

**VICARIOUS TRAUMA AND THE PERFORMANCE OF ANTI-CRIME POLICE  
OFFICERS IN KAMKUNJI DIVISION IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY,  
KENYA**

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**DECLARATION**

I, DonathaRigha, declare that this Research Paper is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references and that this work has not been submitted before for any other degree at any University.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The brunt of vicarious trauma on performance has attracted much attention worldwide. The police service world over is faced with growing numbers of officers who suffer vicarious trauma while on duty. There has been an increase of informed cases of police personnel absconding duty. Performance at work is wanting as indicated by the number of cases recorded in the Occurrence Book and going uninvestigated. This study sought the relationship of vicarious trauma and performance of anti-crime police officers in Kamkunji Division, in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study is important in that in any organization, productivity, efficiency and effectiveness is determined by optimal performance at work. This cannot be achieved when the employees are traumatized. The population for the study were the anti-crime police officers in Kamkunji division in Nairobi City County. The target population was 140 anti-crime police officers from the various police stations working in Kamkunji division. The population sample size consisted of 4 officers in charge police stations and 4 officers in charge of anti-crime sections purposively selected, 8 corporals and 42 police constables selected through simple random. The sample size totaled 58 officers. The research instruments used was a Likert scale questionnaire and an in-depth key informant interview guide was prepared and used for interviews for the purposive respondents. A pilot study for the research was undertaken at Industrial area Police station in Makadara division, in Nairobi County to assess the validity and reliability of the research tools. The primary data gathered was computed by the usage of the Mean Average to derive descriptive statistics. The data was presented in frequency distribution tables and percentages. The findings of the research will go a long way in aiding not only the police department on the ways of handling officers suffering from vicarious trauma but also managers of other institutions as well. Recommendations of dealing with vicarious trauma and areas of further studies based on the findings have also been made.

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## **ACRONYMS/ ABBREVIATIONS**

OVC - Office of Victims of Crime

PTSD - Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

SAP - South African Police

SPSS - Statistical Package for Social Sciences

STS - Secondary Traumatic Stress

STSD - Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder

VT - Vicarious Trauma

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Vicarious trauma is a global phenomenon which impacts caregivers or those directly included in managing cases of traumatized persons (Barbara Philidia 2005). However, significant trauma exposure is experienced by other professional workers who interact with trauma survivors on a regular basis; such as the anti-crime police officers who routinely hear stories of torture and also offer emergency services such as rescue missions. Working with trauma survivors is therefore challenging as it frequently places the professional at risk for vicarious trauma (NetCE, 2014); and this could negatively affect their work performance.

One of the early definitions of vicarious traumatization is by McCann & Pearlman (2010), who described the phenomenon as a chronic condition that causes the alteration of a worker's cognitive schemas or beliefs, expectations, and assumptions; specifically, the way one sees himself/herself or others, and the world around him/her. This definition explains that vicarious trauma sufferers present a peculiar processing of the mind in the way that makes them see themselves or others, and their environment in a different way. As a result, the professional (a police officer, in this case study) will exhibit a sudden change of their past personalities and begin to show symptoms of excessive fear, unwarranted anger reactions, extreme cautiousness, or slowness in decision-making, among other features that evidence a grave change in the subject's cognition that could affect their work (McCann & Pearlman, 1990). This argument brings out the behavior of transference and countertransference elements that manifests with continued

empathization when dealing with trauma cases. According to NetCE (2014), transference refers to the process when the client unconsciously assigns trauma related roles to their helper. For instance, a trauma victim may relate to an anti-crime police officer as if it is them that were the perpetrators of the trauma. This may make them act in a way that may mirror their behavior during the trauma incidence. The fear demonstrated may draw empathy from the officer thereby affecting them emotionally, and could interfere with their work performance or any other police duty; mainly through absenteeism, absconding, or even lack of concentration and interest, hence affecting their effectiveness and performance in crime investigations.

It is evident that anti-crime police officers are normally the first individuals to a place of crime and this warrants them as the first responders who, as crisis employees, will cushion the distressing stresses from severe responses of those who have been aided (Figley, 2013). The author argues that, this has put the officers in danger of going through vicarious trauma; which is also denoted to as empathy fatigue, tributary victimization, tributary survivor stress, police stress, and police trauma syndrome. On the other hand, Chantelle (2008), contents that it is not easy to realize how often anti-crime police become exposed to traumatic stress incidents. This is further observed with the ensuing increase of violent crimes, like in the case of Kamkunji division police headquarters, where police officers regularly turn out to be victims of vicarious trauma by getting engaged with an upsurge cases of trauma related incidences and trauma victims themselves. Notably, however, although the possible effects of trauma on police officers is well documented, there is little reflection on how this could affect their performance and especially on the anti-crime officers.

McCormick (2011), asserts that police officers and other professionals that deal with traumatized people, experience vicarious trauma since they are endlessly exposed to people's traumatic experiences by being witnesses and listening to them. Equally stated, hearing these stories may be overwhelming, leading them to experience vicarious trauma in the same way as experienced by the trauma survivors in their care. In addition, police officers, for instance, work with survivors of domestic abuse, survivors of child violence, and survivors of torture who also might have experienced community abuse leading to trauma associated with criminal activities such as robbery. Further, the police are always the first external persons to arrive at a crime scene, but on the other hand, the effects of witnessing repeated cases of excessive suffering, or brutal murders, have been seriously downplayed in the police profession. Therefore, in support of this view, there exists little to no conversation to sensitize people on the gravity of unresolved vicarious trauma or its impact in the normal police functioning, hence necessitating the need to further explore the frequency and effects of vicarious trauma among the anti-crime police officers.

The few studies conducted on vicarious trauma largely focus on assisting professions that constitute counsellors, social workers, crisis workers, and psychologists but seldom touch or concentrate on the police community. This research aims to bridge this knowledge void by identifying prevalence of vicarious trauma manifestation and effects of vicarious trauma on performance with specific reference to the police section (anti-crime branch) in Kamkunji Sub-County, Nairobi. The experiences of vicarious trauma on police officers could be unique and different from other professions, hence the need to conduct a study on the same. Police officer's trauma has largely been ignored, inadequately studied, and misrepresented (Brown, 2003).

According to Catherell (2005) several researches have documented vicarious traumatization though some studies refer to the disorder in other terms, including compassion fatigue, empathic strain, or secondary victimization. Therefore, tactics that will help a more open debate on stressors, and the inclination on the part of the police officers to admit the impacts of the stressors, will most probably result to a service of mentally improved police personnel who remain willing to work efficiently in their workplace and in their home being (Aaron, 2000).

Equally stated, vicarious trauma is one of the many secondary, occupational, physical, and emotional costs that police officers are likely to experience in the course of investigating and trying to pursue justice for victims of crime-associated abuse or harm. On the other hand, vicarious trauma is unique in that it is a theory-based construct that researchers have established and has more counterproductive effects than any other type of stress acquired in the line of work. Still, referring to Shah (2008) and Shah (2010), they asserted that most criminal investigation departments tend to treat vicarious trauma as part of other work-related stresses that officers are expected to cope with adequately without requiring professional intervention. As such, accordingly, the prevalence of vicarious trauma and its effects among affected officers remains under wraps in most crime branch agencies; necessitating the needs for further research on the same. More significantly how vicarious trauma affects the performance of the anti-crime officers remain undocumented.

Different researchers have offered a wide range of symptomatic presentations of vicarious trauma. However, there are several symptoms that most psychoanalysts seem to agree on and they include, but are not limited to, sleep disorders, high anxiety levels,

nausea, heightened cautiousness, emotional numbness, unprecedented feelings of anger and fear, and an up surged necessity for societal care (Baird & Jenkins, 2003; Jirek, 2015; Levin *et al.*, 2011). Putting the indicated symptoms in closer perspective reveals a distorted appreciation of reality, reduced cognitive competency, and poor self-control. Therefore, officers who suffer from vicarious trauma may have problems with evaluating the cases brought before them due to deteriorated cognitive competency. Affected officers may fail to process the gravity or urgency of a situation, and fail to make important decisions that are useful in conducting successful criminal inquiries leading to loss of vital evidence and increase in dead-end investigations. Moreover, the failure to see situations for what they are leads to increased strain in the work relationships that affected officers have; thus, the branch where they work may experience unnecessary disagreements, and poor cooperation by some team members. In the end, the department is likely to have a decreased speed of cases processing due to avoidable office feuds caused by officers who have a distorted perception of the reality.

Even more crucial is time that could be wasted due to slow decision-making, particularly by senior criminal investigation personnel, which could be due to high anxiety, heightened cautiousness, or emotional numbness. The three symptoms can make the affected officer avoid making a decision in a case, either because they foresee a risk to their life or just to avoid witnessing the traumatic experiences again. Lastly, officers suffering vicarious trauma symptoms may make more sick leave requests than officers that do not present with the condition. Research shows that vicarious trauma can incapacitate the sufferer even physically as in the symptoms listed above, thereby, necessitating breaks from work that increase in frequency as vicarious trauma symptoms

advance (Levin & Greisberg, 2003; Peters, 2007). Eventually, the work assigned to their desk may move slowly, and delay consecutive processes, which translates to delayed or denied justice.

From a global perspective, in regard to prevalence of vicarious traumatization among law enforcement, 39-81 percent of assisting specialists tend to go through higher rates of tributary trauma across various sectors. In addition to this, prevalence researches indicate levels of signs amongst the first responders as a lot higher than 10 percent. Figley (2013), defines secondary traumatic stress as "...the ordinary subsequent manners and reactions as a result from knowing about a traumatizing incident gone through by another... The stress ensuing from aiding or needing to aid a traumatized or grieving individual."

Surprisingly, few researches have been done on the influence of vicarious trauma on officers from the anti-crime branch unit. Studies that have been conducted have mainly focused on secondary traumatic stress disorder (STSD), empathy fatigue, and exhaustion syndrome and were specific to caretakers, caregivers, and health workers. For instance, Mbatha (2004), conducted a study of secondary traumatization among caretakers in Kakuma Refugee Camp, in Kenya. Kokony (2004), conducted a study on compassion fatigue and burnout syndrome; specific to nurses, doctors, and other medical workers. Kariuki, et.al. (2016), did research on vicarious trauma, however, the research was based on healthcare trainees from the Kenya Medical Training College (KMTC). Despite the many efforts being made to study vicarious trauma among professionals in the country, special attention should be drawn towards research and studying vicarious trauma on anti-crime police officers; due to its influence in their work performance.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Anti-Crime branch personnel working in Kamkunji division are vulnerable to vicarious trauma because their occupation is associated with helping people who have encountered traumatic events as a result of crime or other life-threatening events, hence, increasing the chances of vicarious trauma manifestation among the officers. This constant exposure has the potential of affecting the behavior, attitude and health of police officers that could negatively affect their work performance. However, few studies have examined vicarious trauma on the police officers, especially, in the anti-crime branch unit.

Vicarious trauma has disabled many anti-crime police officers in crime investigations branch in many ways. For instance, the police officers share the traumatic experiences with the victims of crime; and this affects them emotionally and interferes with their work in investigations. This manifestation eventually leads to poor performance through absenteeism, absconding, or even lack of concentration and interest, hence affecting their effectiveness in crime investigations.

Recent studies conducted in Kenya on vicarious trauma have consistently focused on the groups that are health care givers, but with limited reflection on how the services feed into national security. For instance, Mbatha (2004), focused on the secondary traumatization among caretakers in Kakuma Refugee Camp, in Kenya. A study by Kokony (2004), focused on compassion fatigue and burnout syndrome; specific to nurses, doctors, and other medical workers. Whereas, Kariuki, et.al. (2016), reported on vicarious trauma, however, the research was based on healthcare trainees from the Kenya Medical Training College (KMTC). However, these scholars have not taken cognizance of the influence of vicarious trauma and the performance of the anti-crime police officers in

Kenya. Consequently, the problem that gives the motivation for this research is that, even though vicarious trauma is a reality in some careers that handle disaster and emergencies, there is limited empirical information on how this influences the performance of the anti-crime police officers. This study, therefore, sought to examine vicarious trauma and the performance of the anti-crime police officers within Kamkunji division, Nairobi County.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to examine vicarious trauma and the performance of the anti-crime police officers within Kamkunji division, Nairobi County.

