

Effect of Occupational Stress Management Practices on Employee Engagement amongst Law Enforcement Officers in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

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Abstract

Understanding the nexus between occupational stress management practices and employee engagement remains quintessential in enhancing their levels of engagement. In this regard law enforcement remains a psychologically stressful occupation characterized by danger, high expectations and ambiguity in work encounters. This therefore invokes the need for law enforcement agencies to adopt the most salient occupational stress management practices to redeem the levels of employee engagement. Occupational stressors precipitates employee disengagement over the long term. Anchored on the social exchange theory, this study sought to determine the effect of occupational stress management practices on employee engagement among law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to; determine the effect of work life balance on employee engagement, examine the effect of employee counselling on employee engagement among law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya. In this regard the study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population was 620 law enforcement officers from 34 police posts and stations in Uasin Gishu County with a sample size of 248 police officers calculated using Krejcie and Morgan Table 1970. The study adopted a simple and stratified sampling techniques to identify the officers from top, middle and lower levels of management. Data was collected using questionnaires and interview schedules. Reliability will be ensured through a Cronbach's. Coefficient Alpha. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Result of multiple regressions revealed that occupational stress management practices jointly and independently influenced employee engagement among law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. Jointly the two constructs namely work life balance and employee counselling contributed 62.0% variation in employee engagement among law enforcement officers. The β value for work life balance (.446) and employee counselling (.291). In conclusion occupational stress management significantly affects employee engagement among law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya. The synergistic effect of the occupational stress management practices under study cannot be gainsaid in achieving high employee engagement among law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya. This implies national police service should give eminence to the strengthening of occupational stress management policies to effectively address the challenge of employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers.

Key Words : occupational stress management, employee engagement, work life balance and employee counselling

Background of the study

Globally, the occupational pressures of law enforcement put officers at risk of physical and mental health lapses. This is corroborated by the fact that the work environment of law enforcement officers is awash with occupational stressors which demands intervention to help officers deal with the difficult and stressful occupation (Greenberg & Jones, 2011).

In the converse, a workplace environment characterized by occupational stressors would adversely affect the engagement levels of law enforcement officers and performance. This argumentation is also advanced by Salahudin, Alwi, Baharuddin, Santhasaran and Balasubramaniam, (2016) who opine that employees who experience high levels of occupational stress have low levels of employee engagement, high turnover intention and employee performance. This therefore invokes the need for law enforcement agencies to adopt the most salient occupational stress management practices to redeem the levels of employee engagement amongst the

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law enforcement officers. However, despite, the extremely negative effects of occupational stress many organizations have not put in any concrete measures to address these stress - related conditions (Enyonam, Opoku, Addai & Batola, 2017).

The highest levels of occupational stress are reserved for those people who assume the role of authority figures, in this case members of the police force (Fawne, 2014). Policing is a psychologically stressful work environment filled with danger, high demands, ambiguity in work encounters, human misery and exposure to death. Police personnel are one of the few professionals one is expected to face physical dangers and if necessary to risk their lives as well as face significant stress in many other aspects (Backman, Arnetz, Levin & Lublin, 1997). Thus, policing work is considered as one of the most stressful occupations, as the officers work continuously over long periods of time and are exposed to all sorts of danger, organizational and personal stressors (Karl, 2019 ;Jonyo, 2015). In this regard Were et al (2013) are of the view that law enforcement agencies should ensure that their officers are well trained, motivated and work in a conducive work environment that is occupational stress free (Were, Gakure, Kiraithe & Waititu, 2013). By attenuating the occupational stress law enforcement officers can effectively maintain law and order in their areas of jurisdiction, detect and prevent crime, provide security, protect life and property and support victims of crime and disorder (Republic of Kenya., 2009). It therefore behooves the law enforcement agencies to increasingly see their own role to play in mitigating and solving occupational stress as a means of increasing employee engagement.

Occupational Stress are the physiological and physical effects of negative activity in the workplace as a result many factors including external events, internal events, job demands and colleague behaviour (Cooper & Marshall, 2018). Occupational stress often stems from pressures that do not align with a person's knowledge, skills, or expectations. Occupational stress can increase when workers do not feel supported by supervisors or colleagues, feel as if they have little control over work processes, or find that their efforts on the job are incommensurate with the job's rewards (Bono, Glomb, Shen, Kim & Koch, 2013). Work-related stress can be caused by poor work organization (the way we design jobs and work systems, and the way we manage them), by poor work design (for example, lack of control over work processes), poor management, unsatisfactory working conditions, and lack of support from colleagues and supervisors (Knezevic, et al., 2011). Furthermore, the highest level of associated stress are related to organizational factors such as management style, poor communication, lack of support, inadequate resources and work overload (Sharma, 2015). All this together gives credence to the adoption of occupational stress management practices by organizations which are mindful about their employees.

Occupational Stress management is an important part of maintaining good physical and emotional health and healthy relationships with others as well as reduction of stress both at the organizational level as well as individually (Stoica, 2010). Defense against the adverse effects of occupational stress begins at the organizational level and the prerogative of the management. Thus, the use of various management practices for psychological stability of the employees and occupational stress-free environment has become the order of the day. This has reportedly been dealt with through Collaboration among all organizational functions concerned with people's wellbeing Surveillance systems for early warning of distress and dysfunction and the full continuum of protection and prevention interventions to benefit everyone in the organization (Quick & Henderson, 2016). Huang, van der Veen and Song (2018) points that occupational stress management practices include problem solving, social support and avoidance. Ajayi, Jones, and Unuigbo, (2019) adds that improved communication and collaboration are occupational stress management practices. Organizational strategies to prevent occupational stress are quite simple; they involve the creation of a suitable working environment in terms of employment characteristics, labor relations, organizational structure and achievement of a healthy organizational culture (Stoica, 2010). Owing to the impact of occupational management practices on the engagement of police officers it remains quintessential.

Police officers work stress reactions are always classified as physiological, emotional and behavioral reactions Bartol and Bartol (2004) cited in (Agolla, 2009). Occupational stress has significant negative impact on organizational citizenship behaviours and employee engagement thereby affecting the performance of the work group and the organisation simultaneously (Jain & Cooper, 2012). Engagement in work which is associated with feeling valued, secure, supported and respected is generally negatively associated with a high-stress, cut-throat culture (Emma & Kim, 2015). Occupational stressors precipitates employee disengagement over the long term. Employee engagement is the emotional commitment of the employee towards the organization (Jeve, Oppenheimer & Konje, 2015). Engendering a culture of engaged employees, who have respect for each other, work harmoniously and committed is requisite for successful law enforcement and a top-down proposition. This makes the attenuation of occupational stressors amongst law enforcement officers through occupational stress management practices occasioning employee engagement remains inevitable. However, this should be within the confines of the policy of the organization as the reverse would weaken authority and cause resentment in the ranks of officers. These altogether should take cognizance of the fact that individual level of engagement and desire to serve the noble and ethical cause should help guide officers' productivity and motivation on the job (Ortmeier & Meese, 2010).

