

# Prevalence Of Burnout Among Law Enforcement Officers: Case Study Of Police Officers In Kenya

Juma Richard Otieno<sup>1</sup>, Abilla Isaiah<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>&<sup>2</sup>*School Of Business And Economics, Department Of Commerce, Murang'a University Of Technology, P.O Box 72-10200, Murang'a, Kenya,*

---

## **Abstract :**

While numerous studies have examined burnout among medical and educational professionals in Kenya and beyond, limited research has focused on the prevalence of burnout among law enforcement officers in the country. This study addresses that gap by investigating the incidence and contributing factors of burnout among police officers stationed at the Matungulu Sub-County Police Divisional Headquarters. Despite significant government investment in the recruitment, training, and retention of police personnel, the Kenya Police Service continues to experience high attrition rates alongside rising crime levels. This research aims to inform policymakers by highlighting burnout as a critical issue in the management of national security. A mixed-methods approach was employed, involving both qualitative and quantitative data collection. Stratified simple random sampling was used to select 155 officers from a total population of 250. Primary data was gathered through questionnaires and key informant interviews, while secondary data was obtained through document analysis from official records. Ethical standards were strictly observed, and informed consent was secured from all participants. The study employed the Maslach Burnout Theory and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model to conceptualize and illustrate the dynamics of burnout syndrome. Statistical analysis considered p-values less than 0.05 at a 95% confidence interval as significant. The findings revealed a high prevalence of burnout among police officers in Matungulu Sub-County, with 95% reporting having experienced burnout in the course of their duties, largely attributed to the demanding nature of police work. Based on these results, the study recommends enhancing training programs, offering regular counseling sessions for both officers and their families, implementing fair and motivating reward and promotion systems, and ensuring transparency in the processes of promotion and transfers within the National Police Service.

**Keywords -** *Burnout, Police Work, National Police Service, Prevalence, Job Satisfaction*

Date of Submission: 04-05-2025

Date of Acceptance: 14-05-2025

---

## **I. UNDERSTANDING THE NATIONAL POLICE SERVICE (NPS)**

The National Police Service (NPS) in Kenya had its humble beginning in the period between 1887-1902, it was funded by the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC), and a businessman Sir William McKinnon who in the interest of his business, found it necessary to provide some form of security for his stores along the coastline of Kenya (Kenya Police, 2004). It was from this origin where the concept of constituting a police service was derived from (CHRI, 2006).

The duties of police officers "Askaris" was mainly protection of business premises of I.B.E.A Company. Their duties were negligible (Kenya police, 2004), but the construction of Kenya Uganda Railways promoted the growth as security provision of railways property and materials and man power was necessary (CHRI, 2006). In 1902, police service existed with offices in Mombasa, Nairobi and Kisumu. The laws in force were Indian Criminal Procedure Code, Indian Evidence Act, and Indian Ordinance (Kenya police, 2004). Up to 1902, Kenya Police was organized along military line and training was heavily borrowed from military and in 1906, the Kenya Police was legally constituted (CHRI, 2006).

In 1918, the Kenya police force began to be organized; training schools were established for African education to reduce illiteracy level. By 1940, there was literate African police officer. In 1920, Kenya East Africa Protectorate was proclaimed a crown colony and its name changed Kenya Colony, (Kenya Police, 2004). In 1926, Criminal Intelligent Unit was formed to collect record and tabulate criminal's data (Moseley and Omwundiwe, 2008).

The special units such as Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Finger Prints Bureau were formed with instructors being drawn from Britain and South Africa. This is the foundation of today's (NPS) (CHRI, 2006). In 1946, the Kenya Police Service was placed under the office of the Attorney General and police officers powers and duties increased. According to Moseley and Omwundiwe (2008), a new deport was opened

in Maseno and in 1948, Police Dog Unit and General Service Unit was introduced and deployed in emergency insecurity prone areas.

Kenya Police Air wing was formed in 1949 to carry out duties of communication, evacuation of sick and wounded police offices. In 1957, Police Force Headquarters (Vigilance House Building) in Nairobi was opened and the force was moved from Attorney General's docket to Ministry of Defense. In 1963, Kenya gained independence from Britain and the Force realized tremendous achievements, including the formation of additional units such as Anti Terrorism Unit (ATU), Anti- Corruption Police Unit (ACPU), Anti-Stock Theft Unit (ASTU), Tourism Police Unit (TPU), Presidential Escort Unit (PEU), and the Motor Vehicle Inspection Unit (MVIU) (CHRI, 2006).