### **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

The major objective of this research was to study the influence of vicarious trauma and the performance of police officers in Kamkunji division in Nairobi city county, Kenya.

The specific objectives were to:

- i. To investigate the prevalence of vicarious trauma manifestation among police officers serving in the anti-crime branch in Kamkunji division, Nairobi County.
- ii. To determine the effects of vicarious trauma on the performance of police officers serving in the anti-crime branch in Kamkunji division, Nairobi County.
- iii. To assess the prevention and intervention strategies against vicarious trauma employed by police officers serving in the anti-crime branch to cope with VT in Kamkunji division, Nairobi County

## **1.5 Research questions**

- i. What is the prevalence of vicarious trauma manifestation among police officers serving in the anti-crime branch in Kamkunji division, Nairobi County?
- ii. What are the effects of vicarious trauma on the performance of police officers serving in the anti-crime branch in Kamkunji division, Nairobi County?
- iii. Which are the current prevention and intervention strategies against vicarious trauma employed by police officers serving in the anti-crime branch to cope with VT in Kamkunji division, Nairobi County?

## **1.6 Justification and Significance of the study**

This research is important because of its direct intervention to resolve vicarious trauma effects and prevalence in the police service. Without direct intervention vicarious trauma can be highly prevalent, as witnessed, and this can adversely impact the productivity and efficiency of the police officers of the anti-crime branch while on duty. Further, this study is significant because it will show that vicarious trauma can cause poor organizational health and staff turnover and, if addressed, will benefit the police officers and the police department as a whole. By virtue of being the custodian of security in the country, police officers play a vital role in crime investigation as prescribed in the Nation Police Service Act; and any impediment like vicarious trauma would directly affect the effectiveness and quality of service, if not addressed.

The study is important because it will benefit the law enforcements agencies from the added results and findings in this study on prevalence and effects of vicarious trauma on police personnel. The police officers will receive more benefits from the added

knowledge on VT and, therefore, equip them with the necessary skills to deal with it. Additionally, the conclusions and findings of this research will benefit other training institutions by enabling them develop programs that will address VT. Furthermore, it will guide for the upcoming advancement of intercession agendas that impart police personnel with intellectual compassion and the significance of social understanding.

The study will also provide data that will enable the government to formulate policies that address issues of vicarious trauma and develop treatment strategies for the same. Other scholars might also utilize this research as a springboard for future research in the field of health care for workers in an organizational structure.

### **1.7 Scope and Limitations of the study**

The research will cover the nexus of vicarious trauma on police performance by interviewing anti-crime branch personnel working in Kamkunji divisional headquarters. The study will also cover the Officers Commanding Police Stations (OCS's), who are expected to have exceptional knowledge of the extent, prevalence, and effects of VT in their jurisdictions. The study will seek to establish the prevalence VT to the officers and examine the effects it has on carrying out their investigation of crime, which is the core duty of anti-crime branch personnel.

Vicarious trauma is a fairly new phenomenon to the police service and this study is expected to face challenges in data collection due to availability of processed information. The study will further face challenges during interviews while attempting to explain the health challenges facing officers in the anti-crime branch. Because some of the research questions will be related to policy, crime, and security related matters, respondents and/ or participants may not be freely willing to give information for fear of

reprisal from authority for insubordination or because of the sensitivity of the subject matter.

This will be addressed by the preparation of a consent form that will be properly applied through the right channels; giving details of the research questions, the protection of identity of participants, the free willingness to pull out from the research at any time, and any indemnity or liability, as well as material or financial implications that come with the participation in the study.

### **1.8 Assumptions of the Study**

The study assumes that:

- i. Anti-crime Police officers in Kamkunji division, Nairobi County are affected by vicarious trauma.
- ii. Vicarious trauma affects the performance of duties of anti-crime police officers in Kamkunji division Nairobi County.
- iii. The participants will be truthful in giving the responses.
- iv. The respondents affected by VT at their work will be the only one's filling questionnaires because they feel the research will be relevant and useful.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter offers details of works reviewed in relation to the prevalence and effects of vicarious trauma on police performance. The literature is studied according to the themes of the research; for instance, the prevalence of vicarious trauma manifestation among police officers; effects of VT on the performance of anti-crime police officers, and the prevention and intervention strategies of VT on anti-crime police officers. The chapter will contain a summation of the works review and the knowledge gaps identified. This chapter also covers the theoretical and conceptual framework of the research.

#### **2.2 The Prevalence of Vicarious Trauma Manifestation Among Police Officers**

According to the National Centre for Victims of Crime (NCVC, 2015), an NGO sponsored by the Office of Victims of Crime in the US, the frequency of Vicarious Traumatization amongst the first rescuers/responders across categories: 39-81% assisting professionals, have experienced some increased levels of secondary trauma/vicarious traumatization. In addition, the NCVC (2015) affirms that among 29 global researches of PTSD, first responders (search & rescue teams, police, firefighters and ambulance personnel) had a frequency level of 10%; in comparison to 4.4% among the generally developed country populations. However, Conrad & Keller-Guenther (2006) disagrees, and asserts that prevalence researches show the levels of signs, as against full disorder, of post-traumatic stress among first responders to be much higher than 10%. The findings from both studies by NCVC and Conrad-Guenther confirm the prevalence of VT and

PSTD, however, the studies were generalized and not specific to anti-crime police officers.

Sledjeski, Speisman and Dierker (2008), agreed that more than half of the US grownups have experience a certain acute stressor at one point of their lives. And Kaufmann, Rutkow, Spira, & Moijtabai (2012), confirms this by asserting that the number becomes a lot more for professional groups like the police and firefighter's personnel. On the other hand, Patterson (2001) stated that, police officer's experiences, on an average, exceedingly three traumatic incidents after every single six months of working. This confirms that, the prevalence of VT is widespread because police experience exact traumatic incidents would comprise armed conflict, in addition to depressing and sad incidences such as handling dead bodies, abusive violence, and providing assistance to victims of severe traffic accidents.

The authors above have demonstrated the prevalence of stressors in the occupational groups including the police officers. However, they have generalized the health condition to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. This study is unique herein because it specifically investigates the prevalence of VT among the police officers because they are the first to respond to a crime or accident scene. The above authors have generalized the stressors but this study will be specific to VT and its prevalence to the anti-crime police service.

To understand the prevalence of VT towards anti-crime police officers one also has to look at the causes of the indirect traumatic stressors. As previously noted, vicarious and secondary trauma are caused by the indirect exposure to or knowledge of another person's traumatic experience (Siegfried, 2008; Bride, 2007). In light of the above circumstances, it would be clear to say that individuals or persons in the helping

professions are mostly susceptible to experiencing vicarious trauma and secondary traumatic stress disorder (STSD). From a general point of view, the nature of occupation and the usage of empathy as a tool in working with people is an important risk factor for developing secondary traumatic stress or vicarious trauma. Frigley (2013), confirms this by asserting that empathy looks like to be the main passage for transmission of trauma from primary to secondary sources. The author argues that the end result is that, professionals who transmit and experience empathy by opening up themselves to a victim's trauma and distress, thereby, acquiring greater risks of experiencing trauma on a secondary or indirect basis.

Ideally, when looking at the literature written by the authors on the sources and causes of vicarious trauma and stress, one will confirm that prevalence of the health condition in the police officer ranks. However, the authors have fallen short of discussing remedial measures and coping mechanisms that can counter the spread of the health disorder. Further, the authors have not discussed the kind of environment that vicarious trauma thrives on. The prevalence of VT highly depends on the environment the police officers are working in. Most developed countries have facilities that can handle stress disorders to a certain level; unlike developing countries like Kenya, where such facilities are non-existent. The authors did not address the causes and sources of VT from the perspective of the environment the police officers live and thrive in. For instance, the prevalence of VT on anti-crime police performance in Kenya is most likely going to vary from the prevalence of VT on police performance in the UK or the US.

### **2.3 The Effects of Vicarious Trauma on the Performance of Police Officers**

VT, as already noted by various current researchers, could result into emotional, physical, and cognitive effects that can potentially disrupt a professional (Adams & Frigley, 2010; Kjeleberg et.al, 2013; Williams, Helms, & Clemens, 2012). In regard to the symptoms of VT, Palm, Polusny & Follet (2004), explains that it brings about intrusive imagery and disturbing thoughts, hyper arousal, emotional numbing and avoidance, and somatization that includes nausea, sleeplessness and headaches. Dunkley & Whelan (2006), have argued that some of the effects or natural by-products of VT, while re-experiencing the client's suffering, include anxiety, sadness, and feelings of anger. In respect to this, White (2006), has further reiterated that experiencing VT may result in reduced work performance and productivity, low morale, increased absenteeism; some of or all of which would negatively impact on the quality of care that individuals and organizations provide to the people they serve. This also relates to the experiences of VT on police officers while on active duty. The symptoms and effects of VT, as explained by the researchers generalize on the professionals in relation with their clients; however, the interest of this study will uniquely research on the behavior and effects of VT on specifically anti-crime police offers.

Turpin and Sabin-Farrell (2003), summarizes their study on Vicarious Trauma and its effects for health care employees, which they divided into four components; for instance, cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and physical responses. The authors affirmed that all the above responses are reactions that are usual to listening on traumatic material and could be more short term than long-term consequences. The authors (Turpin & Sabin-Farrell, 2003), reiterated that additional researches have explicitly examined effects on

occupational functioning and interpersonal relationship. They further argued that, statements that are most often agreed with in VT are related to the effects of personal relations and being overcome by work. However, the authors admit that there is necessity for additional study to evaluate the probable influences on these ranges of operations. The indication for VT in the above study is specific to trauma workers and may be ambiguous and inconsistent in nature. There is the need to study the effects of VT specific to anti-crime police officers so as to assess the level of impact it has on the performance of the anti-crime officers while on duty.

In research done by the Centre for Violence Prevention and Recovery (2013), found that the effects of VT are emotional, physical, behavioral, cognitive, spiritual, and relational. On the professional side, the researchers found that work performance will decrease in both quality and quantity of work. They also found that there would be avoiding tasks, low incentives, or working extremely hard. There could be an obsession with detail and setting up perfectionist standards. And finally, performance could be affected due to difficulty in attention, as well as, forgetfulness. This observation is supported by Frigley (2013), who further reiterates that morale, relational, and behavioral factors will have effects on the performance of any professional experiencing VT. To concur, however, this study intends look into what effects do VT bring to police officers that would affect the performance of their work while on duty. Here again, the studies reviewed discussed the effects of VT on the aspect of personal trauma (as an individual) as against profession trauma (as a professional). The interest in this study is based on anti-crime police officers who are professional in their field of work and the effects of VT on their performance.

## **2.4 The Prevention and Intervention Strategies Against Vicarious Trauma Employed by Police Officers**

Berchiet (2013), suggested that formal structures need to be put in place for interventions and prevention during times of stress. In support of this, Boss (2006), identified the goal of prevention to be a decrease to risk factors, strengthening of protective factors, and the building of support connections. Further, Canfield (2003), contemplated a three-phase deterrence prototype for trauma staffs; for instance, steadying for stability and balance; adjustment to needs to be done to integrate; and, certainly adjusting to trauma by self-care. Gensheimer & Parker (2012), however argued that maintaining and increasing resilience is key to prevention. On the other hand, Carson & Carson (2011), asserted that to ensure supportive, respectful, and effective supervision in VT, there should be strategies for addressing it, together with relevant policies. To support the coping mechanisms for VT, Newell & MacNeil (2010), asserted the importance of raising employees' awareness of professional and personal self-care strategies that would address VT. In support also, Carson & Carson (2011), also argued that employees should be encouraged to practice self-care on both on and off work. In addition, Bell et.al. (2003), further proposed that mental health services should be included in health benefits. On the other hand, however, Meichenbaum (2007), recommended that the assessment of the negative effects of VT in the organization and suggested implementation strategies that would reduce the impact. And, White (2003), confirms this view by having interventions reviewed aimed at reducing the negative effects of VT among the current employees and the new ones. The discussions on prevention and adaptation have targeted mainstream

organizations; and their intervention strategies may not conform to the strategies expected in the disciplined services, especially the anti-crime police service.

