose of this study was therefore to examine the impacts of EI on EP. The wise approach to use emotions is fundamental to the development of human beings. Individuals with high levels of EI have low levels of stressors and are found to lead satisfied life than those who have low levels of EI (Ruiz-Aranda, Extremera & Pineda-Galan, 2014). The application of EI is essential to employees because it helps them to lead a life free of the effects of stress (Oginska-Bulk, 2005). As a result, these studies suggest that there is a connection between EI, management of stress, and workplace performance.



According to Goleman on Shatali (2011), EI largely molds one's leadership and behavior. The career successes of human resource are dependent on the EI of the person. These sentiments were also echoed by Weisinger (1998). For the human resources to fill safe about their jobs, their EI levels ought to be high (Jordan *et al.*, 2002). People with high levels of emotional intelligence, according to Cooper and Sawaf, are able to function well and blend in well with others because they understand how to get along with others. Rotundo & Sackett (2002) noted that employee performance can be the manner in which human resources are able to accomplish their goals properly. It is an individual's ability to contribute to overall performance of an organization (Campbell *et al.*, 1990). In-role performance as well as extra-role performance is two separate aspects of performance of an employee. Organizational citizenship tasks that substantially contribute to the achievement of organizational goals by having a direct impact on the social and psychological environments of an organization are referred to as extra-role performance (Williams & Anderson, 1991). In-role performance is defined as performing mandatory work tasks that are formally demanded by a job (Williams & Anderson, 1991), while out-of-role performance is defined as completing mandatory job tasks that are formally demanded by a job (Rotundo & Sackett, 2002).

Stress management (SM) refers to what has been put in place to counter the effects of stress at the workplace. The main aim of SM is therefore to help the individuals to cope with the stress of day-to-day life. According to Bruce (2003) SM is a technique that a person uses to cope with adverse effects of stress at workplace and in their daily life. Therefore, dealing with stress effectively is paramount to stay afloat in today's life. Persons who have been able to deal with stressors in life are able to adapt ably in the environment by fusion of daily exercises and recreation. Stress management can be defined as interventions designed to reduce the impact of stressors in the workplace. These can have an individual focus, aimed at increasing an individual's ability to cope with stressors. The goal of stress management is to help the individual to manage the stress of everyday life. Stress management also refers to the wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's level of stress especially chronic stress, usually for the purpose of improving everyday functioning (Baridam, 2006). Stress produces numerous symptoms which vary according to persons, situations and severity. These can include physical health decline as well as depression. The process of stress management is named as one of the keys to a happy and a successful life in modern society. Although life provides numerous demands that can prove difficult to handle, stress management provides a number of ways to manage anxiety and maintain overall well Being.

Stress can have adverse effects on employees and their places of work. For example, stressors at workplace can lower human resources' performance and productivity (Paul, Elam, & Verhaut, 2007). Stress being psychological and physical condition affects individuals' performance at workplace (Holmlund-Rytkönen & Strandvik, 2005). Issues related to stress can influence human resources' ability and capability to contribute effectively at their places of work (Rees & Redfern, 2003). The increase in the levels of stress in employees can affect their participation and overall contributions at job (Pflanz & Ogle, 2006). Robbins (2005) observed that from the organization's standpoint management may not be concerned, when employees experience low or, and moderate levels of stress. The reason as pointed out earlier in this study is that such levels of stress may be functional and lead to higher employee performance. But high levels of stress, or even low levels sustained over long periods of time, can lead to reduced employee performance and this requires action by management for improvement. While limited amount of stress many benefit an individual's performance. We do not expect employees to see it that, way from the individuals stand point, even low levels of stress are likely to be perceived as undesirable.



It is not likely, therefore for employees and management to have different notions of what constitutes an acceptable level of stress on the job. What management may consider as “a positive stimulus that keeps the adrenaline running” is very likely to be seen as “excessive pressure” by employees. A major component of stress management is cognitive restructuring or changing the way we think. Our beliefs are the lens through which we look at life. If the expectations we have for ourselves, others and the work do not match reality, we will experience cognitive dissonance. Stress management courses and programs also teach people about the role of exercise and diet in healthy live, how to confidently and assertively express our desires in stressful situations, ways to be better managers of our time and resources and finally making our work more meaningful and productive. Furthermore, learning about stress management is a vital step to preventing many health problems associated with it. Stress management deals with the reduction of stress and various stressors in our daily lives (Newman, 2009). Police service in Bungoma County requires individuals with high levels of EI and who are able to cope up with stressful situations the police officers go through to be productive at their workplace. Given the important role that EI plays, it will be vital to examine the influence of emotional intelligence on job performance in the Police Service (PS) in Bungoma County. The question of the extent of the influence of emotional intelligence on the performance of PS even in the country Kenya will be important to both researchers and academicians.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Very strong opinions suggest that the Police Officers’ (POs) welfare is insufficient. Omeje & Githigaro, 2012 on their study of police welfare and operation observed that most of the POs who were interviewed indicated that they were not sufficiently remunerated for their services The POs also do not have enough insurance covering their hazardous situations they continually encounter as they reinforce law and order. A study by Transparency International Kenya in 2016 on the Kenya police service satisfaction survey and needs analysis unveiled that the police officers live under very poor conditions as there is shortage of housing which hampers their performance. United Nations Development Programme on 22 November 2014 in their study of the state of security in Kenya, observed that these deplorable conditions have led to reduced morale of the police officers at workplace, thus, exposing many officers to a professional life of exploitation and poor service delivery.