The New constitution of Kenya promulgated in 2010 in article 243-245, and the National Police Service Act 2011 establishes the National Police Service (NPS) comprising of the Kenya Police Service (KPS), the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) and the Administration Police Service (APS) under the leadership of the Inspector General (IG) of Police (GoK, 2011). With its name changed from Kenya Police Force to NPS and moved to the ministry of interior and co ordination affairs. The NPS is mandated by the constitution to ensure that law and order is maintained and the life and property of every Kenyan is protected.

## **II. CHALLENGES FACING THE NATIONAL POLICE SERVICE**

A study conducted by Philip Ransley in 2009, found out that there were serious problems affecting the police in Kenya. These include lack of competences, skills, knowledge, attitudes, shared core values and policing excellence. These were attributed to lack of a comprehensive policy on recruitment, deployment, training, career progression, exit, post exit management, morale, meritocracy and professionalism (Ransley, 2009).

The NPS work is influenced negatively by several challenges such as corruption, discrimination, political interference, lack of transparency and accountability, inadequate employment policies, corruption among others (KNCHR, 2014). Discrimination lowers the right to equality and influence burnout rate in the NPS in all aspects such as promotion transfers, and on job training selection.

From the initial training of officers NPS lacks adequate training facilities for the recruit constables and the few facilities available are dilapidated (Kenya Police, 2014). The regional training centers have remained either closed or operate below capacity, and as a result, police officers are poorly trained.

Transfer of police officers is the prerogative of the Inspector General in consultation with the NPSC. An officer should not be transferred from one area to another unless such an officer has served for at least three years in that particular area or due to exigencies of duty. The IG may at times use his directives to effect transfer from time to time (Kenya Police Strategic Plan, 2014). The provision of the Service Standing Orders (SSO) stipulates that transfers can be done on condition that the IG would like to improve on service delivery by assigning officers with certain skills to a task, or at the request of individual officer due to domestic reasons.

## **III. BURNOUT IN POLICE SERVICE**

Globally, police work is a highly stressful occupation and previous research indicates that burnout among police officers is as a result of interplay of the work environment and the employees coping resources (Maslach, and Leiter, 2006) and police officers in Matungulu Sub County are not an exception. Existing literature indicates that gruesome scenes, unpredictable incidences, making violent arrest, murder, inadequate equipment, and failure of criminal justice are some of the causes of stress and burnout among police officers in Kenya and more specifically in Matungulu Sub County (Ellison, 2004).

A study by Johnson and Donald (2005) found out that police work is one of the professions where high burnout leads to poor health and low job satisfaction. In India, police officers are burdened with work and lack of social amenities (Dhaliwal, 2003) and in South Africa many police officers experience burnout due to lack of support, lack of promotion, and lack of recognition among others (Piennar and Rothmann, 2006). In 2016, Kenya had approximately 70,000 police officers against a population of over 45 million, giving a ratio far below the United Nations recommended ratio of 1 police officer to 450 civilians. According to the KNCHR (2014), out of the 400 police officers who died in line of duty, about 300 were killed by their colleagues as a result of burnout related cases. Furthermore, according to the Kenya police (2016), a total of 148 police officers died in one year due to stress and other related illnesses. Some police officers turned the gun on themselves and shot themselves dead or sustained injuries or killed their colleagues while on or off duty and others also exhibit harsh and aggressive treatment of suspects, victims and members of the public that they are ironically supposed to protect. Many causal factors of burnout in NPS have been identified by different researchers and they range from working environment, work load, poor supervision, inadequate housing accommodation, bureaucracy to poor pay among others (Ransley, 2009).

## **IV. WORK ENVIRONMENT AND BURNOUT**

Police work in United States of America (USA), Western European, South Africa and Kenya inclusive is considered to be more dangerous, full of burnout and stress compared to other professions. This is due to the fact that police work is characterized by high crime rate, violence and execution of police officers on and off duty (Omeja and Githigaro, 2010).

In Kenya the frequent killing of police officers especially in the line of duty such as the Nadome massacre has raised concern about the working environment of police work, a situation Gilmartin (2002) describes as “biological rollercoaster.” The psychological and physiological experience of police work, as this is a major source of burnout when officers see how colleagues die in line of duty. According to Malach-Pine and Keinan (2007), some of the emotionally demanding situations within the work environment such as informing relatives of sudden deaths of their kin, visiting of fatal road accident scenes, witnessing of post mortem operations, wounding and maiming. Whereby once energetic police officers are now confined on wheel chairs for the rest of their lives due to gun wounds, investigating sexual offences against children contributes to high burnout rate among police officers.