In a study by Tuttle and Papazoglou (2018), the researchers recommended several evidences and practical based strategies that professionals can employ to develop an effective care for police officers who agonize from incapacitating effects of police work linked trauma or stress. However, the study was based on clinical and training recommendations based on trust and rapport. The interventions included familiarity with the police service values, and the exceptional nature of policing duties; information about the intricacies of police officer's tension and trauma; police ethical damage, loss, and empathy exhaustion; partnership with peer-support programs, inclusion of officers' family in treatment planning; and, establishing a sense of equality; among other interventions.

Further, according to Arnez et al. (2013), prior interventions targeting police stress were based on the premise that offered officers techniques that reduced the stressfulness of critical incidents and reduce critical incidences. According to the authors, this would enhance the perception of predictability and control, which will eventually improve performance and health. The researchers further reiterated significant clinically relevant improvements as strategic interventions; such as, enhanced problem-based coping mechanism, reduced psychological distress, and improved physical health; for instance, less exhaustion, less sleep problems, and reduced digestive stress. As a stress reduction intervention, McCraty et al. (2012), further supported the notion by asserting that reducing psych-physiological activities – (cardiovascular and respiratory) during critical incidences would improve the performance and health for police officers on duty.

There is the relevance of the above discussions to the study due to the references made to police officers; however, the literature is biased towards clinical intervention strategies as against the more conventional strategic interventions that include internal and external environments; such as, employee empowerment and work environment, management and supervision; as well as, training and professional growth. In support to this study, Dalton and Bell (2003), in their article on organizational prevention of VT, argued that organizational components, like self-care, organizational culture, supervision, workload, education, group support, and the working setting; can control or avert VT from staff.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

This research was led by two theories: Constructivist Self-Development Theory (CSDT) and FOA'S fear network theory. The two are taken as appropriate theoretical frameworks for analyzing and interpreting the vicarious trauma phenomena and the performance of the anti-crime police officers, not only in Kenya but in the world.

### **2.5.1. Constructivist Self-Development Theory (CSDT)**

Constructivist Self-Development Theory is a theoretical model that is associated with Saakvitne and Pearlman (1996). The scholars have described the concept of vicarious trauma as a theoretical model of psychological adjustment to acute trauma. They argue that professionals who are cumulatively exposed to traumatic events and better understand CSDT, are in a better position to easily handle current traumatic events because of their early experiences; which will in effect, not affect their performance at work places. The authors further argue that, when professionals are exposed to events that do not fit within their current perceptions of reality, unreasonable or unclear beliefs; protect the professional and its meaning from the harm caused by the trauma; this in

effect does also protect the professional together with his performance in the workplace. However, for the police officers, individual officers who have worked in the crime branch section for a longer period than others in the same section are likely to have developed trauma coping mechanism due to their being adapted to the emotional turmoil as a result of managing trauma clients; and this will in effect, positively affect their performance during crime investigations. On the other hand, those who have recently joined the branch would experience more emotional effect to trauma because they have not developed adaptation to severe trauma; and in effect negatively affect their performance during crime prevention. The longer police officers stay in the branch section and handle more trauma cases the more they adapt to severe trauma.

Therefore, police officers who understand the concept of CSDT and adopt psychologically to severe trauma, like VT, will not be negatively affected during their performance in crime investigation. On the other hand, however, police officers who do not understand the concept of CSDT and have psychologically adopted severe trauma, like VT, will definitely be negatively affected; and this will consequently result to diminished performance of the said police personnel. Based on the concept and themes of this study, the Constructivist Self-Development Theory will help understand the level of prevalence and effects of Vicarious Trauma especially to those police officers who have not fully adapted psychologically to severe trauma. The theory will also ascertain the coping mechanisms of officers who adapted well to the various trauma they come across during their daily duties in crime investigations. But it fails short in explaining the current strategies employed to prevent Vicarious Trauma. And therefore, the need to apply the second theory of FOA's fear network.

### **2.5.2. Foa's Fear Network**

This is the theory articulated by Foa, Cahill and Boscarino (2005) which consolidates data about mental, behavioral and physical responses to an activity. Data brings these stimuli and reply components together after individuals have either gone through a disturbing incident or have been witnesses to another individual going through an incident. The awareness of danger or death to someone's life can result to a helplessness feeling (Foa, Cahill & Boscarino, 2005). Amongst the various types of activities that may activate PTSD are observing torture or are tortured, shootings, being in a traffic accident, being raped, anguishing because of a natural or man-made disaster or being in a combat. Oldman, Riba and Tasman (1993) asserted that, the instigation of the trauma linked fear web is operated through some prompt stimuli for instance, reminders of the ordeal or the 're-experiencing' bunch, including the remembrance of the occurrence in the nature of emotional reactivity flashbacks and nightmares where the individual is recapped on the events. This results in data to go in on a cognizant consciousness (the disturbing signs of trauma disorders).

The second group of indicators include, evasion of whatever that is probable to recap the individual of the trauma, such as trying to force the incident away, evasion of thinking about the incident, or evading whatever that could be a prompt of the incident or that is comparable to the incident. As per Foa et al (2005), a significant set of signs are identified as the "emotional numbing symptoms", referred to as disengagement from others, loss of curiosity in once favorite events, incapacity to have the experience of the variety of feelings one previously had, and a sensation of emotional isolation, particularly from partners or children. The last cluster of signs is categorized as hyper stimulation

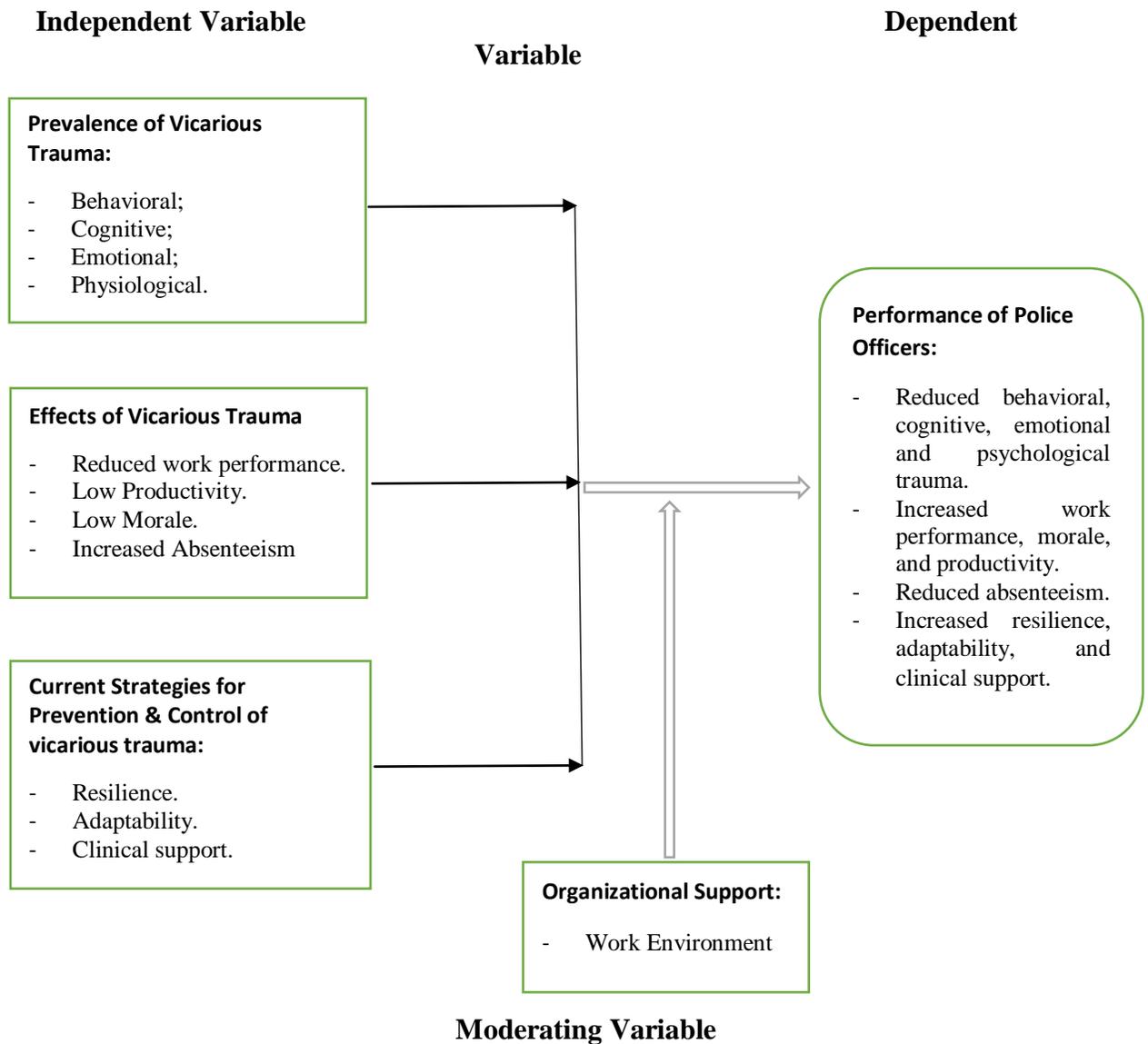
signs: sleep disorder, heightened vigilance, frighten replies, overstated frighten replies, irritability, and eruptions of anger. Vicarious trauma is one of the utmost serious and elongated of the person answers to trauma. Oldman, Riba and Tasman (1993) states that, a successful determination of trauma can happen only when the data in the fear system is combined with prevailing memory formations.

The FOA's fear network conforms with the model that those police officers who have witnessed traumatic events or someone else's, are bound to experience behavioral, cognitive, and psychological reactions that activate the trauma related fear factors; such as in memory recollection and dreams. This will affect their performance in crime investigations. However, if the information of the events lodged in the fear system is combined with the prevailing memory formations, the trauma affecting the said officers would be resolved and their performance increased in crime investigation. The FOA's theory will also be based on the current strategies employed to prevent Vicarious Trauma. By understanding data about behavioral, cognitive and physiological reactions to activities that may affect police officers, positive measures can be used to address these causes of trauma. This can also be effectively address from the research questions on current strategies employed by the National Police Service.

## **2.6 Conceptual Framework**

The review of the interrelated concepts in the study uses a systemic framework to explore the direct and indirect influences of vicarious trauma on the performance of the crime branch police officers. The independent variables will compose of the prevalence of VT, the effects of VT, and current strategies employed to cope and prevent. The moderating variable, which is a gap to be bridged constitutes the organizational support on VT for the

police officers, and the dependent variable will constitute the performance of the police office while in line of duty.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

The independent variables in the research were the Prevalence of Vicarious Trauma, Effects of Vicarious Trauma, and Current Strategies for Prevention & Control of vicarious trauma. The dependent variables in the study were: reduced behavioral, cognitive, emotional and psychological trauma, increased work performance, morale, and productivity, reduced absenteeism and increased resilience, adaptability, and clinical

support. The association of the independent variables and the dependent variable were assessed in the existence of the intervening variables.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1.Introduction**

This chapter highlights the study methodology that was utilized to accomplish the purposes of this study. It comprises the study design, target population, sampling techniques, data collection techniques, validity and reliability, data analysis methods and the likely results.

#### **3.2.Research Design**

The research design was in the form of descriptive survey research design because the study on vicarious trauma is a distinct theme but it has not been entirely tested to the anti-crime police officers' setting. Through the descriptions, an accurate and accountable profile of the specific group of officers in association to vicarious trauma was provided.