The foregoing gives credence to the adoption of occupational stress management practices as an opium for occupational stress amongst police officers to potentiate their engagement levels. This is further justified by the fact that attenuation of occupational stress and potentiating their engagement levels will enhance the attainment of basic police mission of to protect and serve (Ortmeier & Meese, 2010). However, the predisposing factors to occupational stress are from the work environment calling for management. Within democratic societies where excessive use of force by police officers is criticized, aggressively predicted by burnout and lapses in employee engagement reinforces the need to prevent occupational stress that leads to burnout (Queiros, Kaiseler & Da Silva, 2013). American Army survey on US soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan indicates that, (27%) of soldiers suffered anxiety, depression, post-combat stress and other problems namely mental health, the further points that in 2007, 121 soldiers committed suicide which shows an increase of (20%) over 2006 in suicide cases reported among serving combatants (Cuyler, 2016). Peñalba, McGuire and Leite (2008) posits that occupational stressors due to operational factors (job content) and aspects that are linked to organizational factors (job context) is a main cause of deterioration of psychological health among police officers in Malaysia. Therefore, the panacea may be higher level of administrative and organizational support and support from family, friends, and the community they serve.

African has also been an inordinate victim of occupational stress amongst police officers as underscored by Agolla, (2009) that in Botswana the police work stressors are getting injured while on duty and the use of force when the job demand to do so etc. Agola adds that the coping strategies as exercising, socializing, healthy eating or diets, career planning and employee training. however, the treats have their own limitations. In South Africa occupational stressors amongst the police officers include other officers not doing their job, inadequate or poor quality equipment, inadequate salaries which rationalizes the need for occupational stress management practices (Pienaar & Rothmann, 2006). The number of suicides in the South African Police Service (SAPS) is more than 5 times that of police suicide rates elsewhere occasioned by occupational stress (Pienaar & Rothmann, 2006). In Nigeria, rangers were generally dissatisfied with their occupation and inordinate victims of occupational stress where they were poorly motivated because of insufficient funding and lack of proper equipment, inadequate staffing, poor salary, low (Meduna, Ogunjinmi & Onadeko, 2009). According to Wesangula, (2016) In Kenya A 2014 study on the causes of occupational stress amongst police officers published in the Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences fingers high stress levels as the major cause of the suicides. The study adds that Up to 14.3 per cent of the respondents

were experiencing low level stress while 11.4 per cent were experiencing very high levels of stress.

Several authors attributed the lack of progress in the area of stress research in organizations to the fact that stress seemed to be related to such a large number of conditions which prevented a systematic focus (Agolla, 2009). Those features receiving the higher stress ratings related primarily to organizational and management practices. Compared to other predictors of employee engagement (e.g. leader-member exchange, job satisfaction, rewards, leadership style, etc) occupational stress management practices are arguably the least researched, especially in the developing countries of sub-Saharan Africa. As already explained in literature, it is expected that occupational stress management induces high levels of employee engagement. However, there is still limited understanding of how occupational stress management practices may work together to effect the employee engagement. In this regard the current study has been designed to fill the existing gap in literature by investigating the effect of occupational stress management practices on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu County Kenya.

Problem statement

Police work involves dealing closely with the civilians which comprise of those who are good citizens and criminals. This undeniably and understandably places a tremendous degree of expectation upon officers, leading the standards for police ethics and engagement to be some of the highest among any profession (Roufa, 2019). Thus their level of engagement beyond reproach as occasioned by salient management of their occupational stress should be arrantly displayed. In this regard police officers should have a sound mental capability beyond reproach (Agolla, 2009). Thus the conventional police service should embrace the most salient occupational stress management practices invoked by the common place mismatch between job demands and the police officers adaptive resources, occupational stress which occurs and can lead to burnout and disengagement (Schaufeli & Buunk, 2003).

It is well known that occupational stress is frequent in today's society, provoking physical and mental illness, and decreasing the quality of services (Stinchcomb, 2004) cited in (Queiros, Kaiseler & Da Silva, 2013). Policing is a psychologically stressful work environment filled with danger, high demands, ambiguity in work encounters, human misery and exposure to death (sciencedaily.com., 2008). Fifty police officers in Kenya kill themselves every year, highlighting the shocking levels of stress and unhappiness among the people charged with protecting the country's population (Wesangula, 2016). Ironically, the job meant to protect life forces them to take their own. Superiors should attend to the organizational

stressors and life-events of their officers regularly and not only following critical incidents at work (van der Velden, Kleber, Grievink & Yzermans, 2010). Stressed police officers pose a threat to themselves, their colleagues, offenders and/or to public safety and thus it is a matter of urgent concern (Ranta, 2009).

Previous research indicates that stress results from a negative workplace environment and interactions at work as a major problem for police officers (Agolla, 2009). Spielberg et al cited in Ma, et al., (2015) classified police stressors into three categories: administrative and professional pressures, physical and psychological dangers, and lack of support within and outside the police organization. Furthermore, the highest level of associated occupational stress are related to organizational factors such as management style, poor communication, lack of support, inadequate resources and work overload (Wiese, Rothmann, & Storm, 2003; Agolla, 2009; Sharma, 2015). Studies have been conducted on occupational stress management on employee engagement (Law, Dollard, Tuckey, & Dormann, 2011; Crawford, LePine & Rich, 2010; Dollard & Bakker, 2010). According Simon and Amarakoon, (2015) to existing literature suggests a negative relationship between occupational stress and employee engagement. However, an acceptable level of stress is identified to improve individual's performance and the relationship between occupational stress and employee engagement is not a negative linear. Thus, there is still lack of understanding about the effect of occupational stress management practices on employee engagement especially in the police officers in the Kenyan context. This motivated the need to design the current study to fill in the existing gap in literature by focusing on human resource management practices for occupational stress management on employee engagement especially among police officers. This informed by the fact that rehabilitation by human resource management is an important cure and prevention of occupational stress management (Guest., 2017).

