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THE INFLUENCE OF KIDNAPPING TERROR ATTACKS ON EMPLOYEES' WELLBEING IN WAJIR COUNTY

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ABSTRACT
Particularly in areas impacted by political instability, social unrest, or ongoing conflict, the effect of kidnappings and terror acts on employee wellness has grown in importance.Terrorist acts are taking place in many parts of the world and the bombing of government buildings, multinational companies, the kidnapping of passenger airplanes and ships; Diplomatic representations, airports, shopping centers, sometime the attack that attacks are conducted against the subway and train stations, government officials, the kidnapping of diplomats and businessmen, or in different ways, such as the assassination of these people and the confrontation of international community. In response to this wave of crime, the governments have put in place measures which include establishing the anti-terrorism police unit and increasing awareness of the public on the dangers of terrorism. Despite the effort, there are still major milestones to be made in the fight against terrorism. Therefore, the study sought to establish the effect of bombing attacks on employees' wellbeing in Wajir County. The main objective was to establish the effect of bombing attacks on employees' welfare. The study was guided by Rational Choice Theory. The target population for the study was top level management, middle level management and senior employees which consist of 200 employees in the Security Agencies. Stratified random sampling was used to sample individuals from the various groups; the study had a sample size of 60 respondents distributed equally among the three-government department. The study used primary data which was largely quantitative and descriptive in nature and a five-point questionnaire was the research instruments. Descriptive design and inferential analysis was used for data analysis. From the findings, there was a statistically significant relationship between kidnapping attacks and employees' wellbeing in Wajir County, Kenya (P<0.05). Based on the findings, it was recommended that more stringent policies and measures should be directed into reducing the kidnapping attacks in Wajir County and Kenya at large. Future Research gaps were suggested and will act as a reference point to other researchers on similar topics.

KEY WORD: *Kidnapping Attacks, Terrorism, Employee Wellbeing*

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Particularly in areas impacted by political instability, social unrest, or ongoing conflict, the effect of kidnappings and terror acts on employee wellness has grown in importance. The frequency of these occurrences over the last few years has presented serious difficulties for governments, businesses, and organizations. Terrorist attacks occur all over the world, including bombings of government buildings, multinational corporations, kidnappings of passenger planes and ships, attacks on diplomatic representations, airports, shopping malls, and occasionally attacks on government officials, subway and train stations, diplomats, and businessmen. These attacks can also take various forms, including assassinations and confrontations with the international community (Santos & Tran (2023)

According to a UN Security Council study on terror cases worldwide, the Western world has experienced multiple significant terrorist strikes. Terrorists affiliated with Al-Qaeda struck hard in New York, London, and Madrid. The most well-known is the 9/11 attack, which took place in September 2001 and was carried out by the terrorist organization Al-Qaida in New York City and Washington, DC. Two planes crashed into the north and south towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, causing the building to collapse and destroying surrounding structures. Approximately 3,000 people were killed in the Yazidi communities bombing, which was a deadly car bomb attack. Suicide bombers detonated in the towns of Yazidi and Jazeera in August 2007, resulting in an attack that left an estimated 796 people dead and 1562 injured. In July 2006, a sequence of seven bomb explosions occurred on the suburban railway in Mumbai, resulting in 209 fatalities and 714 injuries. This was another significant incident in Asia.

Although a growing body of research has found that terrorism has an influence on the economy, little is known about how it affects the wellbeing of individuals. For example, Clark et al. (2020) investigated how the Boston Marathon bombing in 2013 affected people's well-being. The results showed that negative emotions increased considerably while happiness fell precipitously. Even if the effects only last for a week, they could have negative health and financial repercussions. Additionally, when terrorism occurs at a place of employment, where people spend a significant

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amount of their lives, survivors are severely affected. A person's habits, sense of purpose, and access to social and financial resources can all be adversely affected by workplace violence. At its core, the workplace is a social setting. Following the 2011 Oslo bombing, people who were exposed to terror were more likely to experience depression, PTSD, and take more sick days (Clark et al., 2020).

In East Africa, the attacks took place in Somalia, a lawless nation, Tanzania, and Uganda, which are neighbors. A number of people were killed and injured in a dual attack on the US embassy in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998. Over 70 people were killed and numerous others were injured in bombings that occurred in Kampala in 2010 at a location where the World Cup final was being screened. The Kenyan-run AMISOM army base at El-ADDE, Somalia, was attacked by Al Shabaab terrorists in January 2016, resulting in the deaths of over 100 soldiers, the destruction of the whole base, and the captivity of additional people.