Survey research design aided the researcher to characterize information and features of the phenomenon being studied and answered the questions of who, what, where, when and how (Creswell, 2012).

#### **3.3.Site of the study**

The study was conducted in Kamkunjidivision police headquarters which is located 1-degree south and 52 degrees east of the latitude and longitude respectively. Located in Nairobi County, Kamkunji division police headquarters is approximately 12 square kilometers. Kamkunji area has a population of approximately 1.7 million people and is mostly occupied by middle class residents who usually venture into business. The

division police headquarters covers Buruburu, ShauriMoyo, Jogoo and Dandora police stations.

The site for study was chosen due to its location near the central business district of Nairobi, Kenya. The division is prone to high crime levels due to the many social and business activities that takes place; and cases of vicarious trauma are expected to be exceptionally high. Due to the high crime rates in the division and the likelihood of high levels of vicarious trauma, the researcher deemed it fit to choose the site for data collection.

### **3.4.Targeted population**

The target population for this research were the police officers deployed at the anti-crime branch section in Kamkunjidivisiondivision which has four police stations namely, Buruburu, Shaurimoyo, Jogoo and Dandora. The total targeted population was 140. The anti-crime branch personnel were selected because their duty is to carry out investigation and it entails listening to traumatic cases like murder, robbery with violence, sexual and gender-based offences, child abuse and other life-threatening incidences. The officer in Charge of Station (OCS) was also selected from each of the four police stations.

**Table 1: Target Population**

<b>Target population</b>	<b>Number of Officers working in crime branch/ section</b>	<b>Constables</b>	<b>Corporals</b>	<b>Inspectors (in charge crime branch and OCS)</b>
Buruburu	36	29	5	2
Shaurimoyo	36	30	4	2

Jogoo	34	27	5	2
Dandora	34	25	7	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>8</b>

### **3.5.Sampling technique and Sample size**

A sample is a reduced cluster or sub-butck attained from the available population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). The sample size of the research will include a representative sample of the police in the anti-crime branch and 30% of the available population will be adequate for the sample size. At least 30% of the entire population is illustrative (Borg & Gall, 2003). The population and sample size of the police will be selected as shown in the table 3.2. The targeted population of the Corporals in each police station will be subjected to 30% to represent the sample size in each stratum. The sample size here will be 8 officers.

Purposive sampling was applied to the police inspectors; selecting two in each of the stations; one being officer in charge anti-crime section and officer in charge police station (OCS). The sample size was 8 for the four police stations.

Purposive sampling was also used to single out the Officer Commanding Police Station (OCS) and officer in charge anti-crime branch/section which are normally headed by an inspector of police. The selection was specific due to the position held by these senior officers within each of the police stations in Kamkunjidivision. In addition, these officers heading the station do have a commanding overview of the study's interest and were able to give a clear description of the questions the researcher want answers to.

### **Sample Size (Targeting the Constables Only)**

- 30% of 36 in Buruburu = 10.5
- 30% of 36 in Shaurimoyo = 10.5
- 30% of 34 in Jogoo = 10.2
- 30% of 34 in Dandora = 10.2

Sample size: 42 Constables

**Sample Size (Targeting the Corporals only)**

- 30% of 5 in Buruburu = 1.5
- 30% of 4 in Shaurimoyo = 1.2
- 30% of 5 in Jogoo. = 1.5
- 30% of 34 in Dandora = 2.1

Sample size: 8 Corporals

Total Sample size: 42 (Constables) + 8 (corporals) + 8 (inspectors)

**Total Sample Size = 58 (see table 2)**

**Table 2: Sample Size**

Target population	Number of Officers	Sample Size (Constables)	Sample Size (Corporals)	Sample Size (Inspectors OCS)	Total Sample Size
Buruburu	36	11	2	2	15
Shaurimoyo	36	11	2	2	15
Jogoo	34	10	2	2	14
Dandora	34	10	2	2	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>58</b>

### **3.6.Data Collection**

The study used a Likert scale and a standard questionnaire to facilitate the collection of quantitative data to be used in statistical analysis. Orodho (2003) describes a questionnaire as a tool utilized to collect facts, which permits a measurement for or against a certain viewpoint. The questionnaires for this study was divided into two segments; where section A consisted of questions relating to demographic data, while the other sections consisted of questions addressing the other variables. The questionnaires were designed in a way as to give the respondents options to or not to disclose their names. The respondents were requested to avail themselves at an agreed venue and the questionnaires were administered to them to fill part A about bio data which was collected; and then the researcher used the questions in the other parts to guide in the process of discussion with the respondents.

The data was also collected using the key interview guide which provided qualitative responses about the participants' views on the issues under study. The key informant interviews were prepared using the themes of the study; for instance, the research questions. The key interviews targeted senior officers, in particular, the in charge anti-crime section and the Officer in charge Police station (OCS). This method of data collection was qualitative in nature as against the questionnaires which were quantitative in nature.

### **3.7.Validity and Reliability**

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) stated that, validity is the level to which outcomes gotten from the examination of facts in fact epitomize the subject under study. A valid tool must precisely measure what it is intended to measure. After the research tools are

administered to the nominated target group, the obtained information should be a factual likeness of the study variables. And the types of validity that was relevant to this research study included construct validity, as well as, content validity.

In regard to content validity, it measured the degree to which the test items actually represent the normal universal trait or property being measured. In this regard, the researcher formulated a draft standard questionnaire that was presented to experts in the vicarious trauma sector and to the supervisors of this project to review, improve, and approve the content sought. Bobbie (2003), argues that expert advice is vital in regard to identifying necessary questions, eliminating unnecessary questions, and ensuring that questions and the responses permits comparison to other existing data.

In regard to construct validity, the scholar ensured that the questions in the standard questionnaire were well constructed in such a constructive manner to ensure clarity to the respondents and to avoid vagueness. Construct was applied to measure construct validity as it brought out the meaningfulness of the semi-structured questionnaire when in actual and practical application (Drost, 2011).

According to Orodho (2005), the reliability of a study tool concerns the level by which the tool produces similar results over a number of repeated trials. Testing the reliability of instruments assists in checking consistency and this can be achieved if repeated measurements provide consistent results of the same instrument. This study applied the split half method to pre-test the reliability of the semi-structured questionnaire by subjecting the items to 10% respondents of the study population. The standard questionnaire to be used to collect the data was split into half where the odd and even numbers were separated. Testing the reliability of the semi-structured questionnaire

helped to check the instrument for internal consistency. Reliability was said to have been achieved as it gave consistent results with repeated measurements of the same object with the same instrument. A reliability correlation from the two sets of scores that are even set and the odd score was then done.

### **3.8.Procedures for Data Collection**

The researcher, with the help of two assistants, administered the questionnaires to the selected participants. The participants were informed a week before the conduct of the survey. The key informant interviews were conducted personally by the researcher. The interviews were contacted by phone and email about the interview and consent requested. The questions in the interview guide were also sent to the interviewees before the date of interview to acquaint them with contents of the questions. Consent was also requested, together with details about the participation, purpose of the research, and confidentiality of the participants and contents of the research; which was purely for academic work.

### **3.9.Pilot Study**

A pilot study was conducted in Makadara division, Nairobi County where the standard questionnaires were pretested to at least 10% sample size of this study of respondents in a police station; for instance, Industrial area police station, which has almost similar characteristics as police stations in Kamukunji division police headquarters. According to Bryman and Bell (2007), the worth of research in the determination of the study is done by pilot testing. Pilot testing was undertaken on 5 potential respondents that was gotten from 10% of sample size of 58. This is supported by Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), who indicated that the 10% of the sample size should be pretested and the chosen sample should be like the real sample which the researcher will use in the study but the issues in

the real sample must not be used in the pilot testing. The 5 respondents who participated in the pilot study did not take part of the sample size of 58 respondents involved in the main study so as to eliminate bias. This also assisted in removing ambiguity in the research instruments.

### **3.10. Data Analysis**

The data collected was checked for accuracy, and the Likert scale questionnaires were completely discussed before the data was coded. The study adopted descriptive statistics for presentation of data. The primary data collected were computed using the Mean and Average. The quantitative data can be analyzed by the use of mean, standard deviation, and ranges of scores (Creswell, 2014). The data were presented in frequency distribution tables and percentages.

The qualitative data collected from the key interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis and quotes. This involved the categorization of answers generated, into outstanding themes and reported in narrative forms. The Likert scale was used to gauge the level of impact to the questions raised in the questionnaires. The levels were 1 to 5, for instance, from 'Strongly agreed' to 'Do not know'. The narrative forms were also coded, or broken down into manageable categories on a variety of levels; for instance, words, senses, phrase, sentence, or theme. The non-parametric data, which were qualitative, were analyzed descriptively.

### **3.11. Ethical Considerations**

To conduct the study, the researcher first sought permission from relevant institutions including Kenyatta University, NACOSTI and Police Headquarters. Consent was also

obtained from the participants before being interviewed. An authorization letter to conduct was obtained and presented to convince the subjects that the study was an academic work and will not be used for anything else. The researcher reassured the respondents of confidentiality of the information given. Also the researcher invoked confidentiality for cases whereby participants with likely emotions were referred to professionals for help needed.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1.Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to examine the prevalence and effects of vicarious trauma on police and its influence on performance within the crime branch personnel in Kamkunji Police Division, Nairobi County; Kenya. This chapter reports on the data collected, the presentation of the results of the research conducted, and the analysis done by the researcher.

The chapter is organized alongside the study objectives which were:

- to investigate the perceived prevalence of VT manifestation among police officers serving in the anti-crime branch in Kamkunji Division police headquarters;
- to determine the effects of VT on the performance of police officers serving in the anti-crime branch in Kamkunji Division Nairobi County
- to assess the current prevention and intervention strategies employed by police officers serving in the anti-crime branch to cope with VT in Kamkunji Division Nairobi County.

The presentation of the findings will begin with the response rate and demographic features before discussing the findings of the major objectives.

#### **4.2.Response Rate**

It will be recalled that the main tool applied for data collection in this study was a standard questionnaire with a sample size of 58 officers in different categories of DCI in

Nairobi. As such, fifty-eight (58) standard questionnaires were administered. The response rate is shown as below in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Response Rate**

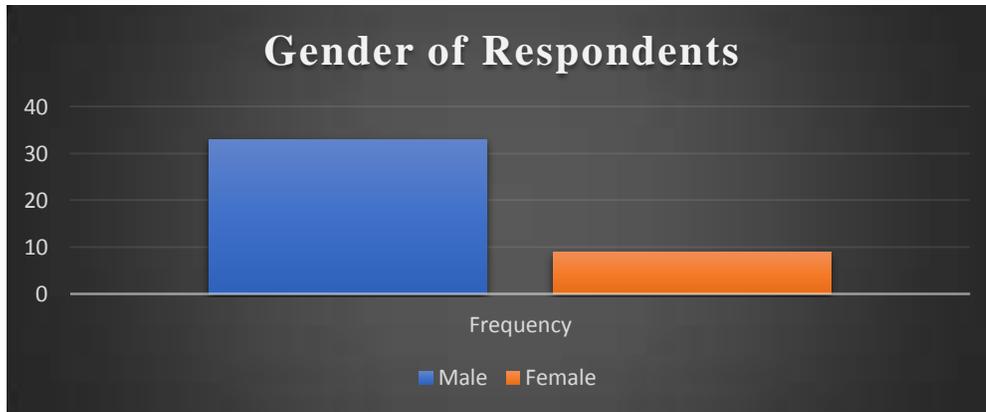
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Male	33	78.6	
Female	9	21.4	
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>	

**Source: Author 2021**

The return rate was 72.4%; for instance,  $42/58 \times 100$ ; being well over the recommended adequacy of standard of responses. The sample size was 58, however, 42 participants actually took part in the research. The relatively low return is due to the nature of police work, and especially those in the crime branch who are usually busy carrying out investigations and responding to criminal activities all over the county. Further, the nature of the study's enquiries on trauma made some respondents uncomfortable because they addressed personal issues that some thought were private, hence are not issues to be discussed in the open. This is in line with the culture of police cynicism which creates distrust among the officers (Hickman 2008), it is therefore not surprising that some declined to respond to the questionnaire. However, the response rate was found adequate to respond to the concerns of the study. According to Rajendram (2020), a 60% response rate is acceptable after calculating the amount of answers essential to attain a 5% margin of error at 95% confidence while aiming to get more responses.