Moreover, the promotion of the police officers was not based on merit but on favoritism. An interview with male Police Constable in Nakuru, 2010 to explore whether promotion in their set up is done honestly and on a merit basis, but they indicated that promotion was majorly done on favoritism. There are few researches investigating the role of EI in the police service (PS) in Bungoma County (Rexhepi& Berisha, 2017; Samiuddin, Ahmad, &Kazmi, 2017; Bandeet al., 2015; Karimi, 2014 among others). There's a chance that EI is a requirement for good EP in the PS, particularly given that they deal with a lot of emotional weakness in the workplace. On the job stress also negatively impacts police officer’s health (Laura Walter 2012; John Violanti and Luenda E. Charles 2017). This is attributable to various reasons. There are for instance, some of these officers who have experienced trauma in the hands of their bosses. In addition, many of them struggle with the emotional instability’s characteristic of misunderstanding among them and work-related aspects as well as hatred by the members of the public.



Several studies have been carried out concerning emotional intelligence to find its impact on several areas and several facts have been realized but very few have been done on general employee performance especially in the police service in Bungoma County Kenya. Kahtani (2013) carried out research on employee Emotional Intelligence and Employee Performance in the Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia, the study was specifically interested in higher education which could have a profound difference from its effect on other sectors such as the police service which this study is trying to determine. In a study done by Abraham, Meyrav and Weisberg (2009) on the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological wellbeing, which set out to prove the theory level of emotional intelligence influences and found out that there is a positive relationship between the two variables, the study was concentrated on a specific field of profession and thus there was little to conclude on the influence of EI on general employee performance regardless of profession which this study aims to examine.

The effect of work-related stressors on employee performance in non-governmental organizations in Kenya (Mwangi, 2015) is one of the few studies closer to the impact of EI on performance done within Kenya hence there is more need to do studies on all the domains of EI on employee performance. What should be noted here is that PS deals greatly with emotions of the citizen, their coworkers' feelings, as well as their own, as a result of their interactions when doing their duties. This means that these officers must have a high EI, be able to consider their own feelings as well as the emotions of others, and be able to properly maintain relationships. However, few or no studies have explicitly attempted to understand the impact of EI on the police service, especially in Bungoma County.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Systemic Stress: Selye's Theory

Selye's (1976) defines this stress as 'a state manifested by a syndrome which consists of all the nonspecifically induced changes in a biologic system.' This stereotypical response pattern, called the 'General Adaptation Syndrome' (GAS), proceeds in three stages. (a) The alarm reaction comprises an initial shock phase and a subsequent counter shock phase. The shock phase exhibits autonomic excitability, an increased adrenaline discharge, and gastro-intestinal ulcerations. The counter shock phase marks the initial operation of defensive processes and is characterized by increased adrenocortical activity. (b) If noxious stimulation continues, the organism enters the stage of resistance. In this stage, the symptoms of the alarm reaction disappear, which seemingly indicates the organism's adaptation to the stressor. However, while resistance to the noxious stimulation increases, resistance to other kinds of stressors decreases at the same time. (c) If the aversive stimulation persists, resistance gives way to the stage of exhaustion.

The organism's capability of adapting to the stressor is exhausted, the symptoms of stage (a) reappear, but resistance is no longer possible. Irreversible tissue damages appear, and, if the stimulation persists, the organism dies. Although Selye, fails to take into account coping mechanisms as important mediators of the stress–outcome relationship, his theory serves to explain the detriments of stress of interventions are not made in time to rescue the stressed individuals. This theory indirectly underpins the importance of stress management strategies to avoid employees reaching the irreversible stage when the stress is more advanced. With adequate intervention measures that are applied in time, employees' commitment may be restored and therefore their productivity.



Trait Model

The trait model of Emotional Intelligence was first developed by psychologist Konstantin Vasily Petrides and it gives a very different view of emotional intelligence than the ability model. This theory is also known as dispositional theory. These scholars are more interested in how personality, which is characterized as repetitive patterns of action, feeling, and emotion, is calculated (Kassin, 2003). According to this view, personalities refer to measures of personality that are relatively stable over time, though differ from person to person. This explains why some people are more active than others. Personalities are in contrast to states, which are more transitory dispositions. The Trait Model considers EI as a temperament character (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). The theory postulates that people behave differently to given situations because their personalities influence their behaviors. Much as personality influence ones behaviors, the trait model indicates that an individual's decision making depends on their personality. Personality allows one always to make constructive decisions and actions as well as individual emotional control. As the study exonerates the effects of EI on employee performance then this trait goes hand in hand with the study to determine how individuals behave and even how they can solve problems at hand as far as their decision making and action is concern.