Purpose of the study

To determine the effect of occupational stress management practices on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya

Specific objectives

The current study was guided by the following hypotheses

- (i) To determine the effect of work life balance on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya
- (ii) To examine the effect of employee counselling on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework illustrates what researcher expects to find out through research representing how the variables under study might relate to each other (Swaen, 2015). The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between independent and dependent variables. This study conceptualized the relationship between occupational stress management practices (independent variable) and employee engagement (Dependent Variable). Occupational stress management practices under study included, work life balance and employee counselling.

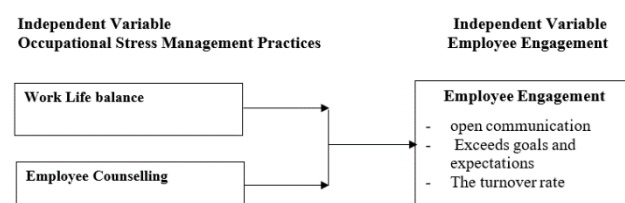


Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework

Source (Author, 2022)

Empirical Review

The empirical review covered the conceptualized relationship of variables under study which included occupational stress management practices as the independent variable and employee engagement as the dependent variable. Occupational stress management practices which included work life balance, employee counselling and how they relate with employee engagement.

Effect of work life balance on employee engagement

Global, national and local changes continue to affect both work and personal life and their interaction (Heraty, Morley, Cleveland, Allis & O'Driscoll, 2008). In this regard there has been blurring boundaries between work and family an index of work imbalance and a stimulant of occupational stress. Work-life balance is the lack of opposition between work and other life roles. It is the state of equilibrium in which demands of personal life, professional life, and family life are equal (Chang, McDonald, & Burton, 2010). Those not currently in the predicament of deciding what level of absence they will require from employment responsibilities may feel singled out and expected to assume additional/unfair workloads, thereby attributing to unsatisfactory work-life balance (Boiarintseva & Richardson, 2019). In fine there is a need for strengthening a work life balance culture in order to realize employee engagement.

Boiarintseva and Richardson (2019) studied work-life balance and male lawyers in Canada: a socially constructed and dynamic process. This study adopted qualitative design comprising interviews and informal

conversations with male lawyers. This study highlighted the socially constructed nature of male lawyers' experiences of work-life balance and the recursive impact of industry, professional and societal expectations and norms. This study identified the need for greater awareness of how institutional, professional and societal expectations and norms impact on men's experiences of work-life balance in male-dominated, high-performance industries. However, the study was limited in sample size and amongst male lawyers in the Canadian context limiting its generalization. Besides the study didn't focus on employee engagement as an outcome of work life balance proving a gap for the current study.

Larasati and Hasanati (2019) studied the effects of work-life balance towards employee engagement in millennial generation in Sewell Indonesia from Banjarmasin. The research participants were employees of PT. Sewell Indonesia from Banjarmasin. Data was collect using questionnaires adapting a work-life balance scale and the Utrecht work engagement Scale. The study used simple linear regression to analyses the data. The results have shown that the percentage of work-life balance on employee engagement shows 14.3 %. Companies that give consideration to the welfare of employees' personal life and work life are proven to be able to influence the level of employee engagement in the company. The study was conducted in a non-Kenyan context without the use of law enforcement officers to provide data limit the generalization of the study. The study only used questionnaires in data collection limiting the triangulation of findings thus the current study will use both questionnaires and interview schedules.

Iqbal, Zia-ud-Din, Arif, Raza and Ishtiaq, (2017) studied the relation between the worklife balance and employee engagement banking sectors of Faisalabad. For this purpose, data was collected from a sample sizes of 125 out of 300 respondents. From the finding's employee engagement, work lifebalance and employee cynicism are highly correlated. The result gives deep insight into subject terminologies, uncover the challenges, and explore the way in which the concept shapes our experiences. The best implication of this research is to improve the policies for employees in banking sector. However the study was conducted in the banking sector outside the Kenyan context limiting it generalization amongst law enforcement officers in the Kenyan context.

De Kort and Poell, (2016) studied the relationship between work-life balance, work engagement and participation in employee development activities: A moderated mediation model in Netherlands. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design using a total of 116 participants in eight organization. Data was collected by use of questionnaires. From the findings there was no support for either the mediating effect of work engagement or for the moderating effect of leader-member exchange. However, the relationship between work-life balance and work engagement was significant.

Additional analyses showed that employees with a high level of work-life conflict were less engaged in their work and were more likely to participate in employee development activities. The study was limited by the heterogeneous nature of organization in Netherlands studied besides the study adopted a smaller sample size and used only questionnaires for data collection.

Potgieter and Barnard, (2010) Studied the construction of work-life balance, the experience of Black employees in a Call-Centre environment in South Africa. The research adopted qualitative designed from an interpretivist perspective. Ten employees, selected through purposeful sampling, participated in the study. Data was gathered through in-depth interviews and grounded theory was applied during data analysis. The grounded theory analysis of the data yielded six themes central to participants' construction of work-life balance. The findings suggest that work-life balance is conceptualized as a continuous, subjective and holistic valuation of satisfaction derived from multiple roles in relation to the importance to the individual at a given point in time. The study was conducted in a call center environment and not law enforcement environment in Kenya limiting its generalization. The study also didn't focus on employee engagement as an outcome of work life balance.

Sheppard (2016) explored the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders utilize to improve employee performance at a charter school organization in New York. Data was collected through semi structured interviews from a purposeful sample of 10 managers and 10 non-managerial employees working at a charter school organization in Harlem, New York. Data collection also included organizational performance track indicator documents on employee absenteeism, turnover, motivation, productivity, job satisfaction, and retention, archived organizational records on WLB programs and current WLB programs and policies guidelines. Through methodological triangulation, a number of themes emerged. These themes included work-life balance programs' effectiveness, the importance of a supportive work environment, employee commitment and motivation, employee well-being and productivity, employee job satisfaction and quality work life, organizational culture change, and low utilization of the job sharing program. According to the study results, work-life balance programs could help improve organizational culture and employee overall performance. However the study was conducted in a setting of a learning institution in the context of a developed country limiting the generalization of the findings to the context of a developing country.

