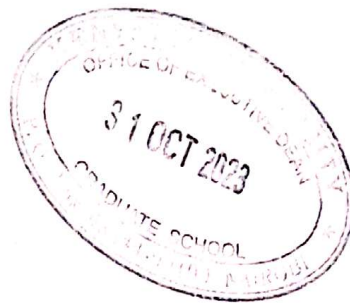


**INFLUENCE OF HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT ON VICARIOUS TRAUMA
AMONG HEALTH CARE WORKERS IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS IN
LAIKIPIA COUNTY, KENYA**

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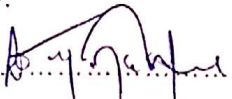


**A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (EPIDEMIOLOGY AND
DISEASE CONTROL) IN THE SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES OF
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**

OCTOBER, 2023

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree at any other University.

Signature 

Date: 18/10/2023

Eroll Mwachabe Wekesa
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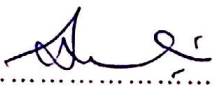
Supervisors: This thesis has been submitted with our approval as university supervisors.

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the influence of the hospital environment on Vicarious Trauma (VT) among Health Care Workers (HCWs) in hospitals in Laikipia County, Kenya. This was necessitated by the fact that HCWs in hospitals in the County often missed work days and sought psychological help while others struggled with symptoms of VT daily. The study addressed the following objectives, to assess the prevalence of vicarious trauma among health care workers, to establish how exposure to traumatic situations influences vicarious trauma among HCWs, to ascertain the influence of the working environment on vicarious trauma among HCWs and to assess the influence of work-life balance on vicarious trauma among HCWs in hospitals in Laikipia County. The study outcomes highlight aspects of the HCWs' working environment that influenced VT. The theory of unpleasant symptoms (TOUS) 1997 was employed. The study assumed a descriptive cross-sectional study design while HCWs in public hospitals of Laikipia County were the main target population. Independent variables under investigation were working in traumatic situations, work-life balance, and working environment, while the dependent variable was Vicarious Trauma among HCWs. The respondents were selected by use of purposive and simple random sampling techniques. 232 participants made up the total sample size. The semi-structured questionnaires and interview schedules aided in collecting primary data, and 10% of the study sample was used to examine the study instruments. The scientific packages for social sciences [SPSS] version 21 was used to analyze quantitative data to produce descriptive statistics presented as frequencies and percentages. Chi-Square testing for significance at a 95% confidence level was used to analyze and present inferential statistics. KII data were transcribed and analyzed thematically. Research ethical issues were abided by during the study. The study established that vicarious trauma was prevalent among HCWs working within Public Hospitals in Laikipia County (68.5%). Results further showed that the relationship between exposure to traumatic situations, hospital working environment, and work-life balance had a statistically significant relationship with VT among HCWs with P values of <0.001 , 0.004 and <0.001 respectively. Therefore, the study concludes that the hospital environment strongly impacts the occurrence of VT among HCWs in PHs in Laikipia County. The study recommends that all public health stakeholders take urgent measures to remedy the negative impacts of the hospital environment on VT among HCWs in this County.