Mixed Model

The Mixed Model finds emotional intelligence as both a skill and a personality trait (Goleman, 1998). Goleman (1995) introduced this model and concentrated on wide varieties of abilities that lead to performance of leadership. Self-awareness, self-control, social awareness, and relationship management are the four elements of Goleman's paradigm of EI (Goleman, 1995). Bar-On (2000) looks at emotional intelligence as the way in which individuals understand themselves as individuals and others. The author also looks at how human beings associate with each other and their surrounding handling its difficulties. Bar-On theorizes that emotional intelligence takes time to evolve and it can be enhanced through education, software designing, and psychotherapy. Individuals with elevated levels of emotional intelligence, according to Bar-On, are more able to respond to their surroundings. This theory best explains the three objectives, that is, personal competence, social competence and stress management skills since it is a mixed model.

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

Ashfaq and Muhammad (2013) conducted research into the effect of work stress on bank job results in Pakistan. A total of 144 respondents formed the target populous who were workers of banks in Pakistan. It was expected that the outcomes of this study would mirror outcomes done in Pakistan, where stressors had an adverse link with JP in that when stress occurs it performance was adversely affected. It was observed that management supporting the human resources helped in lessening workplace stress. However, the research did not give approaches on how the management of the organization could aid their employees in handling workplace stress. This forms the lacuna for further research. A recent American Management Association survey of 292 member firms revealed that per capita disability claims tends to increase when positions were eliminated. The survey, which dealt with layoffs between 1990 and 1995, found that the illnesses workers sought treatment for like gastrointestinal problems, mental disorders and substance abuse, hypertension, were stress related (Rees, 1997). It was seen that the process of restructuring, downsizing and reengineering which had helped companies to become lean, had not done it without great costs. Employees were experiencing more stress and uncertainty because companies got leaner without building their —muscle. Just like going on a diet without exercising. The organization weighed less but the percentage of fat —which manifested as high stress, low morale and less than optimal productivity had actually increased (Harvey & Brown. 2006).



Studies conducted by Wang and Walumbwa (2007) the role of transformational leadership as a moderating variable, showed that flexible work schedules were affirmatively related to EP. Workplace substance abuse and improved mental wellbeing have prompted the development of fitness and work-life services. Stress management systems, according to Cole (2005), are effective tools for dealing with stress and are likely to be used in any well-managed company that views its workforce as its most valuable asset and one of its most important stakeholders. Philips et al. (2000) conducted research in the United States and found that employees who were funded by their spouses had higher earnings and EI ratios. Ngari *et al.* (2013) established that stress noteworthy affects performance and service delivery of workers. Stress affects everybody in all regions in this world. There are negative effects of stress to the employees and ultimately on the organizations. Individuals with high levels of stress have low levels of EI and this explains why their productivity is low. Organizations which are to succeed must be able to deal with adverse effects of stress and train their workers on EI (Cox, Griffiths, & Leka, 2015). Stress management requires time and resources, but the gains will pay for themselves in the long run when better workplaces and societies lead to long-term success and increased corporate responsibility for the company. Improvements in main performance metrics such as meeting quality and implementation targets, decreasing operational expenses, and reducing employee turnover can all be seen as a result of the effect (EU-OSHA, 2015).

Tourism Concern Foundation (2013) carried out a study on how working conditions affects their outputs of hotels in Kenya. This study was carried out along the coastline and had 269 respondents. Information required was obtained by using the questionnaires. It was illustrated that human resources working in the hotels have to handle deplorable conditions, poor remuneration and lacked job security. These respondents did not work on permanent and pensionable basis. There was no inferential statistics which could have revealed the levels/degree of correlation between the variables. It also means that the study was not anchored on the research hypotheses which could have required their testing. The research design was not mentioned in this study. Mary *et al.* (2013) did a study in the Nairobi security exchange (NSE) and specifically looked at how stress affects the performance of the organizations. A total of 32 NSE-listed companies were included in this study. Stress has a positive impact on corporate efficiency, according to the findings. The following suggestions were made by Mary et al. (2013): Since stress is becoming a source of concern, particularly when Kenyans face economic burdens, the CEO must consider how stressors impact their employees. Secondly, there is need to revise the organizational policies, especially those related to health. Auditing of stress levels is vital to determine their levels and their effects on the overall running of the organization.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Bungoma County. Descriptive survey and correlation designs guided the study. According to Saunders (2002), descriptive survey design helps one to get relevant aspects of a situation while using a unit study and inquiry. A correlation research design is one in which a researcher tries to figure out what kind of interactions naturally occurring variables have with each other. Correlation analysis aims to determine if two or more factors are associated, and if so, how (Cheprasov, 2020). The targeted population consisted of 1,517 police officers in Bungoma County (KPSACR, 2019). These police officers are distributed in the nine sub counties namely; Kabuchai, Bungoma South, Bumula, Bungoma west, Webuye East, Webuye West, Mount Elgon, Kimilili, and Tongaren. The sample size was formed by randomly selecting 317 respondents from a total of 1,517 respondents, and everyone in the population had the same chance of being included in the survey. Slovin's formula was used to calculate the size as indicated:



$$n = \frac{N}{1+(N \times e^2)}$$

Key:

N= the population

n = size of the sample

e = tolerance level of confidence or probability level of $\alpha=0.05$.