Rothmann and Baumann, (2014) investigated the relationships between work-home/home-work interaction, psychological conditions and employee engagement. A cross-sectional survey was used. The participants were 292 employees of a uranium mine in

Namibia residing in towns distant from their workplace. The following measuring instruments were used: Survey Work-Home Interaction –Nijmegen, Psychological Conditions Scale and Work Engagement Scale. Positive work-home interaction and negative home-work interaction had direct positive and negative effects on psychological meaningfulness and psychological availability respectively. Psychological meaningfulness, psychological availability, positive work-home interaction and positive home-work interaction had direct effects on employee engagement. An analysis of the indirect effects showed that positive work-home interaction affected employee engagement via experiences of psychological meaningfulness and psychological availability. Negative home-work interaction affected employee engagement negatively via low psychological meaningfulness and low psychological availability. However the study was conducted in the mining industry and not security sector in the Kenyan context providing a gap for the current study.

Mwesiga (2013) investigated work-life balance initiatives and job satisfaction among administrative staff. Bishop Stuart University was used as a case study. The objectives of the study were to establish the effect of health promotion, paid time off, flexible work arrangements on job satisfaction among administrative Staff of Bishop Stuart University. Data was collected using self-administered questionnaire and interview guide. The study revealed a moderate positive correlation between health promotion and job satisfaction as well as a moderate correlation between paid time off and job satisfaction among administrative staff. The study also revealed a weak correlation between flexible work arrangements and job satisfaction among administrative staff. The study concluded that Health promotion and paid time off tend to be associated more with job satisfaction than the flexible work arrangements. However the study focused on job satisfaction as an outcome of work life balance and not employee engagement.

Mulanya and Kagiri, (2018) determined the effect of work life balance on employee performance in constitutional commissions in Kenya. a case of commission on revenue allocation. Specifically, the study determined the extent to which flexible work schedules, job sharing among employees, employee breaks and employee assistance programs affect employee performance in the organization. The study adopted descriptive survey and case study design and targets 68 employees of the Commission on Revenue Allocation. All the 68 employees of the target population were considered. The study found that the organization lacked effective flexible working arrangements that assisted in the performance improvement. Lack of flexible work schedule had reduced encouragement to continue performing well for the organization as well the employees' degree of independence with their working

arrangements. Successful job sharing arrangements served the needs both of individual employees and their work unit/departments. The commission did not encourage job sharing. There was a significance effect of employee breaks on employee performance. Employees felt re-energized and worked better after their annual leave. The employees were more committed because they were not denied any benefit because of taking leaves as demonstrated. There lacked effective employee assistance programs in the organization. The study recommended that the commission should establish effective flexible work schedules to enable employees attend to work and personal matters. There lacked adequate job sharing in the commission. The study therefore recommended that the commission should embrace job sharing and provide team building programs. The study recommended that the leave package should be enhanced to suit the current life styles. The commission should provide employee assistance programs such as child care unity which ensured that employees are not bothered about their children since they were assured of their care. However the study looked at performance as outco of work life balance and not employee engagement among commissioners and not law enforcement officers providing a gap in the current study.

Abdulkadir, (2018) determined influence of work life balance on the performance of employees in Cabinet Affairs Office, Kenya. The research was guided by spill over theory and compensation theory. The research study then employed descriptive research design which enabled the researcher to fully describe the characteristics of the variable under study. Simple random sampling method was used to come up with 70 respondents. The study covered only middle and lower-cadre level of employees. The primary data was collected by use of semi-structured questionnaire while the Inferential and descriptive statistics was applied to analyze and process the obtained data. Descriptive statistics comprised of frequencies, means, standard deviations, and percentage. The study revealed that work-family priorities affected employee performance at Cabinet Affairs Office. However, the study was conducted in the cabinet office and not amongst law enforcement officers. Beside the sample size was small thus compromising the generalization of the findings providing a gap for the current study.

Effect of employee counselling on employee engagement

According to Hughes (2015) Workplace counselling is an employee support intervention that is usually short term in nature and provides an independent, specialist resource for people working across all sectors and in all working environments. Counselling is discussion with an employee, who has some problem or the other, more particularly emotional in nature. Counselling is geared towards assisting an employee to overcome his or her

emotional stress, so that he/she can get back to the main track of performance. *Employee counselling is a psychological technique and that is used in various forms. The main objective of it is to support the employees by providing them advice, guidance, suggestions to solve the prevailing problems and improve physical and mental conditions, performance and which can take many forms* (Cooper., 2009). Employee counseling has emerged as the latest HR tool used to increase the quality and productivity of the workforce and to attract and retain the best employees (Omol, 2018).

Chen, Huang, Chang, Chang and Chuang, (2016) studied the effect of workplace counseling interventions launched by workplace health promotion and tobacco control centers in Taiwan: an evaluation based on the Ottawa Charter. The intervention group consisted of 838 business entities which had ever undergone counseling of the three centers in northern, central, and southern Taiwan from 2003 to 2007. The control group was composed of 1000 business entities randomly selected from the business directories of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Taiwan. The questionnaire survey included general company profiles and the assessment of workplace health according to the five action areas of the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion. A total of 447 (53.3%) questionnaires were received from the intervention group and 97 questionnaires from the control group. The intervention group was more effective in using the external resources and medical consultation, and they had better follow-up rates of the abnormal results of annual health examinations. Compared to the control group, the intervention group had a significantly decreased smoking rate in 246 companies (61.2%) and a reduced second-hand smoke exposure in 323 companies (78.6%) ($p < 0.001$). The study concluded that by means of the intervention of WHP programs, we can enhance the awareness of the enterprises and the employees to improve worksite health and to create a healthy work environment. However, the study didn't focus on employee engagement. Besides the study was not conducted in the Kenyan context focusing on law enforcement officers.

Nyasha, et al., (2013) the role of counselling in changing employee behaviour Bulawayo Premier Service Medical Aid Society (PSMAS) in Zimbabwe. The research was carried in the form of a case study, in which a sample of 55 employees from a population of 120 employees was used. Stratified random sampling procedure was employed in selecting elements from 20 managers and 100 general workers respectively. Questionnaires and interviews were used in triangulation to collect data on the sample. After analyzing the collected data, it was found that employees have high respect for the role of workplace counselling arguing that it reduces rate of absenteeism, grievances, hearings and dismissals. It was also found that some employees feel that counselling is a waste of resources because it is used by managers as a way of suppression and torture of vibrant employees in

the name of disciplinary counselling. The study was conducted in hospital setting and not amongst law enforcement officers. Besides the sample size was too small for purposes of generalization of the findings.