Police officers in Kenya are always an obvious target to outlawed groups such as the Mungiki among the Kikuyu, Chingororo among Abagusi, Jeshi la Mzee, Al-shabab, Talibans (Andersen and Plecas, 2002). Whenever there is an attack by any of these groups, police officers are forced to respond no matter the situation and when killed in the process no one raises an alarm. However, when a police officer shoots and kills, it becomes an extra judicial killing which may send the police officer to a court of law, thus raises the level of burnout due to dissatisfaction and exhaustion among police officers (Demerouti and Kantus, 2001).

Organizations today constantly wrestle with revolutionary trends such as accelerating product and technological changes, global competition, deregulation, demographic changes and at the same time, they strive to implement trends towards a service and information society (Kane and Engle, 2000). The general investment in the police by the government has not been adequate with the police constantly in need of new vehicles, modern equipment and technology, good housing conditions among others (Kenya Police, 2014).

Many officers work and live in deplorable conditions and this causes burnout and stress to the officers forcing some to exit the service for better conditions. According to Trevor and Nyberg (2008), the loss of employee is a disruptive event and replacing the employees may be costly, both in recruiting and training. High level of employee turnover impedes the quality, consistency and stability of services that organizations provide to clients and customers and in turn increase customer dissatisfaction (Gershon, 2000).

#### **V. BUREAUCRACY IN THE POLICE SERVICE**

Mc Carty and Tomasino (2009) defined bureaucracy as events that are precipitated by police administration that are bothersome to police officers. According to Esterhuysen and Heineken (2012) police department structure is hierarchical, authoritarian and assertive and is similar to that of the military in America, Europe and Africa. The nature of bureaucracy in the NPS is based on the top-down hierarchical structure. There are demarcated lines of authority where orders originate from senior officers such as the IG to Deputy IG, to Regional Commander (RC), County Police Commander (CPC) Officer Commanding Police Division (OCPD), and Officer Commanding Police Station (OCS) down to officers of other ranks. This command and rank structure is a causative factor of burnout (Esterhuysen and Heineken, 2012).

#### **VI. WORKLOAD IN THE POLICE FORCE**

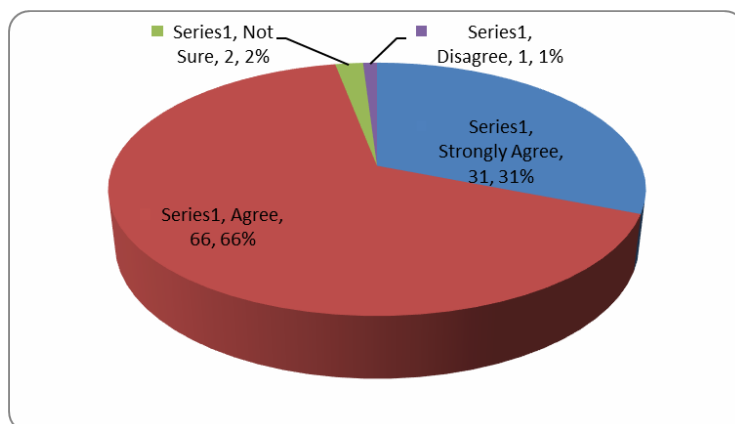
Police officers experience burnout as a result of work over load. Studies conducted on occupational burnout indicate that majority of police officers are under depression due to high demand of their work load. (Maslach- Pines and Keinan, 2007).

A study conducted in Dutch found out that between 65% of the police officers work under strain as a result of work load (Miller, 2007). In South Africa, Botha and Piennier (2006) observes that most of the works performed by police officers are private in nature and does not fit into their job description. As noted earlier the ratio of police officers to the general population places a greater workload on the police and the internationally accepted ratio is not usually achievable in Kenya.

#### **VII. BURNOUT DUE TO UNPREDICTABLE TRANSFERS**

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement that burnout was prevalent among police officers due to unpredictable transfers.

**Figure 1: Burnout due to Unpredictable Transfers**



**Source:** Field Data (2017)

As indicated in Figure 1, 66% agreed, 31% strongly agreed, 2% were not sure while only 1% disagreed with the statement. From the study finding, majority (97%) of the respondents alluded to the fact that unpredictable transfers contributed to burnout.

Even though the policy on police transfers is clear on the duration an officer should serve in any given station before being transferred, it has been realized that many officers are transferred from one station to another without having completed the stipulated three years. Probed further, whether personnel were rotated accordingly, majority 62% of the respondents strongly disagreed that personnel were rotated accordingly, 31% disagreed, 4% were not sure and only 3% agreed. It was realized that other officers have served in one station for more than 26 years.