This method is applied to a populous is not homogeneous (Orodho, 2003).

Substituting the values in the formula, $N= 1,517$, $n=1,517/ (1+ (1,517*0.052)) =316.536$, the sample size obtained was 317. The target population of 1,517 was then classified into the nine (9) sub-counties by stratified sampling techniques. The size of the sample was 317 respondents. The number of 317 was apportioned to the nine (9) sub-counties through proportionate sampling and these respondents (317) were obtained from each sub-county by simple random sampling. The researcher used structured (closed-ended) questionnaires to collect required information. Historical data was used as a tool to collect secondary data on service quality and customer satisfaction. Such data was retrieved from the police archives based on Very Low = 1; Low = 2; Average = 3; High = 4 and very high = 5. The researcher acquired the relevant authorization from National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation and the Kibabii University School of Graduate Studies. Research Assistants helped in administration of the questionnaires. Pilot study was conducted on a population of 30 police officers.

According to the results obtained from the officers this gave the researcher motive to continue with the study, since the responses acquired were positive and supportive to the study. Construct and content validity of the instruments were used. The researcher used expert judgment to know the content of the research tools. The researcher used expert judgment to determine the content validity of the research instruments. The determination of content validity was primarily judgmental and intuitive. The researcher also used a panel of persons who judged how well the instrument met the standard. The researcher used the suggestions from the supervisors to improve the clarity of the items in the questionnaires for use in this study. The data collected was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 22) software. The analysis used both inferential and descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics used frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations to present data. A univariate regression model was adopted by the study to determine the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This was carried out at confidence interval levels of 95%, with level of significance set at 5% ($p < 0.05$).



FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Descriptive Statistics

Distribution of Sub-Counties

The sample was drawn from the nine sub counties of Bungoma County. Each Sub-County had different portion of the respondents as shown in Figure 1.