Dowling (2015) examined health and well-being initiatives in the workplace taking into specific consideration the effect of these initiatives on employee engagement in the Irish Private Sector. The study recruited a sample of 91 participants using convenience sampling. The study examined the differences between Generation Y employees and Generation X employees; isolating their drivers for engagement and determining the differing important initiatives for their respective age categories. The study found that on average work environments are not wholly supportive of workplace initiatives, but that there is a strong line of engagement across the sample. The study showed that there was no correlation between employee engagement and workplace health friendliness for the sample population. However the study focused on the private sector in the Irish republic thus limiting its generalization to the Kenyan law enforcement officers.

Tuvulla and Byaruhanga (2017) establish the effectiveness of workplace counseling in improving employee performance in Mumias sugar company. The study sought to: determine the extent to which workplace counseling improves employee performance; and determine the appropriateness of workplace counseling programmes. The research adopted the descriptive research design. The data was collected through questionnaires and interview schedules. It was established that workplace counseling significantly assisted to improve the performance of employees affected by problems at work and at home. Workplace counseling programmes were appropriate as more than two thirds of the employees were aware of the existence of the programmes at the company. However, the study focused on the manufacturing sector with a different cultural orientation with the security sector limiting the generalization of the findings. Besides the study focused on employee performance and not employee engagement as a dependent variable.

McLeod, (2010) presented a comprehensive, systematic review of the effectiveness of workplace counselling. The findings were analysed in terms of client satisfaction, psychological functioning, the meaning of work, work behaviour, and negative outcomes. The results of the research suggested that counselling is generally effective in alleviating psychological problems and has a significant impact on sickness absence, and has a moderate effect on attitudes to work. However the study didn't focus on employee engagement as an outcome of employee counselling but attitude.

Matolo and Mukulu (2016) investigated the role counseling plays in employee performance in public universities and it focusing on Kenyatta University in Kenya. The study population comprised of management staff, counselors, teaching and non-teaching members of

staff. In order for the objectives of the study to be achieved, a questionnaire was used and data was collected and analyzed using SPSS. The research employed descriptive statistics which gave a result that there was a positive link between counseling and employee performance in public universities in Kenya. However the study only used descriptive statistics which could not give the causal relationship between the variables besides the dependent variable was employee performance and not employee engagement.

Migwe, Gachunga and Iravo, (2017) investigated the perceived influence of employee counselling on the performance of youth development officers in Kenya. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The target population was 195 youth development officers in 12 selected counties including Nairobi, Kiambu, Nyeri, Uasin Gishu, Nakuru, Narok, Kakamega, Bungoma, Kisumu, Meru, Mombasa, and Garissa. A sample size of 105 youth development officers was sampled from the selected counties. Primary data was collected using questionnaires while secondary data was obtained from literature in books, scholarly articles, magazines and journals. Data collected, was edited, coded and then analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. The study established that employee counseling components have positive relationship with the components of performance. As such, it was concluded that employee counseling plays a significant role in determining the performance of youth development officers. However the study didn't focus on employee engagement as an outcome of employee counselling thus providing a gap for the study.

Kay and Tumwet (2015) explored the role of counseling in promoting work engagement and increasing productivity at Kabarak University. The article theorized that engagement, conceptualized as the investment of an individual's complete self into a role, is a significant factor in job wellness and correlates positively with counseling. The study used mixed methods research design. Secondary data was augmented with the participant observation data collection procedure. Qualitative and quantitative data analysis was done using SPSS 22. The study established that at Kabarak University, work engagement is a human resource concern that can be strengthened by staff counseling programs. However, the study did not focus on law enforcement officers thus limiting the generalization of its findings to the sector. Excessive levels of occupational stress causes fatigue, anxiety, depression and social withdrawal and disengages employees from work (Simon & Amarakoon, 2015). Studies have been conducted on occupational stress management on employee engagement (Law, Dollard, Tuckey, & Dormann, 2011; Crawford, LePine & Rich, 2010; Dollard & Bakker, 2010). However, there is still lack of understanding about the effect of occupational stress management practices on employee engagement especially in the police officers in the Kenyan context.

Research Methodology

Research Design: The study adopted a descriptive survey research, a scientific method which involves observing (surveying) and describing the behaviour of a subject without influencing it in any way (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). The descriptive survey design was appropriate for the current study because provides the researcher with the desired information and understanding of the relationship between the study variables. The design entailed collecting data from a sample population and analyzing it in order to establish causal explanations between the independent and dependent variables.

Population of the Study: Target population (also known as theoretical population) is the group to whom we wish to generalize our findings (Polit & Beck, 2010). The target population was all law enforcement officers in Kenya and beyond. Study population (also known as accessible population) is the actual sampling frame, from which we randomly drew our sample. The accessible population of the study was 620 law enforcement officers who were drawn from 34 gazetted police stations and Posts in Uasin Gishu County (Mwangi, 2020; The Kenya Gazette, 2020).

Table 3.1 Accessible Population

Category	Number of officers
OCPD	2
OCS	23
Police officers	595
Total	620

Source: (The Kenya Gazette, 2020).

Sample Size: In this study, the Sample frame consisted of OCPD, OCS, Police officers and women from the 34 gazetted police stations and Posts in Uasin Gishu County. The study used Krejcie and Morgan table, (1970) to calculate the sample size which was 242 law enforcement officers as per the table. A good maximum sample size is usually around 10% of the population (Bullen, 2016). Therefore 242 which is 40% of the population was preferable. The sample proportions from each category of law enforcement officer was determined using the formula according to Cochran, (2007) below:

$$n_h = (N_h / N) * n$$

Where n_h is the sample size for stratum h , N_h is the population size for stratum h , N is total population size, and n is total sample size

Table 3.2 Sample Size

Category	Number of officers	Sample Size
OCPD	2	1
OCS	23	9
Police officers	595	232
Total	620	242

Source: (The Kenya Gazette, 2022).

Data Collection Instruments: The study used questionnaire as well as reviewing existing literature. These instruments supplemented each other and give a deeper and wider exploration to research perspective. Self-administered structured questionnaires based on the specific objectives were used to gather primary data. The items adopted a 5 point Likert Scale of: (1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Undecided 4- Agree 5- Strongly Agree).

Pre-testing of Research Instruments: Pre-testing refers to a study conducted before main study in order to test validity of the research instruments (Sreevidya & Sunitha, 2011). Pre-testing of the questionnaire was done at Kilibwoni Police station in Nandi County in order to identify whether the developed instrument is in agreement with the contents of the research questions. It involved 10% of the size of the sample population (Kothari & Garg, 2014). This means that 25 respondents drawn from sample population participated in the pre-testing of the data instrument but will not take part in final study.