Kenya has also been affected by this crime; prior to the 1970s, when the nation was struck by the first terrorist attack that targeted the Norfolk hotel, this occurrence was unusual. The US Embassy in Nairobi's core business center was the target of yet another significant attack on August 7, 1998. This resulted in hundreds of fatalities, hundreds of injuries, and extensive property damage. This crime is so heinous that it causes a great number of casualties. The attacks that have occurred in Nairobi and other regions of Kenya have all targeted places where people congregate, such as bus stops, places of worship, nightclubs, and even public transportation vehicles. These terrorist assaults have also affected government officials, especially security personnel. Following the abduction of two charity workers in the Dadaab refugee camps and three tourists in Lamu on October 16, 2011, Kenya dispatched troops under the name "Operation Linda Nchi" to southern Somalia in order to combat Al Shabaab, a fundamentalist organization with ties to Al Qaeda. Under the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), the Kenyan government stepped in and cooperated with the Ethiopian and Somali armies. Five people were killed and twenty others were injured in two attacks in 2011 by the terrorist organization Al Shabaab, one in a pub and the second near Nairobi's Machakos bus terminal (KNCHR, 2014).

The following instances of attacks that have happened and are documented show how equally impacted Wajir County, the study region, and the surrounding area are by the scourge of terrorism. Nearly 150 students who may become the nation's workers were killed and numerous more were injured when gunmen invaded Garissa University College in April 2015. The terrorists stated that they were retaliating against non-Muslims occupying Muslim territory and claimed to be from the insurgent organization Al-Shabaab. On 22 November 2014, gunmen attacked a bus traveling from Mandera to Nairobi, killing 28 persons, mostly teachers and government workers heading to Nairobi for the December holidays. On 2 December 2014 – Al-Shabaab militants attacked and killed 36 quarry workers, many of whom were non-Muslims, near the town of Mandera (Kenya Police Service annual crime report 2015).

The Role of International and Local Policy

National and international policies also play a significant role in influencing employee wellbeing in the context of kidnappings and terror attacks. Carter and Watson (2021) argue that governments and international organizations must prioritize the safety and wellbeing of workers in regions prone to such incidents, creating legal frameworks and protections for employees facing these risks. These policies should include insurance coverage for victims of kidnappings, as well as compensation for psychological trauma.

In regions where the threat of terrorism is constant, the implementation of public safety measures and the collaboration between businesses and government agencies can provide additional support for employee wellbeing. Governments can also collaborate with corporations to create crisis management protocols that ensure the timely and effective protection of employees during terror attacks or kidnappings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research has highlighted that prolonged exposure to terror attacks or the threat of kidnappings can lead to a chronic state of hypervigilance. Bonghan et al. (2022) found that employees in regions affected by frequent terror incidents often report a persistent sense of insecurity, resulting in significant decreases in job satisfaction and productivity. The study also pointed out that the continuous psychological toll can manifest in burnout, as employees struggle to manage their fear while maintaining professional obligations. According to a study by Cohen et al. (2021), employees in high-risk regions are particularly vulnerable to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and other anxiety-related disorders following terror attacks or kidnappings. These conditions can impair cognitive functioning, decision-making, and emotional regulation, further diminishing overall wellbeing.

The impact of terrorism and abduction on physical health is often intertwined with the psychological effects. Stress and anxiety, triggered by fear of violence, can manifest in somatic symptoms, including headaches, gastrointestinal issues, sleep disturbances, and cardiovascular problems. Perkins and Vitiello (2020) conducted a study on expatriate workers in the Middle East and found that prolonged exposure to kidnappings and terror threats significantly elevated stress-induced health conditions. Employees reported higher rates of absenteeism due to illnesses linked to stress, with those involved in or exposed to violent incidents suffering from long-term physical ailments. Moreover, the stress response itself can contribute to a decrease in immune function, increasing susceptibility to illness. Jones et al. (2021) noted that employees in volatile regions who had experienced

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terror-related events showed elevated levels of cortisol, a stress hormone that can suppress immune responses, leading to frequent health problems and a diminished ability to recover from illnesses.

Beyond individual health concerns, kidnappings and terror attacks can have a significant impact on organizational dynamics. Following traumatic events, organizations often face challenges related to employee morale, trust, and cohesion. The fear generated by such events can lead to a breakdown in social support networks within the workplace, exacerbating feelings of isolation and vulnerability among employees. According to Santos and Tran (2023), companies operating in high-risk environments often report decreased employee engagement and increased turnover, as workers seek safer opportunities in less volatile regions.