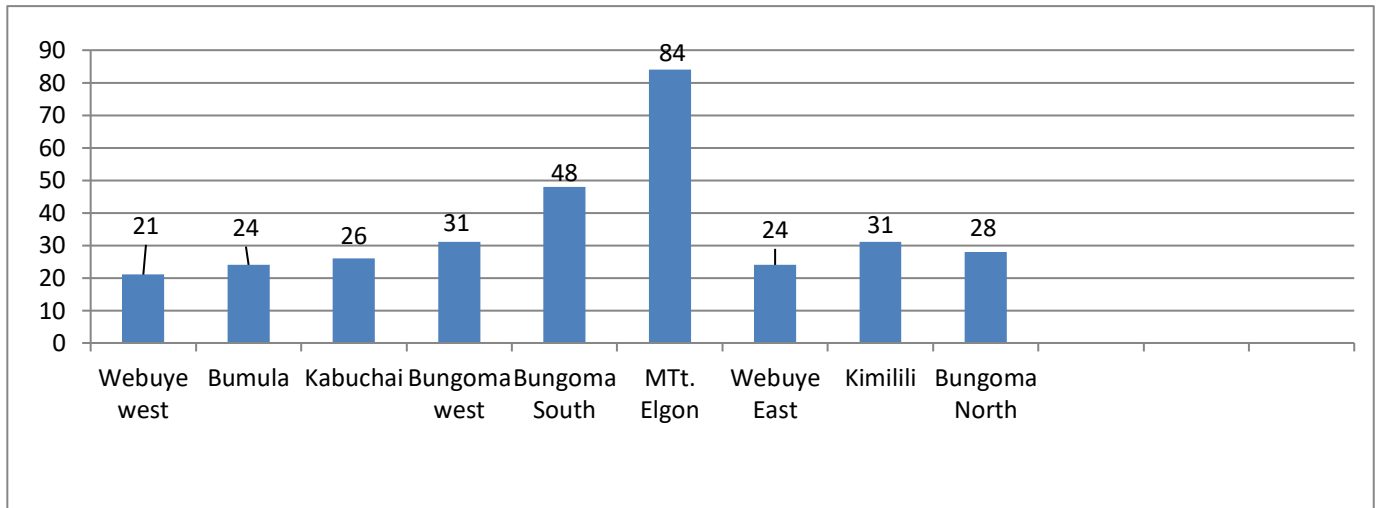


Figure 1 Sub-County Representations

Gender Distribution

Males and females were included in the survey. The gender composition of the respondents in the research sample had to be determined. From the findings shown in Figure 2, the male comprised 67% of the respondents as compared to 33% of the female respondents. As a result of the analysis, the results concluded that a bigger portion of the respondents were male showing an imbalance in the gender distribution. Gender imbalance is a bigger problem in Kenyan work system considering the constitutional requirement of the one third gender rule. It is therefore vital for the institutions like the National police service to ensure that the gender balance is thoroughly observed in their recruitment process. This will therefore ensure that there is enough female personnel just to handle the gender related cases which are supposed to be handled by the female officers, this as a result will ensure an avoidance of delay of service and justice to the needy citizen.



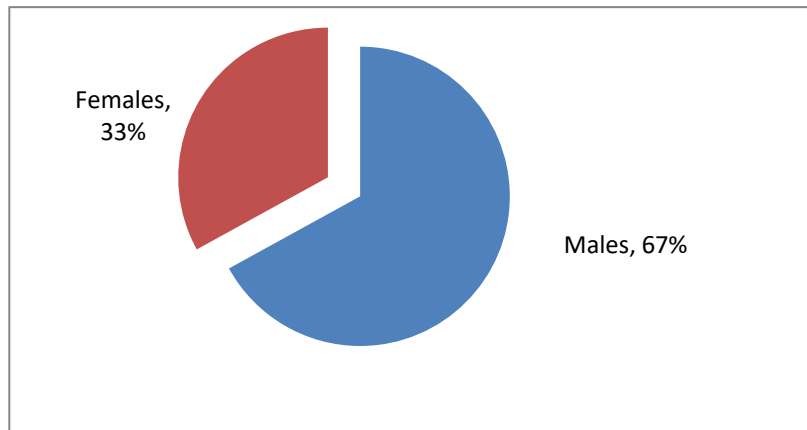


Figure 2 Gender Distribution

Age Distribution

The respondents varied in age from under 30 to over 50 years old. The pie chart in Figure 3 depicts the distribution of respondents across different age groups.

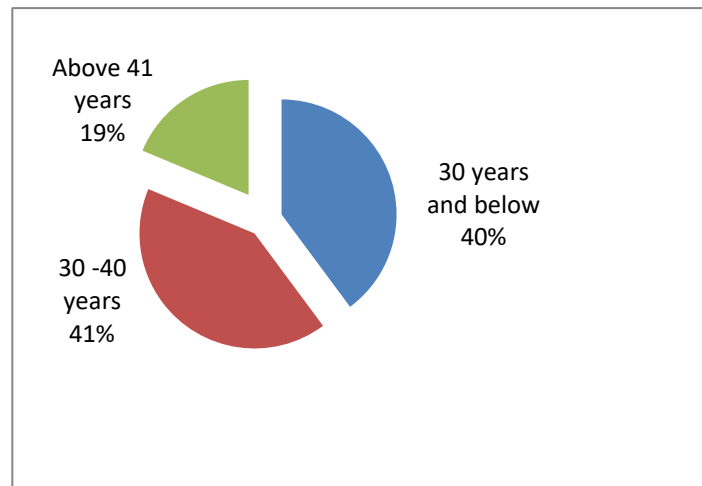


Figure 3 Age Distribution

Figure 3 shows that respondents under 30 years old accounted for 49 %, while those between 30 and 40 years old accounted for 41%. It was further evident that there was a good number of participants (19%) falling above 41 years. Age distribution in any work set up helps the management to ensure a proper human resource planning, and also to make them be prepared for any sort of changes in their system like retirement, recruitment, training and so forth. In the case of the study this finding therefore acts as a guidance to both the researcher and the organization being researched on to know their human resource set up and to ensure a proper adjustment in terms of police officers' deployment, training and even



recruitment. In other words, this will further help in proper human resource planning.

Educational Level Distribution

The respondents had a wide range of educational accomplishments. The researcher was particularly interested in learning about the respondents' education level. The findings as shown in Figure 4, indicated a huge percentage of 95% of the respondents having completed secondary level education, 43% had attained college education, 27% having completed degree course, 15% of the respondents having attained master's degree and above. Therefore, the findings concluded that the majority of the respondents are educated. Having realized an educated service then the researcher concluded that, they are people who can make proper decision as far as their service delivery and work operation is concern since there is believe that with at least a high school education one can make a constructive decision with mature actions and better problem-solving skills, whether personal or work-related ones. With such kind of consideration one can therefore believe that they are able to manage and control their emotions at work.