Data Processing and Analysis: Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Under inferential statistics, multiple regressions was used to determine the effect of a set of independent variable (Occupational stress management practices) on dependent variable (employee engagement), coefficient of correlation using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0 package. The regression model will be as follows:

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots \text{Equation 3.1}$$

Where y is employee engagement, dependent variable x was occupational stress management practices, β is the standardized regression coefficient.

X₁ represent work life balance

X₂ represent employee counselling

Data Analysis, Results Findings and Discussion

Descriptive Results for Variables

The study sought to establish the descriptive results for occupational stress management practices as work life balance, employee counselling as independent variables and employee engagement as the dependent variables as represented.

Descriptive Statistics of Work Life Balance

Work-life balance is reducing work-related stress and developing a stable and long-term work schedule while preserving good health and general well-being. Therefore, there is need for employees to set an equilibrium in prioritizing between their personal and professional activities to reduce stress. The study sought to establish the state of work life balance amongst the police officers as presented on table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Results of Descriptive Analysis of work life balance amongst the law enforcement officers

Responses	SD %	D%	UD%	A%	SA%	MEAN	SD
I find it difficult to fulfill my domestic obligations because i constantly think about work	0.0	0.6	10.3	33.9	55.2	4.44	.701
I do not fully enjoy the company of my spouse/family/friends because of work	0.0	1.8	21.8	31.5	44.8	4.19	.840
I fulfill my domestic obligations better because of the things i have learned on my job	0.0	6.1	23.6	35.8	34.5	4.02	.877
I have difficulty concentrating on my work because i am preoccupied with domestic matters	0.0	0.6	27.9	30.3	41.2	4.12	.839
I am better able to keep appointments at work because i am required to do the same at home	0.0	2.4	27.9	50.9	18.8	3.86	.740
Work life balance						4.12	.583

Source: Research Data, (2022)

The study used five questionnaire items to establish Work life balance amongst police officers in Uasin Gishu County. This was presented in table 4.2.

86.1% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they find it difficult to fulfill their domestic obligations because they constantly think about work (M=4.44 SD=0.701), .6 % were in disagreement and 10.3% were undecided. 76.3% of the respondents both agreed and strongly agreed that they do not fully enjoy the

company of their spouse/family/friends because of work (M=4.19 SD=.840) while 1.8% and 21.8% were in disagreement and undecided respectively. Besides, a majority of the employees both agreed and strongly agreed (70.3%) that they fulfill their domestic obligations better because of the things they have learned on their job (M=4.02 SD=0.877), 6.1% disagreed while 23.6% were undecided. 71.5% of the respondents were in agreement that they have difficulty concentrating on their work

because they are preoccupied with domestic matters (M=4.12 SD=0.839), 0.6% disagreed while 27.9% undecided.

In connection with how does the nature of their work help them balance family and work demands

One of the interviewees responded that *“I am having the freedom to complete tasks in my work life while also having time and energy to enjoy my personal life. The nature of my work provides me with some days to work longer or having shifts and leave days so that i can enjoy other activities later in the week or month”*.

Lastly 69.7% respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they are better able to keep appointments at work because they are required to do the same at home (M=3.86 SD=.740), 2.4% disagreed while 27.9% were undecided. In this connection one of the interviewees was asked what does the organization do to help the employees balance work and family demands and had this to say.

“Making sure the officers are leaving the office on time, officers take their time off within the year and not allowing them to carry over holiday or capping how many days they can carry over. Sensitization of the National Police Service of Kenya on the NHIF Comprehensive Medical Insurance Scheme”

The implications of these results are that the national police service should ensure that work life balance practices are in place to so as to acquire better performance and engagement of the police officers.

Descriptive Statistics of Employee Counselling

Organizations use employee counseling as a means of identifying and assisting people who are having technical, personal, or emotional adjustment issues that are interfering with their work performance (Follmer & Jones, 2018). The study sought to establish the state of employee counselling amongst the police officers as presented on table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Results of Descriptive Analysis of Employee Counselling amongst the law enforcement officers

Responses	SD %	D%	UD%	A%	SA%	MEAN	SD
After going through the counseling programs my job performance increases.	3.0	24.2	10.9	24.2	37.6	3.69	1.281
counseling programs has enhanced my interactions with members of the public	1.2	17.6	21.2	22.4	37.6	3.78	1.165
Counselling improved my ability to communicate effectively	0.0	20.0	17.6	19.4	43.0	3.85	1.180
counseling programs enhances my ability to resolve conflict	1.8	14.5	26.1	13.3	44.2	3.84	1.196
misunderstanding among ourselves	0.0	17.0	18.8	17.0	47.3	3.95	1.160
Counselling has help me reduce my levels of stress.	0.0	17.0	18.8	17.0	47.3	3.95	1.160
Employee Counselling						3.82	.706

Source: Research Data, (2022)

The study used five questionnaire items to establish employee counselling amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu County. This was presented in table 4.3. 61.8% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that after going through the counselling programs their job performance increases. (M=3.69 SD=1.281), 27.2% were in disagreement and 10.9% were undecided. 60% of the respondents both agreed and strongly agreed that counselling programs has enhanced their interactions with members of the public (M=3.78 SD=1.165) while 18.8% and 21.2% were in disagreement and undecided respectively. Besides, a majority of the employees both agreed and strongly agreed (62.4%) that counselling improved their ability to communicate effectively (M=3.85 SD=1.180), 20% disagreed while 17.6% were undecided. 57.5% of the respondents were in agreement that counselling programs enhances my ability to resolve conflict misunderstanding among ourselves (M=3.84 SD=1.196), 16.3% disagreed while 26.1% undecided.

Lastly 64.3% respondents agreed and strongly agreed that counselling has help them to reduce their levels of stress (M=3.95 SD=1.1160), 17.0% disagreed while 18.8% were undecided. The implications of these results are that the national police service should strengthen employee counselling services. This is underpinned by the findings of the study and argumentation of Muthomi (2014) that within law enforcement, *employee counseling* programs have given rise to positive outcomes among officers and their job performance.

Descriptive Statistics of Employee Engagement

The policing profession is associated with high engagement and a risk of burnout (Beata & Dâderman, 2019). The study established perception of the law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu County work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption as presented on table 4.3 below.