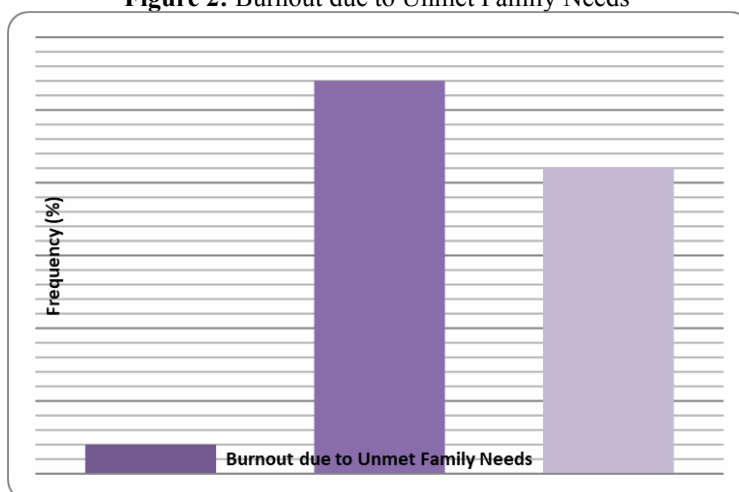
The unpredictable transfers and lack of rotation bring about burnout to both officers transferred frequently and those who are never transferred at all. This was consistent with He et. al. (2002) that bureaucracy in police structure breeds enduring repetitive tasks and red tape for any action taken out of the range of standard operating procedures, conflicting policies and legislations.

The study also showed that personnel were not transferred and managed for various duties within the service accordingly. This is consistent with (Naikuni, 2012) who observed that transfers in police service is rarely done, and even if done, due procedures are not followed resulting in some officers remaining in some work stations for more than stipulated period for the exclusion of others, hence high burnout level.

## **VIII. BURNOUT DUE TO UNMET FAMILY NEEDS**

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement that burnout is frequent among police officer due to unmet family needs. As depicted in Figure 2, 54% agreed, 42% strongly agreed and only 4% disagreed. Majority (96%) of the respondents were in agreement that unmet family needs increases the incidences of burnout in the NPS.

**Figure 2:** Burnout due to Unmet Family Needs



**Source:** Field Data (2017)

Police officers working condition involves working overtime, working in shifts and working distance away from home and family and these often creates an intense discord that can disrupt the obligation s of an officer's family life and (Ornelas and Kleiner, 2003) supports this notion by arguing that work family conflict occurs when work domain and family domain are incompatible with each other and these can lead to a high burnout among police officers. This is further supported by Valeryevna (2013).

The respondents were further asked to indicate their level of agreement as far as their salaries and allowances are concerned and the appropriateness of their housing conditions. On the sufficiency of their salaries and allowances, 67% strongly disagreed that their salaries and allowances are sufficient, 28% disagreed, while only 5% were not sure. Findings from key informants indicated that approaches related to employee's efforts should be returned in a fair and equitable manner as it focuses on cognitive behaviors, when there is inequity in remuneration and employees feel unsatisfied, they will develop cognitive dissonance. Hence, there will be tension varied with the amount of inequity. Inputs comprised of skills, education, and effort, and outcomes consist of compensation, promotion job status and fringe benefits (Adams, 1963).

According to the police records within the division, about 20% of police officers leave the service for better remunerated organization. This is supported by the work of Carrell and Diffrich, (1978) which indicated that when employees found themselves in inequitable situation, they will strive to reduce the inequity by cognitive dissonance or alteration of inputs outcomes or by leaving the organization (Carrell and Diffrich, 1978).

For quite some times, Housing has been a problem in the NPS and 70% of the respondents strongly disagreed that housing conditions in the NPS is appropriate, 29% disagreed and only 1% were not sure on the appropriateness of the housing conditions. In NPS, Junior Police Officers in rank are required to reside within the police lines for quick response to a demanding situation, while Senior police officers from the rank of Senior Superintendents (SP) and above are allowed to rent accommodation outside the police lines but house allowance provision is not sufficient to enable them rent decent housing. Junior police officers are forced to reside in overcrowded quotas. Sharing of rooms amongst single and married officers is very common in police lines. In some police units, police officers reside in dilapidate structures while others reside in iron sheet hurts which are very hot during the day and very cold during the night.

This situation was supported by statistical findings that the NPS with a compliment of over 70,000 police officers had a short fall of 30,000 housing units. However, the budgetary allocation for police housing has been consistently low, not taking to account the rising number of police officers annually. The NPS has not been committed to planning and prioritization of housing projects and there is also problem of corruption associated with procurement of construction services within the NPS (Naikuni, 2012).