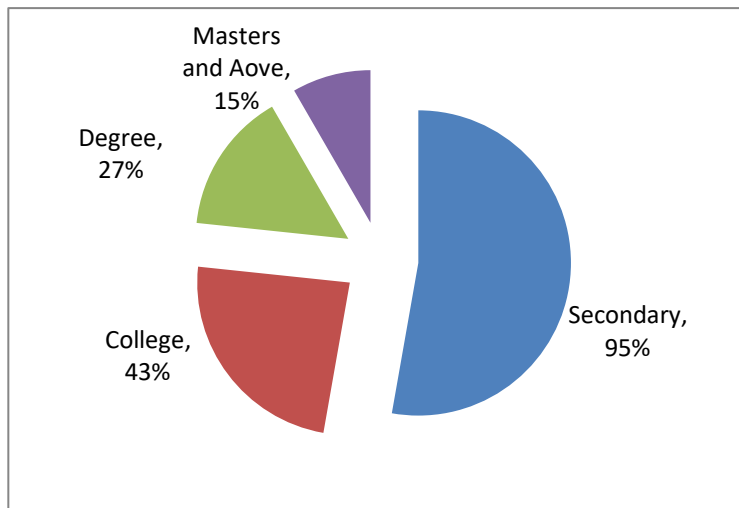


Figure 4 Education Level Distributions

Work Experience Distribution

The length of service among the respondents differed. Some had only served for a year, and some had served for over 20 years. The researcher was interested in determining whether the longer serving officers could have much resistance to work related stress and how they go about their stressors at work. This was of great concern, since the researcher believed that the longer serving officers may be having much experience with the organization and hence may be able to guide the newly recruited officers and help them overcome the work oppressors which may lower their emotional intelligence and ways of solving their problems at work. Much as this is concern, the researcher realized that longer serving officers are more competent at work and value the contribution of competency to their service delivery. Figure 5 shows the sample's particular distribution of service duration in a bar graph.



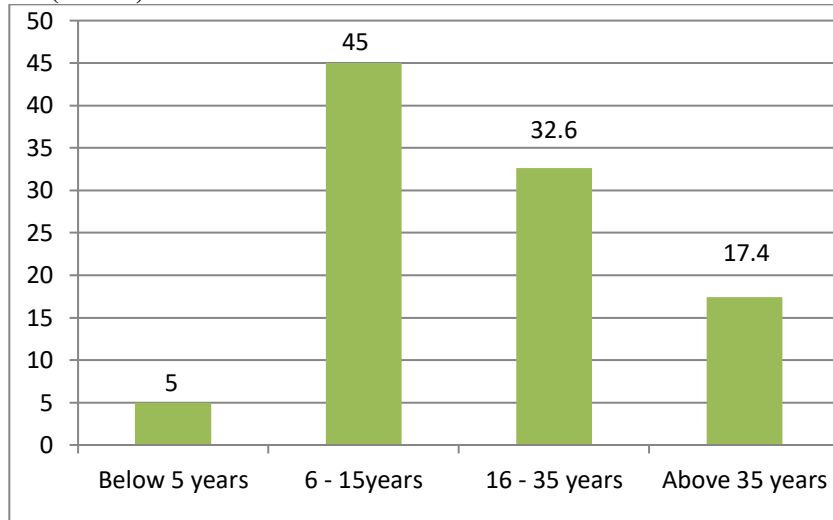


Figure 5 Work Experience Distribution

As shown in Figure 5, just a fewer number of police officers (5%) had worked for 5 years and below. Fatherly the findings revealed that a huger percentage of the respondents (45%) have been in service for 6 – 15 years, while another batch of 32.6% have been in the service for between 16 – 35 years. Finally, there was a considerable percentage 17.4% of the participants falling above 35 years.

Stress Management Skills

Table 1: Stress management Skills of the PS

ITEM(S)	D	N	A	SA	MEAN	Std. Dev.
Work load is properly manageable in our organization	70.6%	10.3%	14.1%	5.1%	3.7	0.9
We usually work as a team in our work place			95.3%	4.7%	4.0	0.8
I always receive motivation from my bosses at work	83.5%		10.2%	6.3%	4.3	0.7
I always experience a friendly atmosphere at work place	5.3%	4.6%	79.2%	12.3%	4.2	0.6
I always learn stress management skills through teaching at work	62.2%	6.2%	22.8%	8.3%	3.9	0.9
Are your roles and duties clearly spelt to you at work	5%	9.5%	63%	17.5%	3.6	0.9

SD= strongly disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A=Agree, SA=strongly agree



Aligned to the third objective, the researcher sought to determine the effect of stress management skills on employee performance in the police service. The respondents reacted variedly about their stress management skills as per the questions given. Table 1 summarizes the results in percentages, mean and standard deviation. To begin with, respondents were asked if their workload is manageable. Surprisingly a huge number 70.6% registered their disagreement on this followed by 14.1% who agreed, 10.2% took a neutral stand while only a mere 5.1% of the respondents strongly agreed. This implies that stress management in the police service still needs much concern. Though there was some encouraging indication during the study as most of the officers agreed to be working as a team always. This was shown by a large proportion (95.3%) showing support to this idea while only 4.7% showing a disagreement to this. Furthermore, the respondents were asked to score their consensus on whether or not their bosses motivate them at work. Most of the respondents 83.5% were not in agreement with this, only 10.2% agreed while 6.3% of the respondents strongly agreed.