Table 4.6: Results of Descriptive Analysis of Employee Engagement of the law enforcement officers

Responses	SD %	D%	UD%	A%	SA%	MEAN	SD
My supervisor is a great role model for employees	0.0	.6	9.1	47.3	43.0	4.33	.664
The employer motivates me to go beyond what I would in a similar role elsewhere	0.0	.6	7.3	45.5	46.7	4.38	.648
I rarely think about looking for a job at another company	0.0	.6	14.5	30.3	54.5	4.39	.754
I would recommend law enforcement I willingly help fellow professionals when they have work related problems	0.0	0.0	22.4	34.5	43.0	4.21	.785
	0.0	.6	20.6	29.7	49.1	4.27	.807
Employee Engagement						4.32	.520

Source: Research Data, (2022)

The study used five questionnaire items to establish the state of employee engagement in the law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu County. This was presented in table 4.6 above. 90.3% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that their supervisors are a great role model for employees (M=4.38 SD=.664), .6% were in disagreement and 9.1% were undecided. 93.2% of the respondents both agreed and strongly agreed that their employer motivates them to go beyond what they would in a similar role elsewhere (M=4.38 SD=.638) while .6% and 7.3% were in disagreement and undecided respectively. Besides, a majority of the employees both agreed and strongly agreed 84.8% that they rarely think about looking for jobs in other companies (M=4.39 SD=.754), .6% disagreed while 14.5% were undecided. 77.5% of the respondents were in agreement that they would recommend law enforcement (M=3.21 SD=.785), while 22.4% undecided. Lastly 78.8% respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they willingly help fellow professionals when they have work related problems

(M=4.27 SD=.807), .6% disagreed while 20.6% were undecided. The implications of these results are that the national police service should further strengthen employee engagement amongst the police officers.

Regression Analysis

The study used multiple regression analysis so as to establish the relationship of independent variables and dependent variable that is effect of occupational stress management practices on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya.

Effect of work life balance on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya.

The study sought to determine the effect of employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya. From the model summary in table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.714 ^a	.510	.507	.365	1.766

a. Predictors: (Constant), Work life balance
 b. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement
 Source; (Field data, 2022)

Table 4.5: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	22.643	1	22.643	169.536	.000 ^b
Residual	21.770	163	.134		
Total	44.412	164			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Work life balance
 Source; (Field data, 2022)

the R-value showed a simple correlation value of all the independent variables to the dependent variable, which was 0.714. This is an indication of a strong positive correlation between the independent variables to the dependent variable. The reported R squared value .510 or 51 % showed how much of the variance in the

dependable(employee engagement) variable was explained by work life balance (independent variable) in the model. The value of adjusted R squared was 0.507 an indication that there was variation of 50.7 percent on employee engagement due to changes in work life balance at 95 percent confidence interval. This shows that

50.7 percent changes on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya could be accounted to work life balance.

The statistical significance of this value was reported in the ANOVA table where the analysis results revealed that the significance of F statistics (169.536) is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. This implies that there is a significant relationship between work life balance and

Employee Engagement as seen in table 4.12. This tested the null hypothesis and indicated that work life balance significantly affects employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya. Thus, the rejection of the null hypothesis. These findings were supported by Larasati and Hasanati (2019) Iqbal, Zia-ud-Din, Arif, Raza and Ishtiaq, (2017).

Table 4.6: Regression Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Model	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.693	.203				
	WLB	.637	.049	.714	13.021	.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement
Source; (Field data, 2022)

The regression coefficients table 4.13 showed the contribution of the independent variable to the dependent variable. Finally, from the data in Table 13, the study established regression equation was

$$Y = 1.693 + .637X_1 \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation 4.1}$$

Therefore, Employee Engagement = 1.693 + .637WLB.
From the above regression equation, it was revealed that holding WLB to a constant zero, employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya would be at 1.693 units. A unit increase in WLB would

lead to increase in employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya by a factor of 0.637 (B=0.637, P<0.05).

Effect of Employee Counselling on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya

Objective two of the study sought to establish the effects of employee counselling on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya.

Table 4.7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.666 ^a	.444	.440	.389	1.507

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Counselling
a. Dependent Variable: Employee engagement
Source; (Field data, 2022)

From the findings in table 4.7 the value of adjusted R squared is 0.444 an indication that there is a variation of 44.4% on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers due to Employee Counselling at 95% confidence interval. This shows that 44.4% changes in employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers could be accounted to changes in Employee Counselling

while other factors not considered in this study account for only 55.6% of employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers. R is the correlation coefficient which shows the relationship between the study variables. From the findings shown in the table 4.7 above there was a fairly strong positive relationship between the study variables as shown by 0.666.

Table 4.8: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	19.703	1	19.703	129.972	.000 ^b
	Residual	24.709	163	.152		
	Total	44.412	164			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee engagement
b. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Counselling
Source; (Field data, 2022)

The statistical significance of this value was reported in the ANOVA table where the analysis results revealed that the significance of F statistics (129.972) is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. This implies that there is a significant relationship between employee counselling and employee engagement as seen in table 4.8. This tested

the null hypothesis and indicated that employee counselling significantly affects on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya. Thus, the rejection of the null hypothesis. These findings were supported by (Omolo, 2018; Kay & Tumwet 2015).

Table 4.9: Regression Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Model	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	2.439	.167		14.579	.000		
Emp Counselling	.491	.043	.666	11.401	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee engagement
Source; (Field data, 2021)

The regression coefficients table 4.16 showed the contribution of the independent variable to the dependent variable. Finally, from the data in Table 16, the study established regression equation was

County would be at 2.439 units. A unit increase in employee counselling would lead to increase in Employee engagement of law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu County by a factor of 0.491 (B=0.491, P<0.05).

$Y = 2.439 + .491X_1$ Equation 4.2

The effect of occupational stress management practices on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya

Therefore, Employee engagement = 2.439 + .491 Employee counselling

The study established the effect of occupational stress management practices on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya as presented in table 4.10.

From the above regression equation it was revealed that holding Employee counselling to a constant zero, Employee engagement of law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu

Table 4.10: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Durbin-Watson
1	.787 ^a	.620	.615	.323	.620	1.801

a. Predictors: (Constant), work life balance and employee counselling
b. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

From the model summary of multiple regression model, the results showed that all the predictors (work life balance and employee counselling) jointly explained 62.0 per cent variation on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya. This showed that considering the three study independent variables, there is a probability of 62.0% (R²=0.620) in predicting

employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya. This implies that when the management of law enforcement officers embrace occupational stress management practices then employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya is likely to improve.