## **IX. BURNOUT DUE TO LACK OF SUPPORT FROM COLLEAGUES AND SUPERVISORS**

The respondents were probed of their level of agreement with statement that burnout was prevalent among police officers due to lack of support from colleagues and supervisors. As indicated in Table 1, 54% agreed, 36% strongly agreed, 8% disagreed, while only 2% strongly disagreed. From the study findings, certain job-specific stressors such as difficult clients' problems with no solutions, work overload coupled with risk and death, lack of support from officers higher in rank, poor social support and being side lined in critical decision making have diverse psychological impact on police officers.

**Table 1:** Burnout due to Lack of Support from Colleagues and Supervisors

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	1.9	1.9	1.9
	Disagree	12	7.7	7.7	9.7
	Agree	84	54.2	54.2	63.9
	Strongly Agree	56	36.1	36.1	100.0
	Total	155	100.0	100.0	

**Source:** Field data (2017)

Findings from key informants indicated that whenever there is lack of support from colleagues and supervisors within the organization, then job induced strain and burnout may be transferred from one employee to another.

The respondents were further probed whether there was adequate support from supervisors and senior police officers. Majority of the respondents 59% strongly disagreed, 33% disagreed, 4% were not sure, 3% (4) strongly agreed, while 1% agreed. According to Govender (2008) peer support provides a defensive function which allows police officer to tolerate high levels of anger, hostility and abuse. He argued that peer and supervisors bond within law enforcement agents lead to extreme secrecy and solidarity among police officers. From (SCB, 2003) report, almost 80% of police officers reported that psychosocial strain has increased within the last five years and half of the police officers reported that they rarely or never discuss difficult work situations experienced in their work with their supervisors, senior officers or peer colleagues. It's a work place social isolation in which work mates are not available for each other (Schaufeli and Enzmann, 1998).

## X. BURNOUT DUE TO INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement that burnout was prevalent among police officers due to inadequate equipment. As indicated in Figure 3, 54% agreed, 40% strongly agreed, 5% disagreed, while only 1% was not sure.

**Figure 3:** Burnout due to Inadequate Equipment



Source: Field data (2017)

From the study findings, 94% agreed that inadequate equipment was a source of burnout in the NPS. Job resources are those physical, psychological, social or, organizational aspects of the job that help to achieve workload, reduce job demands or stimulate personal growth, learning and development and are generally the most important predictors of work enjoyment, motivation and work engagement.

Statistical tests showed a Chi-Square value  $\chi^2_{6, 0.05} = 122.945$  of  $P = 0.000$  at 95% confidence interval and Spearman Correlation  $R = 0.474$  (Table 2) indicating a significant positive relationship between burnout and inadequate equipment or job resources.

**Table 2:** Burnout due to Exposure and Inadequate Equipment Cross Tabulation

Burnout due to Exposure to Physical Danger and Possible Death \* Burnout due to Inadequate Equipment  
Crosstabulation

Count		Burnout due to Inadequate Equipment				Total
		Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Burnout due to Exposure to Physical Danger and Possible Death	Disagree	7	0	2	0	9
	Agree	1	2	54	20	77
	Strongly Agree	0	0	27	42	69
Total		8	2	83	62	155

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	122.945 <sup>a</sup>	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	64.690	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	64.441	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 8 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .12.

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error <sup>a</sup>	Approx. T <sup>b</sup>	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal				
Phi	.891			.000
Cramer's V	.630			.000
Contingency Coefficient	.665			.000
Interval by Interval				
Pearson's R	.647	.071	10.492	.000 <sup>c</sup>
Ordinal by Ordinal				
Spearman Correlation	.474	.070	6.667	.000 <sup>c</sup>
N of Valid Cases	155			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on normal approximation.

The majority indicated that high work load, demanding decision making situations, time pressures, work environment, work schedules were significantly related to emotional exhaustion. An attitude of disengagement was thus primarily associated with lack of resources mostly job related equipment. Findings from key informants further indicated that they work with inadequate resources such as fuel to attend to demanding situations thus, affecting their personal resources. This was supported by Makikangas and Kinnunen (2003) which indicated that employees with high levels of personal resource have greater mastery that helps them to effectively deal with demanding situations and prevent them from negative outcomes (exhaustion).

The respondents were further probed to indicate their level of agreement as to the adequate of tools and equipment for police operations. Majority of the respondents 68% strongly disagreed with the statement that tools and equipment are sufficient for police operations, 24% disagreed, and 7% were not sure and only 1% agreed.