A friendly atmosphere in a working place is always paramount and the respondents were asked to a firm on whether a friendly atmosphere prevails among people in their organization. In their input 79.2% of the respondents able to confirm this in their agreement, some 5.3% disagreed while 12.3% strongly agreed with the aspect, this only leaves 4.6% who took a neutral ground. Above all the study sought to know whether the respondents were taught stress management skills in their organization. A huge number 62.2% disagreed with this while 22.8% agreed, 8.3% strongly agreed with 6.2% of the respondents taking a neutral ground. Likewise, respondents were required to state if their roles and duties were clearly spelt to them. The findings indicate that a bigger number 63% showed their solidarity by agreeing to this, followed by 17.5% who strongly agreed while 9.5% choose to remain neutral while 5% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed. Finally, asked if respondents were able to eliminate all stress from their life, a larger portion of the participants 84.2% disagreed with this whereas only 4.6% were in agreement with this while 1.3% remaining indecisive.

Employee Performance of Police Service

The study sought to establish descriptive statistics of employee performance of police service in Bungoma County using a 5-point Likert scale. The responses were rated as shown in Table 2. On the question asked on whether service quality was rated good, 68(22.7%) were of the opinion that service quality was very high, 137(45.8%) said it was high, 88(29.4%) said it was average, 5(1.7%) were of the views it was low and 1(0.3%) said it was very low with a mean of 3.9153 with SD of 0.749.



Table 2: Employee Performance of Police Service

Item(s)	VL	L	A	H	VH	Mean	Std. Dev.
Service quality is rated good	1 (0.3%)	5 (1.7%)	88 (29.4%)	137 (45.8%)	68 (22.7%)	3.9153	0.749
Customer satisfaction is fair	3 (1.0%)	4 (1.3%)	125 (41.8%)	103 (34.4%)	64 (21.4%)	3.7939	0.778
Number of Customer complaints is above average	7 (2.3%)	19 (6.4%)	46 (15.4%)	42 (14.0%)	185 (61.9%)	4.2742	1.080
Rate of employee performance is good	17 (5.7%)	43 (14.4%)	29 (9.7%)	114 (38.1%)	96 (32.1%)	3.7659	1.206
Handling of customer complaints is very good	35 (11.7%)	57 (19.1%)	36 (12.0%)	93 (31.1%)	78 (26.1%)	3.4080	1.313
Timeliness in handling customer complaints is always observed	26 (8.7%)	54 (18.1%)	41 (13.7%)	104 (34.8%)	74 (24.7%)	3.4883	1.278
Average Mean						3.7743	

VL= Very Low, L=Low, A=Average, H=High, VH=Very High

The question on the customer satisfaction being fair was responded to differently by the respondents. 64(21.4%) were of the view that customer satisfaction was very high, 103(34.4%) noted that it was high, 125(41.8%) said it was average, 4(1.3%) said it was low and 3(1%) noted it was very low with mean of 3.7939 and SD of 0.778. Results on the item on the rate of employee performance was good were: 96(32.1%) of respondents were of views it was very high, 114(38.1%) said it was high, 29(9.7%) noted it was average, 43(14.4%) observed it was low while 17(5.7%) said it was very low. Most of the respondents, 210(70.2%) were of the views that the rate of employee performance was good. The variable on handling of customer complaints being very good had the following results: 171(57.1%) of the respondents agreed that it was high while 92(30.8%) observed that it was low with the mean of 3.4080 and SD of 1.313. Results on the timeliness in handling customer complaints had the following results: 178(59.5%) of the respondents were of the views that it high while, 80(26.8%) of the respondents said it was low with the mean of 3.4883 and SD of 1.278. The average mean of the of employee performance of police service in Bungoma County was 3.7743.

Regression Analysis

The study sought to determine the relationship between stress management skills and employee performance of PS in Bungoma County through a regression model. It was hypothesized that there was no significant relationship between stress management skills and employee performance of police service in Bungoma County. To test the Hypothesis, the study fitted the model $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon$. Table 3 indicates the model summary for the regression between stress management skills and employee performance. An R-squared of 0.120 indicates that up to 12% of the changes in employee performance is explained by stress management skills and the remaining percentage is explained by other factors not considered in the model.



Table 3: Model Summary for Stress Management Skills on Employee Performance

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	0.346 ^a	0.120	0.117	0.55846	0.120	40.449	1	297	0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), stress management skills

a. Dependent Variable: employee performance

Table 4 shows ANOVA results of the regression model between stress management skills and employee performance. The independent variable stress management skills were regressed against the employee performance and the results indicated that the fitted regression model was a good fit and significant ($p < 0.05$).