From an organizational perspective, companies may need to implement costly and time-consuming security protocols and provide additional support services, such as counseling and mental health interventions. Ghosh et al. (2022) found that organizations that invest in comprehensive employee support systems, such as mental health care, flexible work arrangements, and crisis management plans, are more likely to retain employees and maintain productivity post-trauma. These measures not only promote psychological recovery but also foster a sense of organizational loyalty and stability, even in the aftermath of traumatic events.

Studies on the impact of terror activities on organizational employees' wellbeing in Wajir county, Kenya is very important as many lives were lost (death of Government workers and civilians), destructions of properties and more and more employees are quitting their jobs after terrorist attacks while others fear to seek employment in these areas. This drew a major security concern in the country and changed the perspective from which the government viewed terrorism. This suggests that institutions and organizations need to develop proactive anti-terrorism programs to address post-traumatic stress disorder, and prevention or evacuation strategies for employees in terrorism, conflict or post-conflict zones (Soomro et al.,2023). In response to this wave of crime, the Kenyan government has put in place measures which include establishing the anti-terrorism police unit and increasing awareness of the public on the dangers of terrorism. There are still major milestones to be made in the fight against terrorism though. These non-state actors have become sophisticated by the day hence calling for the change in policies and general approach to this kind of crime. Therefore, the study sought to establish the effect of bombing attacks on employees' wellbeing in Wajir County, Kenya.

According to Soomro et al., (2023) the current workplace environment of various organizations has positive association with satisfaction of employees which leads to employees' commitment to their work and hence better job performance. Many organizations find themselves managing employees in countries characterized by substantial security risks. One such risk is terrorism that directly and indirectly affects organizations, institutions and work places .Direct effects include the destruction of organizational environment and infrastructure, death or murder and/or the kidnapping of employees, or their families through terrorism attack in their work stations, while indirect effects include the loss of colleagues and work mates in an institution, interruptions in production and disturbances in supply of goods and services that affect livelihood.

THEORY

Psychological Stress Theory

The Psychological Stress Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) provides a key framework for understanding the impact of traumatic events like kidnappings and terror attacks on employee wellbeing. This theory posits that stress results from an individual's perceived imbalance between the demands placed on them and their ability to cope with those demands. It emphasizes the importance of cognitive appraisal (how individuals evaluate threats) and coping mechanisms (how they respond to those threats) in determining the outcomes of stress.

In the context of kidnappings and terror attacks, employees may experience acute stress or chronic stress depending on their exposure and proximity to these events. For employees directly involved or witnessing such traumatic incidents, the stress response can be overwhelming, leading to psychological distress, PTSD, and other anxiety disorders. For those indirectly affecteds uch as coworkers or individuals in high-risk areas, the constant threat of violence or abduction can trigger a sustained state of fear and hypervigilance, eroding mental health over time.

The theory is highly relevant to understanding employee wellbeing in this context because it helps explain how individuals interpret and respond to the threat of terrorism and kidnappings. Those who perceive these events as unmanageable or unpredictable are more likely to experience heightened stress, leading to negative outcomes like decreased job satisfaction, burnout, and lower productivity. Moreover, the theory suggests that the effectiveness of organizational responses (e.g., crisis management support, mental health services, or relocation options) can mediate these stress responses, potentially reducing the negative impact on employee wellbeing.

Thus, applying Psychological Stress Theory helps explain why and how employees' wellbeing is compromised in the face of kidnappings and terror attacks and underscores the need for targeted interventions to manage stress in high-risk environments.

Objective

To assess the effect of kidnappings attacks on employees' wellbeing in Wajir County.

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Null Hypothesis

$H0_1$ There is no statistically significant relationship between kidnappings attacks on employees' wellbeing in Wajir County.

DATA AND METHODS

Descriptive research is preferred because it is effective in depicting the relationship between the dependent and independent variables by gathering data and using visual aids for data presentation (Kothari, 2012).

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

According to Kothari (2015) a population consists of all items in any field of inquiry. The target population for the study was top level management, middle level management and senior employees which consist of 200 employees in the Security Agencies (provincial administration and NPS), Health and Education departments' and are seen as most appropriate to give out required information for the purpose of this study.