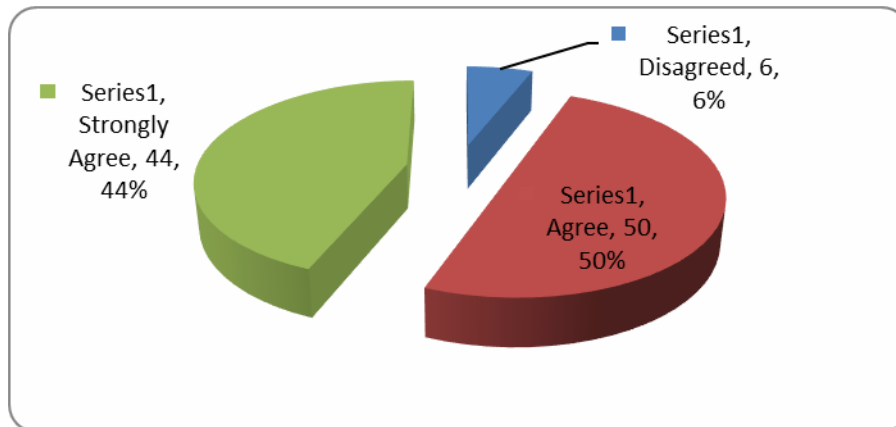
Findings from key informants indicated that police lack appropriate communication equipment, ICT knowledge and skills. Matungulu Police Division further lacked an effective electronic network and communication system which connect Division to all stations, posts and bases. Use of closed circuit television (CCTV) in detecting crime was found to be inadequate. This was supported by Naikuni (2012) which observed that NPS had not strengthened the use of ICT more so on forensic investigation. As result all scientific investigation exhibits collected from dead bodies or at the scene have to be taken to government chemist in Nairobi.

## **XI. BURNOUT DUE TO EXPOSURE TO PHYSICAL DANGER AND POSSIBLE DEATH**

The level of agreement of the respondent was assessment on the statement that burnout was prevalent among police officers due to the exposure to physical danger and imagination of possible killing by the enemy or colleague while on duty. As indicated in Figure 4, 50% agreed with the statement, 44% strongly agreed while only 6% disagreed.

**Figure 4: Burnout due to Physical Danger and Possible Death**





Source: Field data (2017)

Police officers are the obvious target to criminals especially the outlawed groups such as Al-shabaab, (Andersen and Litzenger, 2002). Findings from key informants further indicated that burnout was high among police officers due to danger and trauma associated with police work. Omeja and Githigaro (2010) indicated that police officers stress and burnout is on the increase as a result of physical danger and possible deaths associated with the police occupation. Gevender (2008) supports the notion of high danger experienced by the police as a result of the nature of duties they undertake in the community.

Statistical tests showed a Chi-Square value  $\chi^2_{2, 0.05}=7.573$  of  $P=0.023$  at 95% confidence interval and Spearman Correlation (Table 3) indicating a significant minimal association between experiencing burnout and burnout due to exposure to physical danger and possible death.

**Table 3:** Burnout Experience and Exposure to Danger Cross Tabulation

**Experienced Burnout \* Burnout due to Exposure to Physical Danger and Possible Death Crosstabulation**

Count		Burnout due to Exposure to Physical Danger and Possible Death			Total
		Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Experienced Burnout	Yes	7	72	68	147
	No	2	5	1	8
Total		9	77	69	155

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	122.945 <sup>a</sup>	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	64.690	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	64.441	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 8 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .12.



**Symmetric Measures**

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error <sup>a</sup>	Approx. T <sup>b</sup>	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.221			.023
	Cramer's V	.221			.023
	Contingency Coefficient	.216			.023
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	-.218	.105	-2.759	.007 <sup>c</sup>
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	-.186	.074	-2.337	.021 <sup>c</sup>
N of Valid Cases		155			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on normal approximation.

## XII. BURNOUT DUE TO TRAUMATIZING INCIDENTS WITNESSED

The respondents were probed to indicate their level of agreement with the statement that burnout was prevalent among police officers due to traumatizing incidences experienced such as witnessing post mortem. As indicated in Table 4a, 53% agreed, 39% strongly agreed, 4% strongly disagreed, and 3% disagreed, while 1% was not sure.

Statistical tests showed a Chi-Square value  $\chi^2_{4, 0.05}=21.435$  of  $P=0.000$  at 95% confidence interval and Spearman Correlation (Table 4b) indicating a significant minimal association between experiencing burnout and burnout due to witnessing traumatizing events at work.