#### 4.2.1 Gender of the Respondents

The study sought to establish the gender of the respondents. The results are shown in the below:



**Figure 2: Gender of Respondents**

**Source: Field 2021**

As can be seen above, the study findings showed out of 42 participants, that the majority of the respondents (33) were male; while only (9) of the respondents who participated were female. Few women participated in this study due to their relatively few numbers in the crime branch department; and this can be attributed by their few numbers in policing and other institutions across the board. According to the National Institute of Justice (2019), notwithstanding efforts to rise representation, the proportion of women in law enforcement has persisted fairly still over the past couple of decades, and they consist fewer than 13% of entire officers.

#### 4.2.1. Ranks of Respondents

The research likewise sought to find the ranks of the participants. This was important because ranks are associated with responsibilities that could influence the psychology of individuals. The results are shown in the table 4 below

**Table 4: Ranks and Frequency of Police Officers**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Buruburu</b>	<b>ShauriMoyo</b>	<b>Jogoo</b>	<b>Dandora</b>	<b>Total</b>
Constable	71.42%	10	8	6	6	30
Corporal	16.67%	1	2	2	2	7
Inspector	11.91%	1	1	1	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>42</b>

**Source: Field 2021**

In the table 4, the researcher administered questionnaires to 30 Constables, 7 Corporals, and 5 Inspectors, totaling to 42 respondents. Buruburu Police Station contributed 12 respondents, ShauriMoyo Police Station contributed 11 respondents, while Jogoo Road Police Station contributed 9 respondents and Dandora contributed 10 respondents for both the questionnaires and the key informant interviews. In most law enforcement agencies, the Constable is the entry point and constitutes the largest number of officers taking up most of the administrative and follow-up investigation assignments in a station, hence their large number in the study. Followed up by Corporal, which is the next common hierarchy in the law enforcement applied here in Kenya, and most developing countries, then the Inspectors who constitute a lesser number, depending on the size of the station. This also explains why their number is less in the participation of this study. Erstad (2021), explains that police officer ranks are best aligned with a hierarchy that is

commonly found in municipalities and police organization; for instance, from Constable up to Inspectors. The officer numbers also tend to reduce with an increase in hierarchy. In Kenya, it is from Corporal all the way to Inspector General (NPS, 2020). The summary of the findings on ranks are presented in the figure below:



**Figure 3: Frequency of Ranks**

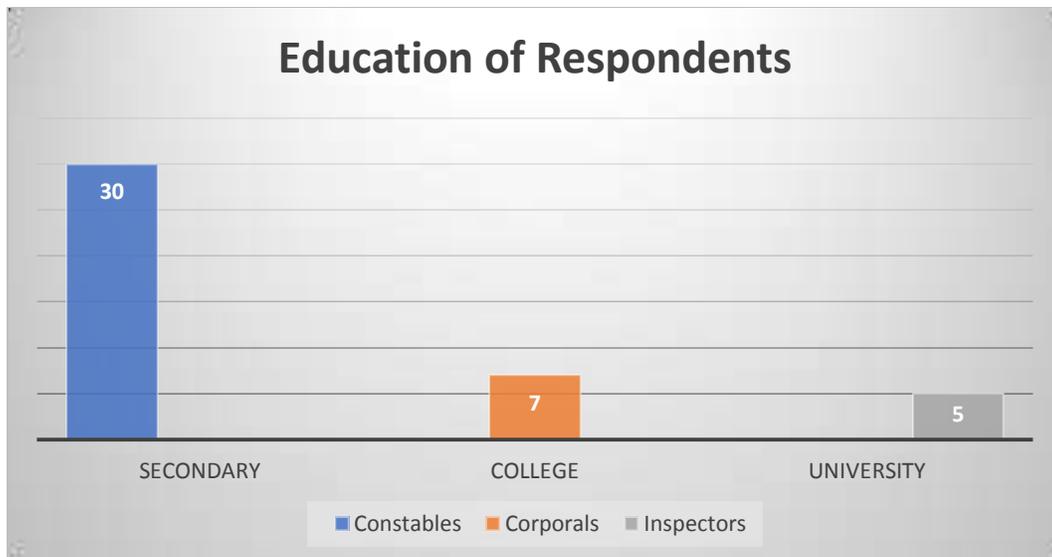
**Source: Field 2021**

In the figure 3, 71.42% of the respondents in the research in Makadara Police Division were Constables, while 16.67% of the respondents in the research were Corporals, and 11.91% of the respondents were Inspectors (including OCSs).

#### **4.2.2. Education of the Respondents**

Education is a key aspect in development of not only working skills but also self-management. This research sought to establish the rate of education of the participants.

The findings are summarized in the diagram below.



**Figure 4: Education of Respondents**

**Source: Field 2021**

The level of education for the respondents followed their respective ranks in the service. The Constables who participated in the research were Secondary graduates totaling to 30. Corporals who participated in the study were College graduates with diplomas totaling 7. While university graduates with higher Diplomas who participated in the study stood at 5 in total.

From the bio-data received from the respondents, the findings revealed that the majority of participants in this study were basically secondary educated officers. This is attributed to the fact that secondary level is the entry level for intake in the police force. Therefore, police officers at this level are likely to be the majority across ranks and especially in the lower cadres. In addition, secondary education provides a good basis for training officers in crime investigation. This is explained by Meesig (2020), who claims that there is a new narrative in regard to police criminal investigation process in this new millennium that proposes a new detective model that directly addresses individual liberties – and this

is attracting middle-level educated police officers. With secondary education, the officers can easily be trained, therefore the fact that more participants in the study had secondary education is not surprising.

### **4.3 Findings of the major study objectives**

Having presented the findings of demographic characteristics, this section focuses on presenting the findings of the main study objectives. As stated in the introductory section of this chapter, the study has three objectives. The first objective sought to study the prevalence of the VT among officers in the crime branch. This is presented in the section below.

#### **4.3.1. Prevalence of VT manifestation among police officers serving in the anti-crime branch**

The first objective sought to find out the prevalence of VT among the officers serving in the anti-crime branch. To assess the prevalence of VT among the officers in the crime branch a questionnaire in the form of a Likert scale was used. The findings are presented in the summary table 5 below:

**Table 5: Likert Scale Summary**

Item	Descriptor	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
	<b>1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Disagree; 4 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Do Not Know</b>						
1	When police officers interact with the victims of trauma, they continue to remember the incidences they have seen for several days.	8	26	4	1	3	2.19
2	It is common to keep acting or feeling as if the incident was occurring again after listening or observing crimes	6	29	3	2	5	2.52
3	Investigating rape cases in children leads to nightmares and sometimes I am unable to sleep	8	21	12	1	0	2.26
4	Investigating murder cases creates feelings of fear in me, this makes me to remain alert most of the time	10	27	3	2	0	1.92
6	Investigating violent crimes has no effect on police officers	9	31	2	0	0	1.83
7	Sometimes I keep thinking about the scenes of crime I observed and this interferes with my work, I cannot concentrate	9	28	3	1	1	1.97
8	I often get irritable with minor issues after interacting with victims of violent crime	8	18	7	5	4	2.50
9	Day dreaming about scenes of violent crime is common	6	21	8	6	1	2.33
10	Police officers in the anticrime branch may experience feelings of detachment and like to stay alone.	11	18	8	4	1	2.19

**Source: Field 2021**

Mean Calculations for Question 1 =  $(8 \times 1) + (26 \times 2) + (4 \times 3) + (1 \times 4) + (3 \times 5) = 92$  divide by no. of participants:  $42 - 92/42 = 2.19$ .

This has the implication that the participants agree at a mean of (2) that police officers, while interacting with the victims of trauma, continue to remember the incidences they have seen for several days. For the second question, the participants also agree that it is common to be kept acting or with the feeling of the incident was happening again after you listen or observe the crimes at a level of 2.52, which is relatively high. The third question on nightmares elicited a mean result of 2.26, while the fourth question on fear

creation had a mean score of 1.92 respectively. The sixth and seventh questions on effects of crime investigation and lack of concentration elicited mean responses on 1.83 and 1.97 respectively. On question 8 and 9 on irritability and day dreaming the participant elicited mean responses of 2.50 and 2.33 respectively. And finally on question 10, the question of the feeling of detachment brought out a mean response of 2.19. While analyzing and including all levels of questioning the researcher confirms the prevalence of Vicarious Trauma among the officers because the responses are leaning towards the general acceptance of the trauma as manifested among their ranks. The officers' responses to the questionnaire confirm the general prevalence of VT at a mean of 2.19 among the ranks as seen from their responses. Though this is low, it demonstrates that trauma is present among the officers.

Therefore, officers generally, agree that trauma is prevalent and has manifested in the crime branch of the police department. However, as noted not all officers are affected which could be attributed to individual differences and grid of trauma. According to Bowman (1999) individual differences are powerful in predicting PTSD. The author argues that personal characteristics such as long-standing traits, beliefs, and pre-event histories among others, moderate the way individuals respond to traumatic events. Papadopoulos (2007) on the other hand argues that traumatic events lead to different outcomes. Describing what he called as trauma grid, Papadopoulos observed that individuals may be negatively affected by traumatic events, remain resilient or develop positively. Therefore, the fact that all police officers working crime branch demonstrate different outcomes is not surprising.

Further police officers training is known to encourage stoicism which is about being strong and endurance as they go about their work. Accordingly, as part of their training, the police officers undertake mental preparedness program, which includes basic knowledge of stress and reactions to stress, coping, mental preparedness (short- and long-term), mental training through mental and muscular relaxation, and methods for improving sleep quality (Padyab, Ghazinour and Hurtig, 2022). Therefore it is not surprising that despite the exposure to the traumatizing crime incidences the VT prevalence rate is at a mean of 2.

Key informant interviews were conducted to participants to learn from experience the prevalence of Vicarious Trauma among Police officers in Kamkunji Police Division. The participants included the Officer Commanding Police Station and the Inspectors within the Police Division. Most of the senior officers interviewed were aware of the trauma and its prevalence within the police department; however, many of them agree that the terminologies used at times confused especially in regard to trauma and stress disorders. According to an Inspector in one of the Police Station studied observed,

*“It is very difficult to differentiate the meanings of trauma as against stress, because both conditions lead to the discomfort of both the victim or survivor and the responder to the crime.”(SNR I SM)*

From the quote, the participant seem to suggest that vicarious trauma may be common but it is often confused with normal stress. This is a clear indication of lack of awareness among the police officers including the supervisors. This may be indicative that although the problem exist the level of prevalence may not be clear hence leading to poor management. According to (Shahsavarani, Abadi and Kalkhoran (2015), stress is a feeling of mental press and tension and low levels of stress might be desired, useful, and

even healthy. However, the authors also note that stress especially a cumulative stress leads to negative emotions and feelings that could result in serious psychological disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This multidimensional nature of stress leads to confusion that make many people confuse stress with other conditions of stress that may present similar negative feelings such as anger and outbursts. Lind, Lerias and Byrne (2003) define vicarious trauma as traumatic stress which develops from the knowledge of a traumatizing event. Among the emotional effects of vicarious trauma may include anger and irritability which is similar to experiences of common stress. It is therefore not surprising that the officers may confuse trauma with normal stress. According to a senior officer in the department, Vicarious Trauma indeed affects police officers in different departments, but with special prevalence in the anti-crime branch which has to investigate the various crime.