According to Connaway and Powell (2010) a sample is usually drawn because it is less costly and less time consuming to survey than the population, or it may be impossible to survey the entire population. Sample of 30% respondent of each category will be considered to provide a general view. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the ideal subjects for the study, the technique is appropriate as only those who are deemed to have information required for the study will be selected. Stratified random sampling was used to sample individuals from the various groups; the study had a sample size of 60 respondents distributed equally among the three-government department under study

Data Collection Tools and Procedure

The study used primary data which was largely quantitative and descriptive in nature. The study also employed focus group discussion guide as its data collection tools. McCusker *et al*., (2010), points out that, questionnaires are appropriate for studies since they collect information that is not directly observable as they inquire about feelings, motivations, attitudes, accomplishments as well as experiences of individuals. McCusker *et al*. (2010) observe that questionnaires have the added advantage of being less costly and using less time as instruments of data collection. The questionnaires were semi-structured in nature, with both open and close-ended questions. While the close-ended questions will guide the respondents' answers within the choices given, the open-ended ones were useful in obtaining a more detailed response essentially in cases where the researcher has no pre-determined options.

The researcher administered the questions to the relevant respondents in an effort to achieve the necessary information. The questionnaires were administered through a drop and pick later method because of the busy schedule of the target respondents. Pre-testing enables the researcher to modify and remove ambiguous items on instruments (Kothari & Garg, 2014). The developed research instruments were pre-tested in Garissa County as it has similar features with the area of study due to numerous terror attacks that happened in this area.

Response Rate

The study had targeted to collect data from a sample of 60 respondent distributed equally among the three-government department but the researcher managed to collect data from 44 respondents which displays a response rate of 74% of the sample which the study considered the response rate good.

Descriptive Analysis

Kidnapping Attacks variable that was assessed by five statements which were exposed through descriptive investigation and outcomes indicated in Table 1.

Table:1 Descriptive Analysis for Kidnapping Attacks Measures

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
I feel safe and secure working in Wajir even with kidnappings attacks	44	3.851	.8820
I have experienced kidnappings attacks threat to my own life while working in Wajir County.	44	3.727	.8324
During kidnappings attacks, working environment is affected in Wajir County.	44	4.526	.5456
During kidnappings attacks, the employees' families are displaced resulting to their poor wellbeing	44	4.531	.9382
Kidnappings attacks have instilled a lot of fear to employees' hence affecting their wellbeing	44	3.912	.9486

Source: Research Data, 2018

Mainstream of the respondents were of the opinion that during kidnappings attacks, the employees' families are displaced resulting to their poor wellbeing in that it had the highest mean of 4.531. The statement that the kidnappings attacks makes working environment is seriously affected in Wajir County with a mean of 4.526. The lowest mean score was recorded by the statement that I have experienced kidnappings attacks threat to my own life while working in Wajir County with a mean of 3.807 followed by I feel safe and secure working in Wajir even with kidnappings attacks with a mean of 3.851. Kidnappings attacks have instilled

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a lot of fear to employees' hence affecting their wellbeing had a mean of 3.912.

Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis was done to establish the association between the independent and dependent variable.

Correlation between Kidnapping Attacks and Employees' Wellbeing

The association between kidnapping attacks and employees' wellbeing was established using Pearson product moment correlation and results indicated on the table.

Table 2: Correlation between Kidnapping Attacks and Employees' Wellbeing

	Statements	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1.	I feel safe and secure working in Wajir even with kidnappings attacks	1				
2.	I have experienced kidnappings attacks threat to my own life while working in Wajir County.	.626**	1			
3.	During kidnappings attacks, working environment is affected in Wajir County.	.547*	.672*	1		
4.	During kidnappings attacks, the employees' families are displaced resulting to their poor wellbeing	.362*	.561*	.367*	1	
5.	Kidnappings attacks have instilled a lot of fear to employees' hence affecting their wellbeing	.368**	.631*	.649*	.364*	1

Source; Research Data, 2018

The association between the statements that during kidnappings attacks, working environment is affected in Wajir County and I have experienced kidnappings attacks threat to my own life while working in Wajir County had the highest, positive and statistically significant (r = .672, p < .01). This was followed by the correlation between kidnappings attacks have instilled a lot of fear to employees' hence affecting their wellbeing and during kidnappings attacks, working environment is affected in Wajir County (r = .649, p< .05) which was significant at .01 significant level. The lowest correlation was reported between the statements that during kidnappings attacks, the employees' families are displaced resulting to their poor wellbeing and I have experienced kidnappings attacks threat to my own life while working in Wajir County (r = .362, p> .01) which was followed by the correlation between kidnappings attacks have instilled a lot of fear to employees' hence affecting their wellbeing and I have experienced kidnappings attacks threat to my own life while working in Wajir County (r = .368, p> .01). All the measures of kidnapping attacks had positive and significant relationship among themselves.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was done to establish the relationship between Kidnappings Attacks and employees Wellbeing