**Table 4a:** Burnout due to Traumatizing Incidences Witnessed

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	7	4.5	4.5	4.5
Disagree	5	3.2	3.2	7.7
Not Sure	1	.6	.6	8.4
Agree	82	52.9	52.9	61.3
Strongly Agree	60	38.7	38.7	100.0
Total	155	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data (2017).

**Table 4b:** Experienced Burnout and Traumatizing Events Cross Tabulation

**Experienced Burnout \* Burnout due to Traumatizing Events Crosstabulation**

Count		Burnout due to Traumatizing Events					Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Experienced Burnout	Yes	4	5	1	79	58	147
	No	3	0	0	3	2	8
Total		7	5	1	82	60	155

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.435 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	10.168	4	.038
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.419	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 7 cells (70.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .05.

**Symmetric Measures**

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error <sup>a</sup>	Approx. T <sup>b</sup>	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.372			.000
	Cramer's V	.372			.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.349			.000
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	-.260	.136	-3.332	.001 <sup>c</sup>
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	-.144	.096	-1.806	.073 <sup>c</sup>
N of Valid Cases		155			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on normal approximation.

Police officers are prone to varied degrees of repeated trauma in their line of duty especially when visiting gruesome scenes of fatal road accidents and scenes of suicide and homicides. They are also bond to witnessing postmortem in public and private hospitals as they gather evidence to prosecute the accused persons in court.

The study found out that there were emotional impact of such incidences (92%) of the officers interviewed felt that there is no effective mechanism in place to address the post trauma. About 25% were of the opinion that some of these duties were not under their job description and therefore burn them out for no reason as the new constitution stipulates that moving of dead bodies from the scene lies under the mandate of the corona (Kenya Constitution, 2010).

The result of 92% was higher compared to Miller (2007) in which only 65% of the police officers work under strain as result of work load. Most of the work performed by the police such as carrying dead bodies and witnessing postmortem do not fit into their job description as observed by Piennner (2006).

### **XIII. CONCLUSION**

This paper established that burnout is not a matter of weakness or poor attitude in individual employees, but it is a problem of the social environment in work place caused by “mismatches” between the employee and the nature of the job itself. The Chi- square tests at  $\alpha = 0.05$  level of significance led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and to the conclusion that prevalence of burnout among police officers in the NPS varied with effectiveness of burnout intervention strategies. Majority of officers had a service record of between 25 to 35 years while burnout prevalence rate is high on those who had served the NPS for more than 10 years and had the work experience required for good service delivery. About 75% of the police officers were married and this increased their level of burnout as a result of trying to balance their work and family life. In addition, police officers burnout was linked to several behavioural, attitudinal and interpersonal consequences. Moreover, approximately 95% of police officers indicated that they had experienced burnout due to factors such as: Unpredictable transfers, unmet family needs, lack of support from colleagues and supervisors, inadequate tools and equipments, poor housing conditions, lack of motivation, exposure to physical danger and possible deaths, and traumatizing incidences witnessed by police in the cause of their duties.

### **XIV. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The findings indicate a clear connection between effective burnout intervention strategies and improved service delivery within the National Police Service (NPS). Burnout poses a serious risk not only to the health and well-being of police officers but also to national security—particularly in the current climate of frequent terrorist threats. To mitigate these risks, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Enhance Organizational Support Systems:** The National Police Service should implement comprehensive burnout intervention measures, including improved training programs, regular counseling services, and psychological support for both officers and their families.
2. **Strengthen Supervisory Training:** Police supervisors should undergo specialized re-training focused on recognizing early signs of burnout—particularly during the initial "honeymoon stage"—by closely monitoring the cognitive and behavioral changes in their junior officers. This proactive approach will enable early identification and timely intervention to prevent long-term psychological harm and performance decline.