According to an Inspector in Buruburu Police Station,

*“Trauma is experienced by Police officers especially those who work in the crime branch and the children department. They deal directly to victims and survivors of crime. Violent crime especially against children is very traumatizing to the police officers.”*

As can be deduced from the quote, direct interaction with victims of violent crime especially children are quiet traumatizing and could lead to discomfort which could be interpreted as VT. This quote informs the study of the prevalence of trauma among the crime branch, is more pronounced in the children’s department who have to deal with cases of gender violence and child abuse. Studies have demonstrated that most caregivers fill angered when they encounter innocent and helpless children who have been harmed. For example, Fong, Bennett, and Mondestin, (2017) observed, that caregivers experienced significant emotional and psychological distress, characterized by anger,

depressed mood, and guilt, after learning that their child may have been sexually abuse. Therefore the experience of the police officer is similar to the experiences of care givers of victims of violence. Existing literature also says that people exposed to violence are more likely to exhibit internalizing problems such as anxiety and depression (Haze, Connelly, Kelleher, Barth & Landsverk, 2006). Most of the participants interviewed, believed that vicarious trauma is very prevalent among police officers in the police anticrime division.

According to another senior officer in a police station,

*“Various trauma and stresses are common in this station due to its proximity to the highway. Violent crimes and traffic accidents are commonly reported; and this has brought its toll on the police officers who have to fight the trauma and stresses that come with their duties.” (SNR LR)*

As can be seen, from the quote, VT is common among the police officers. The officer further reiterates that common stresses and trauma are accompanied by the accidents that occur regularly on the highway especially during weekends and at night. Police officers at times have to dispose of mangled and mutilated bodies of victims involved in crashes; hence increasing the prevalence of Vicarious Trauma and other stresses like secondary traumatic stress (STS) disorder. This also further informs this study that prevalence of trauma is not only confined to the crime branch department but the manifestation also is felt in other departments like traffic and accident departments.

The findings of this study are in line with other studies conducted on police officers. For example, Papazoglou and Tuttle, (2018) observed that extreme stress and trauma are inherent to police work. Accordingly, Police officers respond to various criminal activities and resolve violent situations such as rescue missions in terrorist attacks, armed

robbery or domestic violence that predispose them to traumatic experiences. Similarly, Waren (2015) observed that Police officers' work of conservation of societal order, preserving lives, and the execution of the laws in the society predisposes them to violent or traumatic events or images that may lead to psychological disturbances.

In general, the presence of VT among the police officers working in the crime branch cannot be underestimated despite the low rate of a mean of 2 as portrayed in the quantitative data. As discussed, there is likely lack of awareness as the symptoms that mirror those of normal stress therefore making it difficult to differentiate. However, the qualitative data provides evidence of the prevalence of VT which could have far reaching effects to the officers' work performance. The next section examines the effects of VT on work performance of the officers.

#### **4.3.2. The effects of VT on the performance of police officers serving in the anti-crime branch**

Having established the prevalence of VT in the crime branch, the second objective sought to establish the effects of VT on the performance of police officers serving in the anti-crime branch. To measure the effects, the participants were given a list of possible effects to respond to appropriately with 1 representing strongly agree and 5 do not know. The findings are presented in the summary table 6 below:

**Table 6: Likert Scale Summary**

<b>Question S/No.</b>	<b>Strongly Agree (1)</b>	<b>Agree (2)</b>	<b>Disagree (3)</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree (4)</b>	<b>Do Not Know (5)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Working in the crime branch has reduced my ability to concentrate	5	27	9	1	0	2.14
I sometimes feel confused	6	25	10	1	0	2.04
I sometimes keep seeing the images of the violent acts I dealt with and this interferes with my work	9	28	3	1	1	1.97
Sometimes a doubt my ability to address criminal activities	1	18	16	5	2	2.73
Sometimes I feel very disoriented	3	23	11	4	1	2.45
I feel quite powerless when handling victims of violence	10	27	3	2	0	1.92
I experience anxiety on many occasions after engaging with violent criminals	8	26	4	1	3	2.17
I feel helpless when handling children	9	31	1	0	1	1.88
I experience a mixture of emotions after dealing with victims of violent crime.	8	18	7	5	4	2.50
I often feel overwhelmed when I engage with violent crimes	10	19	7	5	1	2.14
Many officers in the crime branch are withdrawn and like working alone	8	26	4	1	3	2.17
Officers in the crime branch are often irritable	7	19	8	4	4	2.50

Disturbing thoughts pushes me to frequent drinking, smoking and substance abuse	0	4	14	19	5	3.59
I experience lack of sleep due to the work I do in the crime branch	6	21	8	6	1	2.33
Sometimes I hold feeling of self-harm or harming others	9	29	2	1	1	1.95
I sometimes find myself I direct my anger to wrong people such as my family members	8	21	11	2	0	1.26
I frequently experience depressed feelings	27	9	2	3	1	1.61
I find it difficult to trust people	6	20	9	3	7	2.85
I experience low self-esteem sometimes	8	26	4	1	3	2.17
I do not feel safe while walking on the streets so I am highly vigilant	2	8	10	16	6	3.00

**Source: Field 2021**

Mean Calculations for Question 1 =  $(5 \times 1) + (27 \times 2) + (9 \times 3) + (1 \times 4) + (0 \times 5) = 90$  divide by no. of participants:  $42 - 92/42 = 2.14$ .

The findings show that the participants agree (2) that police officers working in the crime branch have reduced their ability to concentrate. For the second question, the participants also agree that at times they feel so confused with a mean of 2.04. The third question on images of violent acts was 1.97. The fourth question on lack of ability to address criminal activities had a mean of 2.73. The fifth question on disorientation had a mean of 2.45. The sixth question had a mean of 1.92 on powerlessness. The seventh question on anxiety earned a mean of 2.17, while the eight question on helplessness on children earned a mean of 1.88, respectively. The ninth question on feeling overwhelmed and the tenth question on feeling withdrawn earned the mean of 2.17 and 2.50 respectively. This trend

of questioning confirms that trauma has a number of various effects that directly and indirectly influence the performance of police officers. The officers' responses to the questionnaire confirm the influences and impact of VT among the ranks as seen from their responses.

Overall, the findings show that VT has negative effects on work performance of police officers at a mean of 2.14. Though this may be viewed as low effect, it may present serious challenge in the overall outcome of the work of the police. It should be acknowledged that the crime branch is an important docket putting in consideration that the core mission of the police is to control crime (see U.S.A Department of Justice 1988). The police are required to respond quickly and act effectively to control crime, therefore, any effect that might affect the work negatively, however small, should be a source of concern. Therefore, despite the low rate, it is argued that the effect is significant given the importance of the docket.

In addition, the low effect rate could also be attributed to the cynic attitude of the police officers. For example, the researcher found that when it comes to personal questions, like S/No 13 and 18 the participants were not willing to provide their true reactions to trauma when asked about drinking and drug abuse; or whether they trust their co-workers or superiors. This made it difficult to verify the true picture of the effects of VT. This is perhaps due to the fact that drug abuse is outlawed in the service and even those with the problem may not admit. In addition, the social acceptance of use of alcohol makes it hard for the users to accept negative effects. Alcohol is widely used in social gatherings to lighten the spirit of people. On the other hand, the issues of trust as relates to the coworkers and superiors is in line with loyalty which is a core aspect in police

organization. Ledford & Raver, (2021) observe that loyalty is one of the key ethos among security personnel therefore perceived disloyalty is severely punished. Therefore, although VT may have such effects it may not be easily accepted. Hence, although participants may frequently engage in drinking and substance abuse to suppress their thoughts and they also do not trust people, they may not be ready to admit. The implication is that there are many cases of hidden trauma among officers in the crime branch and other departments among various institutions.

The participants agree in general that trauma has relative effects on the performance of police officers serving in the anti-crime branch in Kamkunji division police headquarters. From the perspective of qualitative data collected from the interviews conducted, the researcher found that most of the respondents interviewed also agreed on the effects of Vicarious Trauma in the performance of police officers while on duty. According to a Senior Officer in one Police Station,

*“This kind of trauma or stress is manifested in the behavior of the affected police officers. These officers tend to alter their normal routines by increasingly becoming late on duty, increased absenteeism, and lack of concentration while on duty.”(SNR B)*

As can be seen from the quote, the work of the officers is affected by absenteeism, coming late or lack of concentration. Absenteeism, could be seen as trying to avoid work. Avoidance is a key aspect in trauma as well as VT. According to Larias and Bryne (2003) evading recapping of the incident and amplified social drawing away, are features of post-traumatic stress. The quote informs the study that officers in crime branch stay away from the work perhaps with the desire not to remember events that expose them to VT. It can be recalled that experiences of VT mirror those of the really experience. Therefore, their stay away from the work could be in the avoidance category of trauma.

As relates to the concentration, studies have indicated that VT affects the concentration of individuals. Accordingly, individuals affected by VT are affected cognitively. As such many are hyper vigilant making them loose focus on many issues. Richardson (2001) observed that affects the concentration of individuals. This affects the way people perform their work

According to a senior officer,

*“These kinds of trauma are common in police officers especially in the crime unit because they deal with violent crime which is prevalently spread in the area. This has further exasperated the behavior of some personnel who have engaged in un-professional behaviors like working in isolation, insubordination, poor reporting mechanisms and engagements, and lack of team work.”(SNR I D)*

The quote above outlines the other effects of trauma on officers at workplace that affects their performance, and informs the study of the extent of violent crimes in the area and its direct relationship to trauma. For example, insubordination may be suggestive that the officers do not take orders from their seniors which may affect the entire work of the organization. On the other hand, poor reporting mechanism may deny the organization the information required to control crime or even arrest the perpetrators. As far as team work is concern, it should be recalled that this is the main approach in police work. Given the traumatic nature of the service the officers are expected to work in teams to support each other. Espevik et al (2021), argue that team work is important in service delivery in law enforcement. Therefore, the fact that VT affects teamwork in the service spell doom for the success of the department. The quality of the work of the officers is definitely affected in addition to other indirect issues that ultimately bring questionable behaviors at

workplace. All these factors above influence the performance of officers in the crime branch.

The findings are in line with Nova Scotia Health authority (2015) that observed that the effects of trauma are very broad and can affect many areas of functioning. Accordingly, traumatic experience could lead to negative emotional aspects such as depression, physical effects such as low energy, cognitive effects such as loss of memory and lack of concentration, behavioral such as substance abuse and spiritual harm such as self-blame which could all affect the performance of the officers. For example, depression could contribute to apathy which leads to isolation while substance and drug abuse would contribute to misbehavior which would compromise professionalism. Isolation compromising team work could greatly undermine police work. However, there was a feeling that the effect of VT is not quantifiable since there has been no evidence. According to a senior official had this to say

*“The level of the effects of Vicarious Trauma in performance is still average. In as much as the Police officers are affected by the trauma and stressors, we do not have confirmed prove that it has adversely affected the performance of the officers while on duty. “(SNR M)”*

According to the officer, trauma maybe rampant in some sectors and departments of the police force, however, no proper figures have been deduced to understand the extent of the problem among the officers. This informs the study that with the prevalence and manifestation of Vicarious Trauma among the police force, especially at the crime branch, no official statistics are available to shown the level of the effects, especially in performance of police officers. This means that trauma in the crime branch cannot be quantified, therefore, the level of its effects is still un-accountable. This kind of scenario may negatively affect the wellbeing of police officers. Without evidence on the

prevalent of the problem, then the NPS may not be able to take necessary steps to address the problem. According to Head (2010) without evidence-based approach the implementation and coordination of institutional capacities are challenged. In addition, without clear information, decision making becomes problematic. Therefore, the fact that there is clear no clear record on trauma in Crime Branch and perhaps the entire national police service, paints a gloomy picture on the wellbeing of the officers. It means that the officers suffer on their own without organizational support. It also means that the poor performance of the officers is blamed on the inability or poor skills of the officers even if it is linked to their VT experiences. This could also mean that the remedies put in place to improve on performance is not effective since one of the root cause is not addressed. In addition, officers who misbehave due to effects of VT may be labeled indiscipline when they are actually sick. The need to create awareness and at the same time conduct a study to establish the level if VT in the NPS cannot not be overemphasized. This will enable the organization put in place the necessary structures to address the problem.