Table 1 Regresion Results of Kidnappings Attacks on Employees Wellbeing

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.446[a]	.199	.207	.31082

a. Predictors: (Constant), Kidnappings attacks

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.201	1	.201	1.314	.031[b]
	Residual	.612	4	.153		
	Total	.813	5			

a. Dependent Variable: Kidnappings attacks

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a. Predictors: (Constant), Employees' wellbeing

Coefficients [a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.668	2.174		1.687	.188
	Kidnappings attacks	.570	.616	.446	.925	.031

a. Dependent Variable: Employees' wellbeing

Source; Research Data, 2018

The regression results of this study show that kidnapping attacks had overall a significant effect on employees' wellbeing in Wajir County (β = .446, p-value = .031). The study outcome also shows that 19.9 percent of employees' wellbeing in Wajir County can be explained by kidnappings attacks (R square = .199). From the above regression results, $\beta \neq 0$ and p-value < .05, hence the study therefore concludes that kidnapping attacks had overall a significant effect on employees' wellbeing in Wajir County. The study results goes hand in hand with those of Kahan, (2016) who noted that terrorism affects people's daily lives no matter if they are directly affected or not. Terrorism prone area is not viable for investment thus loss or reduction of basic commodities, scarcity of goods and services in an area makes it experience food insecurity (as measured in US this refers to the social and economic problem of luck of food due to resources and other constraints. Food insecurity also means experience of discomfort to chronic food shortage to severe and life threatening lack of food (Global Sustainability Institute GSI). Food insecurity implies: uncertainty about future food availability and access; insufficiency in the amount and kind of food required for a healthy lifestyle, this leads to rise in price hence making life expensive to manage and this affects livelihood. The basic commodities especially food stuffs that are daily consumed and not available in a particular area will be forced to get from other areas thus it will have cost implication making cost of living in terrorism prone areas high. Some closely linked consequences of uncertainty, insufficiency and inaccessibility are assumed to be part of the experience of food insecurity.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion and Summary of the Study Findings

Summary of the Study Findings

The regression results of this study show that kidnapping attacks had overall a significant effect on employees' wellbeing in Wajir County. The association between the statements that during kidnappings attacks, working environment is affected in Wajir County and I have experienced kidnappings attacks threat to my own life while working in Wajir County had the highest, positive and statistically significant. This means that majority of the respondents felt that kidnappings attacks had an effect on the working environment hence affecting the employees' wellbeing in Wajir County. The study outcome also shows that employees' wellbeing in Wajir County can be explained by kidnappings attacks.

Conclusions

Founded on the fact that kidnapping attacks had overall a significant effect on employees' wellbeing in Wajir County, the study drew the conclusion that county government of Wajir should make more efforts in minimizing kidnapping attacks. The study outcome also shows that employees' wellbeing in Wajir County can be explained by kidnappings attacks. The study findings agree with those of Kahan, 2016 and Waxman, 2011 also notes that terrorism affects people's daily lives no matter if they are directly affected or not. Terrorism prone area is not viable for investment thus loss or reduction of basic commodities, scarcity of goods and services in an area makes it experience food insecurity (as measured in US this refers to the social and economic problem of luck of food due to resources and other constraints (Obayelu *et al.* 2015). Food insecurity also means experience of discomfort to chronic food shortage to severe and life threatening lack of food (Global Sustainability Institute GSI, 2011). Food insecurity implies: uncertainty about future food availability and access; insufficiency in the amount and kind of food required for a healthy lifestyle, this leads to rise in price hence making life expensive to manage and this affects livelihood. The basic commodities especially food stuffs that are daily consumed and not available in a particular area will be forced to get from other areas thus it will have cost implication making cost of living in terrorism prone areas high. Some closely linked consequences of uncertainty, insufficiency and inaccessibility are assumed to be part of the experience of food insecurity.

Recommendations

The study results showed that kidnappings attacks affect the employee wellbeing in Wajir County hence the study makes the recommendation that the County government should put more efforts in reducing the kidnappings attacks because they affect the employee wellbeing in Wajir County.

Suggestion for further research

The study suggests that a further study on other Counties which are affected by terrorism activities since this study concentrated mainly on Wajir County alone.

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