## References

- [1] Adams, J., (1963). Toward An Understanding Of Inequity, *Journal Of Abnormal And Social Psychology*. 67(5). P 422-436.
- [2] Anderson, G., And Litzenberger, R. (2002). Physical Evidence Of Police Officer Stress Policing: An International Journal Of Police Strategies And Management. 25(2). P 399-420.
- [3] Botha, C., And Pienaar, J. (2006). South African Correctional Official Stress: The Role Of Psychological Stress. *Journal Of Criminal Justice*. 34. P 73-84.
- [4] Carrel, M. And Dittrich, J. (1978). Equity Theory, The Recent Literature, Methodological Considerations And New Directions. *The Academy Of Management Review*. 3(2) P 202-210.
- [5] CHRI (2006). The Police, The People, The Politics: Police Accountability In Kenya. A Joint Report By The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative And The Kenyan Human Rights Commission, [Www.Humanrightinitiative.Org](http://www.humanrightinitiative.org) (Accessed 24/5/2017)
- [6] Demerouti, B., And Kantus, A. (2001). The Convergent Validity Of Two Burnout Measurements In Greek Population; Manuscript Submitted For Publication.
- [7] Ellison, K. (2004). Stress And The Police Officer, New York: Charles C. Thomas, LTD.
- [8] Esterhuysen, A., And Heineken, L. (2012). A Report To The Chief Of The S. Army On The Military Culture Institutional Ethos Of The South Africa Army. Unpublished Paper.
- [9] Gevender, S. (2008). Relationship Between Personality And Coping A Amongst Members Of South Africa Police Service. Unpublished M.A Thesis. University Of Johannesburg
- [10] Gilmartin, M. (2002). Emotional Survival For Law Enforcement: E.S, Press, PMB, 233, 2968.
- [11] Gok, (2010). The Constitution. Nairobi: Government Printer.
- [12] Gok (2011). The National Police Act Nairobi: The Government Printer.
- [13] He, N, Zhao, J. And Archbold, C. (2002). Gender And Police Stress: The Convergent And Divergent Impact Of Work Environment, Work Family Conflict And Stress Coping Mechanisms Of Female And Male Police Officers. *Policing: An Intervention Journal Of Police Strategies And Management*. 25 (4). P 687-708
- [14] Kane, M. And Engle, W. (2000). Working Memory Capacity, Proactive Interference, And
- [15] Divided Attention: Limits On Long-Term Memory Retrieval. *Journal Of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory And Cognition*. 26. P 333-358.
- [16] Kenya Police (2004). Kenya Police Strategic Plan (2004- 2008). Kenya Police
- [17] Kenya Police (2014). The Kenya Police Annual Report (2014). Kenya Police
- [18] Kenya Police (2016). Annual Crime Report (2016). Kenya Police
- [19] Kenya National Commission On Human Rights (2014). Are We Under Siege? The State Of Security In Kenya: An Occasion Report (2010-2014).
- [20] Makikangas, A. And Kinnunan, U. (2003). Psychosocial Work Stress Ors And Well-Being: Self- Esteem And Optimism As Moderators In A One-Year Longitudinal Sample. *Personality And Individual Differences*. 35. P 537-557.
- [21] Maslach, Pine, And Keinan (2000). Burnout In G. Frink (Ed): *Encyclopedia Of Stress* End Ed. (358-362) U.K Elsevier.
- [22] Maslach, C. And Leiter, M. (2006). Early Predictors Of Job Burnout And Engagement: *Journal Of Applied Psychology*. 93 (3). P 498-512.
- [23] Mc Carty, R. And Tomasino (2009). The Coherent Heart: Heart- Brain Interactions Psychological Stress Among Police Officers. Working Paper 2009-27.
- [24] Miller, L. (2007). Police Families, Stresses, Syndromes, And Solutions. *American Journal Of Family Therapy*. 35(1). P 21-40.
- [25] Moseley, T., And Onwundiwe, I. (2008). Kenya Police, *World Police Encyclopaedia*, Routledge Library, [Www.Routled.Ay.Com](http://www.Routled.Ay.Com)
- [26] Naikuni, D.T (2012). Police Reforms Implementation Committee, Nairobi: The Government Printers.
- [27] Omeja, K. And Githigaro, J. (2010). The Peace And Conflict. *Review Journal*.7: Issue ISSN; 1659-3995.
- [28] Ornelas, S. And Kleiner, B. (2003). New Development In Managing Job Related Stress. *Journal Of Equal Opportunities International*, 2(5). P 64-70
- [29] Piennar, S. And Rothman, S. (2006). Occupational Stress In The South African Police Service: *Journal Of Industrial Psychology*: 32(3). P 63-71 Doi: 104102/Saji Pp323.
- [30] Ransley. (2009). Report Of The National Task Force On Police Reforms Nairobi: The Government Printer.
- [31] Schaufeli, W. And Enzmann. (1998). *The Burnout Companion To Study And Research A Critical Analysis*: Taylor And Francis, London.
- [32] Trevor, C. And Nyberg, J. (2008). Keeping Your Headcount When About You Are Losing Theirs: Downsizing, Voluntarily Turnover Rates And The Moderating Role HR Practices. *Academy Of Management Journal*. 51. P 259-276. Doi. 1054651 AMJ. 2008 31767250.
- [33] Valeryevana, P. (2013). Methods Of Measuring Follower Burnout In The Workplace [Http://Ej.Kubagro.Ru/2013/06/Pdf/57.Pdf](http://Ej.Kubagro.Ru/2013/06/Pdf/57.Pdf)