#### **4.3.3. The current prevention and intervention strategies employed by police officers serving in the anti-crime branch to cope with VT.**

Following the administration of the questionnaires for the first two objectives to the participants, key informant interviews were conducted to determine the third objective; for instance, current prevention and intervention strategies employed by police officers serving in the anti-crime branch. From the perspective of qualitative data collected, the researcher found that different respondents had various views on the current measures and strategic intervention being applied to tackle Vicarious Trauma, especially in regard to the performance of police officers in line of duty. According to an Inspector in a Police station,

*“Some of the intervention strategies that I have witnessed employed are not mainstream in character, but are designed at station level to help affected officers cope with the stresses and trauma. Counseling sessions are most popular; however, they include both the working environment interventions and clinical intervention.” (SNR I B)*

From the above quote, the study deduced that there is no standard guidelines for officers to follow in regard to coping mechanisms for stresses and trauma. Various stations adopt their own systems. However, from the quote counselling services are used working environment. This could mean simple debriefing than counseling professionally. This suggests that there are limitations in the services offered.

The quote also suggests clinical interventions which could mean those seriously affected seek help on their own. The fact that the service is not mainstreamed suggests that there are no effective mechanisms to assist those severely affected, therefore, individual initiation of treatment may be the main approach.

Another Inspector in a Police Station asserts that,

*“The current strategies and measures employed to tackle Vicarious Trauma and other stressors are not in place, therefore there is limited intervention. Most of the affected Police Officers seek assistance and treatment from outside institutional bodies and agencies who deal with trauma and stress. There seems to be no effective guidelines or policies that guide the interventions for trauma cases and stresses.” (SNR I D)*

The above quote also confirms to the study that internal mechanisms to cope with trauma and stressors may be limited in the organization and officers seek external interventions. It therefore means there are no institutional structures in place for trauma intervention and treatment. Lack of institutional structures to support those affected by VT may be seen as a serious omission in police organization for the type of work the police engage in. The police officers are often confronted with scenes and activities that predispose

them to traumatic experiences. Although it is assumed that the training provided prepares them to such incidences, not all officers will remain resilient. Accordingly, poor mental health on police officers are amplified by continuous exposure to traumatic scenes. Accordingly, leeway in terms of feasible alternatives for coping strategies and help-seeking, where officers are required to face conflicts and other stressors the stigmas surrounding mental health issues( Forouzan et al, 2015) and police cultures where cynicism affects their health seeking behaviors. Therefore the need to mainstream the counseling services cannot be overemphasized.

However, some officers had different view on measures taken to support the police officers in dealing with VT. A senior officer had this to say.

*“The conventional measures undertaken by the police service to tackle trauma and stressors among police officers has been working relatively but not effectively. These measures include in-house counseling, training, and the use of workshops and seminars.”(SNR JR)*

The above quote, also confirms that the internal measures currently being applied to intervene are not effective. The traditional measures for stress prevention and treatment in the stations are not up to standards and do not provide the adequate quality service required. The study, therefore, asserts that the current prevention and intervention strategies employed to cope with VT are not effective at the crime branch.

The suggestions of the presence of some measures to support the officers in their mental wellbeing however, weak is encouraging. This may be suggestive that there is some reflection on the value of mental health services. Use of workshops and seminars creates awareness that inoculates the officers with VT information that is preventive. Training helps to prepare them mentally while counseling provides curative services. However, the

strengths of this services can only be realized if they are effective. Therefore, this study commends the police organization in the effort, but implores the organization to invest more in the services for the mental wellbeing of the officers. This will go a long way in making the officers competent hence effective in service delivery and to a larger extent the security and safety of the communities they serve.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1.Introduction**

As stated, the summary is presented as per objectives of the study. The study has three objectives. The summary of each objective is presented below

#### **5.2.Summary of Findings**

##### **5.2.1. Prevalence of Vicarious Trauma Manifestation among Police officers**

The study sought to find out the prevalence of Vicarious Trauma manifestation among Police officers. The study findings show that Vicarious Trauma is present among police officers especially at the anti-crime branch unit. Apart from the anti-crime branch unit, Vicarious Trauma also affects and is prevalent in other departments of a police station that handle crime, such as children & gender department, petty crimes department, report office, traffic department, and the records office. Further, Vicarious Trauma is

strongly believed to associate with the work that Police officers provide to the public. This includes their engagements with victims or survivors of crime and their day-to-day interactions with crime related scenes and activities. For example, confronting violent criminals, rescue missions in accidents and dealing with cases such as child defilement all expose the police to traumatic experiences

### **5.2.2. Effects of Vicarious Trauma on the Performance of Police Officers**

The second objective sought to find out the effects of trauma on performance of police officers. The study found that Vicarious Trauma affects the performance of Police officers in different ways in the line of duty. Vicarious Trauma manifests itself in police officers through various engagements during service delivery and these directly affect the performance of the officers because they influence the behavioral, emotional, psychological, and cognitive traits of a Police officer while on duty. This include but not limited to; lack of concentration, unprofessional behavior, isolation that interferes with their team work way of working among others. Therefore, the effects of Vicarious Trauma is highly placed in the performance of police officers while on duty. However, most officers are unable to distinguish between the various traumas and the stressors that come with service to the public. For instance, it is very hard to differentiate Vicarious Trauma from ordinary stress. The symptoms usually look similar in nature.

### **5.2.3. Current Vicarious Trauma Prevention and Intervention Strategies**

In regard to the third objective; for instance, Current Vicarious Trauma Prevention and Intervention Strategies; the study finds that the Police officers are relatively conversant with the current strategies employed to counter Vicarious Trauma and other stressors among them in the line of duty. There are certain strategic interventions and measures in

place; however, their effectiveness is still questionable especially in regard to the performance of police officers while on duty. The main intervention mechanism is psychological counseling. However, this measure has not been particularly effective in as far as increasing or improving the performance of the police officers while on duty. The research finds the police officers, especially in the crime branch unit, are not fully efficient and effective in-service delivery because of the inadequate measures employed to tackle Vicarious Trauma and other stressors affecting the same officers.

### **5.3.Conclusion**

In regard to the first theme; on the prevalence and manifestation of Vicarious Trauma, the researcher concludes that there is an un-restricted increase in the prevalence and manifestation of Vicarious Trauma among police officers, especially among the anti-crime branch unit. This is basically due to the un-checked causes of the trauma and other stressors while the officers are conducting their day-to-day service to the public. The trauma and other stressors are caused by the interaction and the relationship developed between the police officers as first responders and the victims or survivors of a serious or tragic crime.

In regard to the second theme; on the effects of Vicarious Trauma in the performance of police officers, the researcher concludes that the trauma has adversely affected the performance of affected police officers while in the line of duty. The research found that the effects (for instance, behavioral, cognitive, emotional, and psychological) as mentioned above directly impact on the performance of the police officers. The officers will lack morale; will be isolated, fatigued, increase absenteeism; while others will indulge in excessive alcohol drinking and insubordination. These effects will ultimately

impact on the officer's efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery, hence poor performance.

In regard to the third theme; on the current strategic interventions and measures on Vicarious Trauma, the researcher can safely conclude that these measures are not fully adequate to handle the prevalent cases of Vicarious Trauma and other stressors affecting police officers in the line of duty. The current strategies and measures are restricted to the working environment and clinical measures; which though are working, but are not adequate in countering the influence of trauma and stressors among police officers, which affects their performances. More needs to be done to improve on the strategies and measures, especially in regard to direct intervention; for instance, personal consultations, medical treatment, training on knowledge, organizing workshops & seminars on the prevalence and effects of Vicarious Trauma and other stressors.

In conclusion, the findings show that police officers, especially in the crimes branch unit, investigate serious crimes and being mostly the first responders will absorb the traumatic stress from acute reactions from victims while being assisted. This is one of the causes that accentuate the prevalence and manifestation of the trauma among officers. The officers also interact with trauma survivors and listen to their stories of torture regularly. The effects of the trauma can be seen when police officers respond to emergency services like rescue missions; for instance, fire emergencies. The strategic interventions in place do not take many factors into consideration especially when officers are working with trauma survivors, which places the police officer at risk of Vicarious Trauma and other related traumas and stressors.

Based on the findings of the study, it is possible to conclude that vicarious trauma is prevalent among the officers in the crime branch. The VT affects the officers in many ways including, behavioral, psychological, cognitive and physical among others. These affects their work performance. However, the institutional intervention mechanisms are weak and do not help the officers. Without effective intervention on Vicarious Trauma, the prevalence and manifestation will continue to increase among police officers, especially in the anti-crime branch units; as explained in the research study. This will ultimately continue affecting performance on service delivery negatively. Without direct intervention, the effects of Vicarious Trauma will continue to be felt both internally (in terms of the individual and the police force) and externally (in terms of the public and the social environment).

#### **5.4.Recommendations**

In regard to the first objective, the researcher finds it prudent to increase knowledge, through training, on the symptoms of Vicarious Trauma and other stressors for early detection. This will ultimately reduce the prevalence of the trauma and stressors as they manifest among the police officers. There should also be institutional guidelines that can be used as manuals and guides for the officers who are vulnerable to the effects of Trauma and stressors. This will also check on the spread of the conditions among the police officers.

In regard to the second objective, the researcher believes that sensitizing and creating awareness of the effects of Vicarious Trauma and other stressors can increase knowledge on the impact of the trauma on the performance of police officers while on duty. With proper dissemination of knowledge on the trauma, police officers will continue to

perform their duties effectively and efficiently without fear of physical, mental, or psychological drawbacks. The National Police service should establish an independent trauma Centre that will personally engage officers in service who are directly working with victims and survivors of violent or serious crimes and grizzly accidents.

In regard to the third objective, the researcher finds that there is a need to put in place policy guidelines and institutional structures that will govern trauma and stressors especially in the uniformed forces in the country. Currently, there seems to be none. Having policies and structures in place will help various departments within the police forces to develop strategies and measures that can be used to check on the effects and prevalence of the traumas and stressors affecting the performance of the police officers while in the line of duty. The national government should be directly involved in the preparations of these policies and guidelines, because the prevalence, manifestation, and effects of Vicarious Trauma and other stressors affect both the internal environment consisting of the individual officers and the institution; and the external environment consisting of the public and the society as a whole.

### **5.5.Areas for Future Studies**

Vicarious Trauma is not only the mental condition that affects police officers, among the various traumas and stressors, especially in regard to performance. There are many kinds of traumas and stressors and more studies should focus on other conditions, apart from Vicarious Trauma, that directly affect the performance of police officers while in the line of duty. Some of the major conditions recognized that have impacts on the performance of police officers include Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS), Hidden Curriculum (HC), and Compassionate Fatigue, among others.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Consent Form

#### Respondents

Dear Sir/ Madam;

I, Donatha Chari Righa, is a Masters of Arts student from the National Police Service and studying ‘Leadership and Security Management’ in School of Security, Diplomacy and Peace Studies – Kenyatta University. I wish to conduct a study on “Vicarious trauma and the performance of the anti-crime police officers within Kamkunji division, Nairobi County” here in Kenya. The information I seek is vital for understanding the various aspects of vicarious trauma as one major stressor affecting the effectiveness of police officers working in the Anti-Crime branch/section within Kamkunji division Police stations. The information gathered will be stringently be confident and only to be used for the aims of the research. No data will be drawn to any of the participants and they is not duly bounded to give individual particulars on record.

#### Informed consent

I agree to participate in this study, as duly explained to me by the researcher. My taking part is not under any due influence but my own free will; and with no direct or indirect benefits accrued. I may benefit or not benefit in the study.

Yes

No

Participant’s Signature: ..... Date: .....