Table 4: ANOVA between Stress Management Skills and Employee Performance

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	12.615	1	12.615	40.449	0.000 ^b
	Residual	92.627	297	0.312		
	Total	105.242	298			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of employees

b. Predictors: (Constant), Stress management skills

Table 5 shows that the regression coefficients between stress management skills and employee performance. The results were statistically significant ($t = 7.044 < 1.96$; $p < 0.001$). This led to the conclusion that stress management significantly influences performance of the employees.



Table 5: Regression Coefficients between Stress Management Skills and Employee Performance

Coefficients ^a							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for β	
	β	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	2.794	0.157		17.853	0.000	2.486	3.102
stress management skills	0.281	0.044	0.346	6.360	0.000	0.194	0.368

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

The results from the regression model showed that the model could be used to predict the level at which stress management skills influenced employee performance. The regression model between stress management skills and employee performance was $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$

Based on the findings obtained, the derived fitted model equation was:

$$Y = 2.794 + 0.281X_1$$

Since β_1 is significantly different from zero ($\beta_1 = 0.281$, $t = 6.360 < 1.96$; $p < 0.05$) the null was rejected since there is significant relationship between stress management skills and performance of employees. For 1 unit increase in stress management skills, employee performance increases by 0.281 units. These findings are similar to the findings by Ngari *et al.* (2013) who established that stress noteworthy affects performance and service delivery of workers. Stress affects everybody in all regions in this world. There are negative effects of stress to the employees and ultimately on the organizations. Individuals with high levels of stress have low levels of EI and this explains why their productivity is low. Organizations which are to succeed must be able to deal with adverse effects of stress and train their workers on EI (Cox, Griffiths, & Leka, 2015). Mary *et al.* (2013) did a study in the Nairobi security exchange (NSE) and specifically looked at how stress affects the performance of the organizations. A total of 32 NSE-listed companies were included in this study. Stress has a positive impact on corporate efficiency, according to the findings. The following suggestions were made by Mary *et al.* (2013): Since stress is becoming a source of concern, particularly when Kenyans face economic burdens, the CEO must consider how stressors impact their employees. Secondly, there is need to revise the organizational policies, especially those related to health. Auditing of stress levels is vital to determine their levels and their effects on the overall running of the organization.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings from the objective of the study indicated that stress management skills in police service were a significant factor in relation to employee performance. Subsequently, the null hypothesis that there is no significant impact of stress management skills on employee performance was rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis that is, there was significant effect of stress management skills on employee performance. It was therefore concluded that better understanding, close relationships, high socialization and optimism helped employees to be more committed to their



working organization. All the officials and leaders serving in the police service need to understand positivity of having close ties in the workstation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS

In order to attain better performance and tolerance in the service, there is need to incorporate emotional intelligence testing during the recruiting of staff to be qualified as police officers on dimensions such as motivation, empathy and professionalism on stress management skills and guidance and counseling and finally on social skills. Secondly, to avoid any form of improper deployment, it is key to identify educational, professional, and personal skills of police officers that are required for good service. Better placement after training must be identified and clearly done to avoid mix up in duty performance. To avoid clashing of the officers while performing their duties with other personnel in other service there is need to explicitly define well their duties and responsibilities.

Equally, there is need to ensure that the officers are taken for courses related to stress management regulations at work and to ensure that they identify proper courses which fit the officers whom are identified for training, this could be achieved with the help of professionals in related fields including physicians, counselors, therapists, and educators. The researcher has recognized the need for sufficient and prompt recruitment of police officers in order to avoid understaffing, which prevents the seamless delivery of services to citizens and also exposes current officers to exhaustion at work, resulting in a difficult work environment. Furthermore, training programs aimed at fostering motivational, social, and empathic aspects of emotional intelligence in employees must be organized. Supervisors should practice a lot of tolerance to their juniors to ensure proper governing and operation among them. They should spell clearly the policies and regulations to their juniors in order to understand the organizational policies or the service regulations to avoid breaching the service code of conducts.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE SERVING POLICE OFFICERS

To avoid regrets on unwarranted behaviors and actions, the officers should practice tolerance and a lot of restraint when faced with any stress full situation at work. They should as well learn how to handle the problems they have with a lot of decorum and high wisdom. Seek moral counseling and divine intervention when faced with stressful situation in life, either personal or work-related stress. This also involves sounding problems to the concerned authority in good time before the said problem escalates and goes out of hand. The officers should also be willing to attend to courses introduced by the management, this is due to the fact that some of the officers may not be interested in short courses developing their social and physical well-being. Above all due to change in global set up the officers should be flexible in their operations and be quick in adapting to the global changes that may be introduced in their system of operation.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Onura Daniel Odoyo wrote the study concept, collected data and analyzed for the entire project under the guidance of Dr. Laura Mamuli and Dr. Michael Washika as the supervisors. Onura Daniel Odoyo also sought all the necessary permits from relevant authorities required to conduct the study.

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CONFLICT OF INEREST

No potential conflict of interest was recorded by the authors.

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