I, the student, have clarified in detail to the respondents about the research, its effects and have not held back any data concerning the aforementioned research. I have guaranteed the respondents of their privacy during the research, and they can withdraw any time.

Researcher's Signature: ..... Date:  
.....

## **Appendix II: Questionnaire**

This questionnaire is intended to gather information on vicarious trauma and the performance of anti-crime police officers in Kamkunji division in Nairobi city county, in Kenya. Kindly respond by ticking or filling in the appropriate responses to the questions. Information provided in questionnaire will be used for the academic purpose by the researcher. Your participation is voluntary and thus you can opt out.

**Do not write your name anywhere in this questionnaire.**

### **PART A: Respondent's Information**

1. County \_\_\_\_\_

2. Division \_\_\_\_\_

3. Station \_\_\_\_\_

4. Section \_\_\_\_\_

5. Age \_\_\_\_\_

6. Employment Status

Permanent \_\_\_\_\_ Contract \_\_\_\_\_

7. Gender

Male (tick) \_\_\_\_\_ Female (tick) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Marital Status

Married (tick) \_\_\_ Single (tick) \_\_\_ Separated (tick) \_\_\_ Divorced (tick) \_\_\_

9. Education

None (tick) \_\_\_ Primary (tick) \_\_\_ Secondary (tick) \_\_\_

College (tick) \_\_\_ University (tick) \_\_\_

**PART B: Prevalence of VT Manifestation**

**Likert Scale Questionnaire.**

**Please circle the way you feel about the following statements below:**

Item	Descriptor	1	2	3	4	5
	<b>1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly Disagree 5 = Do Not Know</b>					
1	When police officers interact with the victims of trauma, they continue to remember the incidences they have seen for several days.					
2	It is common to keep acting or feeling as if the event was re-occurring after you listen or observe the crimes					
3	Investigating rape cases in children leads to nightmares and sometimes I am unable to sleep					
4	Investigating murder cases creates feelings of fear in me, this makes me to remain alert most of the time					
6	Investigating violent crimes has no effect on police officers					
7	Sometimes I keep thinking about the scenes of crime I observed and this interferes with my work, I cannot concentrate					
8	I often get irritable with minor issues after interacting with victims of violent crime					
9	Day dreaming about scenes of violent crime is common					
10	Police officers in the anticrime branch may experience feelings of					

	detachment and like to stay alone.					
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**PART C: Effects of VT on Police Performance**

**Likert Scale Questionnaire**

**Please circle the way you feel about the following statements below:**

S/N	Descriptor	1	2	3	4	5
	<b>1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly Disagree 5 = Do Not Know</b>					
1	Working in the crime branch has reduced my ability to concentrate					
2	I sometimes feel confused					
3	I sometimes keep seeing the images of the violent acts I dealt with and this interferes with my work					
4	Sometimes a doubt my ability to address criminal activities					
5	Sometimes I feel very disoriented					
6	I feel quite powerless when handling victims of violence					
7	I experience anxiety on many occasions after engaging with violent criminals					
8	I feel helpless when handling children					
9	I experience a mixture of emotions after dealing with victims of violent crime.					
10	I often feel overwhelmed when I engage with violent crimes					
11	Many officers in the crime branch are withdrawn and like working alone					
12	Officers in the crime branch are often irritable					
13	Disturbing thoughts pushes me to frequent drinking, smoking and substance abuse					
14	I experience lack of sleep due to the work I do in the crime branch					
15	Sometimes I hold feeling of self-harm or harming others					
16	I sometimes find myself I direct my anger to wrong people such as my family members					

17	I frequently experience depressed feelings						
18	I find it difficult to trust people						
19	I experience low self-esteem sometimes						
20	I do not feel safe while walking on the streets so I am highly vigilant						

### **Appendix III: Key In-depth Interview Guide**

1. What do you understand by vicarious trauma?
2. Do you think vicarious trauma affects police officers in the anti-crime branch of your station?
3. How prevalent is vicarious trauma among police officers in the anti-crime branch? How would you gauge the stressor in a scale of 1 -10?
4. To what extent do you think vicarious trauma affects the performance of police officers in Kamkunji division?
5. What are some of the effects of vicarious trauma on the performance by police officers in Kamkunji division?
6. To what extent do you think vicarious trauma affects performance of police officers in Kamkunji division? How would you gauge the stressor in a scale of 1 – 10?
7. What are some of the VT preventive and intervention strategies employed by your police officers in Kamkunji division?
8. What do you think are the main sources of vicarious trauma among police officers in Kamkunji division?
9. What do you think are the main causes of vicarious trauma among police officers in Kamkunji division?
10. What other relevant information can you provide that can give light on vicarious trauma and other stressors among police officers in Kamkunji division?

## Appendix IV. Work Plan

**Table 7: Work Plan**

Activity	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selection of Topic and Submission										
Defense of Concept Paper										
Development and Presentation of Project proposal										
Piloting										
Data Collection										
Data Analysis and Report Writing										
Defense of Final Report										
Corrections of Final Report										
Approval and Final Submission of Project										

## Appendix V: Research Budget

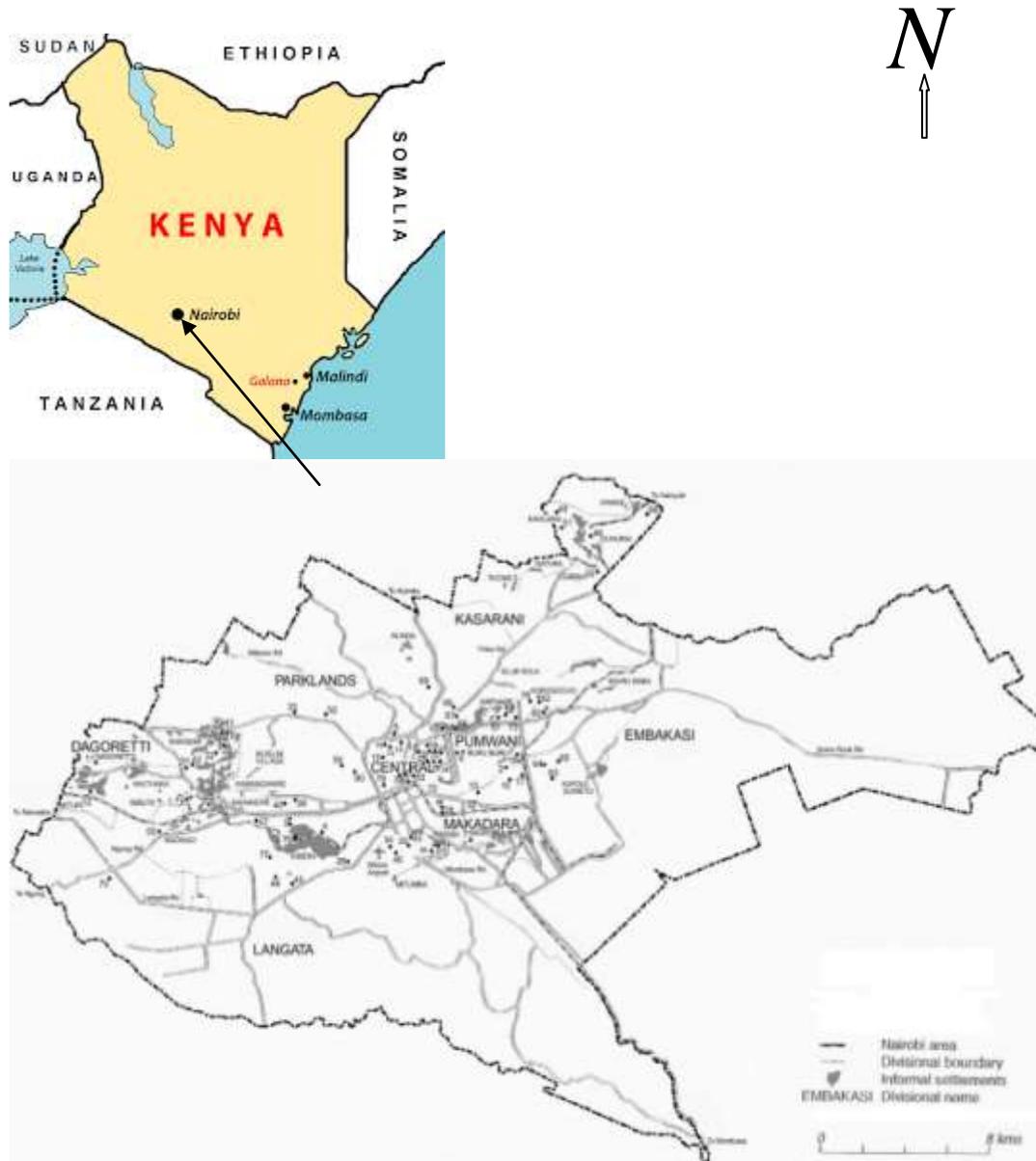
**Table 8: Research Budget**

The project paper had a budget of Kshs. 333,500/=, as tabulated below:

Items	Particulars	Amount (in Kshs.)
Library Cost	Assorted Reading	58,100.00
Internet Expenses	Wi-Fi, Bundles	34,900.00
Typing	Research Paper	12,500.00
Printing Costs	Assorted	45,000.00
Stationary Expenses	Assorted	44,400.00
Transportation Expenses	Various	74,000.00
Compiling Report	Various	25,000.00
Contingencies	N/A	21,100.00
Field Work	Assorted	18,500.00
Total Costs		333,500.00

## Appendix VI: Area of the Study - Map

Figure 5: Map of Nairobi.



Source: <http://cranwellkiberaproject.weebly.com/where-is-kibera-located.html>

## Appendix VII: Research authorization from Graduate School

Figure 6: Research authorization from Graduate School

  
**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**  
GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: [kubps@yahoo.com](mailto:kubps@yahoo.com) P.O. Box 43844, 00100  
[dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke](mailto:dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke) NAIROBI, KENYA  
Website: [www.ku.ac.ke](http://www.ku.ac.ke) Tel. 8710901 Ext. 57530

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Our Ref: C160/38919/16 Date: 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2021

The Director General,  
National Commission for Science Technology & Innovation  
P.O. Box 30623-00100,  
**NAIROBI**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR DONATHA C. RICHA-REG. NO. C160/38919/16**

I write to introduce Richa who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. The student is registered for a M.A degree programme in the **Department of Security & Correction Science in the School of Security, Diplomacy & Peace Studies.**

Richa intends to conduct research for a M.A Project Proposal entitled **“Prevalence and Effects of Vicarious Trauma on Police Performance. A Study of Anti-Crime Branch Personnel, Nairobi County, Kenya”**

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,  
  
**PROF. ELISHIBA RIMANI**  
**DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**

HI/cao

## Appendix VIII: Approval for Research from Graduate School

Figure 7: Approval for Research from Graduate School

  
**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

E-mail: [kubps@yahoo.com](mailto:kubps@yahoo.com) P.O. Box 43844, 00100  
[dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke](mailto:dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke) NAIROBI, KENYA  
Website: [www.ku.ac.ke](http://www.ku.ac.ke) Tel. 810901 Ext. 57530

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**Internal Memo**

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FROM: Dean, Graduate School DATE: 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2021

TO: Donatha C. Richa REF: C160/38919/16  
C/o Security & Correction Science  
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

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**SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL**

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We acknowledge the receipt of your revised Research Project Proposal entitled "Prevalence and Effects of Vicarious Trauma on Police Performance: A Study of Anti-Crime Branch Personnel, Nairobi County, Kenya" as per recommendations raised by the Graduate School Board of 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2021.

You may now proceed with your Data collection, subject to clearance with the Director General, National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed supervision Tracking Forms per semester. The forms are available at the University's Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

  
**MARIET ISABOKE**  
**FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**

c.c. Chairman, Department of Security & Correction Science  
Supervisors:

I. Dr. Merecia Sirera  
C/o Dept. of Security & Correction Science  
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

HI/cao

**Appendix IX: National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) Permit**

**Figure 8: NACOSTI CERTIFICATE**