Table 4.11 ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	27.537	2	13.769	132.179	.000 ^b
Residual	16.875	162	0.104		
Total	44.412	164			

a Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement
b. Predictors: (Constant), work life balance and employee counselling

Table 4.11 reveals that the F-value of 132.179 and a p-value of 0.00 significant at 5% level of confidence indicate that the overall regression model is significant; hence, the joint contribution of the independent variables was significant in predicting employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya. F-value

of 95.143 and a p-value of 0.00 significant at 5% level of confidence indicate that the overall regression model is significant, hence, the joint contribution of the independent variables was significant in predicting employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya is likely to improve

Table 4.12 Regression coefficients of employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers as predicted by occupational stress management practices

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.367	.186		7.356	.000		
1 Work Life Balance	.446	.051	.500	8.672	.000	.706	1.416
Employee counselling	.291	.042	.395	6.855	.000	.706	1.416

a. Dependent Variable: Employee engagement

Results of the regression coefficients presented in Table 4.12 show the estimates of Beta values and give an individual contribution of each predictor to the model. The Beta value tells us about the relationship between with each predictor. The positive Beta values indicate the positive relationship between the predictors and the outcome. The Beta value for work life balance (.446) and employee counselling (.291). The positive B values indicate the direction of relationship between predictors and outcome. From the results in Table 4.12 the model can then be specified as: -

$$Y = 1.367 + .446X_1 + .291X_2 \dots \dots \dots \text{Equation 4.4}$$

Where:

X_1 = Work life balance

X_2 = Employee counselling

T-test was then used to identify whether the predictors were making a significant contribution to the model. When the t-test associated with Beta value is significant then the predictor is making a significant contribution to the model. The results show that work life balance $t = 8.672$, $P < .05$) and employee counselling ($t = 6.855$, $P < .05$). These findings indicate that all the occupational stress management practices under study jointly significantly affect employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya.

Discussion of Results

The study investigated the effect of effect of occupational stress management practices on employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya. The hypotheses tested were derived from the objectives of the study as discussed.

Individual's perception of the organization's work-family balance support leads to an increase in work engagement. From the study findings multiple regression analysis showed that a significant relationship exists between dependent variable and independent variables. The coefficient of determination (R square) of .510 indicated that the model explained only 51 % of the variation or change in the employee engagement with the remainder of 49 % explained by other factors other than work life balance. From the regression analysis table t value is = 13.021 Similarly, P value is equal to 0.000 that is less than 0.05 that is sufficient to show relative importance. Therefore, it is evident from the results that

work life balance was found to be a positive and a significant predictor of employee engagement. This implies that organizations should be strongly committed to work life balance practices because this can foster employee satisfaction and secure greater employee engagement which can warrant an increase in organizational commitment and performance. This finding is further corroborated by Adewale, Larasati and Hasanati (2019) Iqbal, Zia-ud-Din, Arif, Raza and Ishtiaq, (2017). Who found that work life balance practices significantly affects employee engagement in this regard the national police services must take cognizance of work life balance amongst its staff to perpetuate continuous progress in organizational operations through employee engagement. This finding is also underpinned by social exchange theory which suggests that workers feel obliged to return the favor to employers in the way of hard work. Thus, courtesy of work life balance the national police service is able to retain its most valued talent through employee engagement. Talents are important to the organizations since they are valuable, rare, in-imitable (costly to imitate), and non-substitutable (VRIN) and are a source of organizational performance to the extent that there are no strategically equivalent resources.

Employee counseling is a technique for identifying and assisting people with technical, personal, and emotional adjustment issues that are interfering with their job performance. Employee counseling is the best way to deal with workplace stress, depression, anxiety, and decreased productivity. Therefore, the appreciation and employee counselling is a cornerstone of effective people management, which can enhance employee engagement. The converse might become barrier to achieving employee engagement. This argument is justified by the findings of this study. Standardized regression weight was found to be positive and explores that a positive relation is caused by independent variable in dependent variable. The coefficient of determination (R square) of 0.444 indicated that the model explained only 44.4% of the variation or change in the employee engagement with the remainder of 55.6% explained by other factors other than employee counselling. The t value = 11.401, $p < 0.05$ which is significant. Therefore, these results are providing sufficient ground to affirm that employee counselling has a significant effect on engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya. Thus, the rejection of the null hypothesis. These findings were

supported by (Omol, 2018; Kay & Tumwet 2015 who found a positive and significant effect of employee counseling on employee engagement. This finding is premised on both social exchange theory and jobs demand resource theory thus as the management focuses on employee counselling they do not side step the tenets of employee relations initiatives to engender maximal employee engagement. This implies that national police service should move beyond equal employment opportunity (EEO) façade and myopia of affirmative action laws and intransigently embrace effective employee counselling management strategies for employee engagement amongst the law enforcement officers.

Result of multiple regressions further revealed that occupational stress management practices jointly and independently influence employee engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya. The findings revealed that jointly the two constructs namely work life balance and employee counselling all the jointly explained 62.0 per cent variation on engagement amongst law enforcement officers in Uasin Gishu, Kenya. However, in the light of occupational stress management practices. Work life balance, as a concept, when embraced by the law enforcement officers will contribute extensively to improving their employee engagement as compared to employee counselling. This findings are supported by Rineer, Truxillo, Bodner, Hammer and Kraner (2017) Malik and Noreen (2015) who also found a relationship between occupational stress and well-being. These findings are premised on both social exchange theory and job demands- resource theory

Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study and the guidance from the literature review, it is apparent that strengthening the occupational stress management practices in the police service is an important ingredient for eliciting high employee engagement amongst the law enforcement officers. While there are other factors crucial for employee engagement. The National Police Service should pay more attention in addressing work life balance and employee counselling, for purposes of increasing employee engagement amongst the law enforcement officers. In this regard, the study makes the following recommendations:

The National Police Service should be strongly committed to enhancing work life balance practices to continuously foster employee satisfaction and secure greater employee engagement, which warrants an increase in organizational commitment and employee performance. This will certainly attract and enhance employee engagement of dignified and professional law enforcement officers. The National Police Service should explore ways such as delegation, training, leave policy, time for leisure and flexible working schedules among others to improve the ability of law enforcement officers

to balance work and family responsibilities. This will potentiate work-life separation and minimize work-life interference amongst the law enforcement officers.

Employee counseling is the best way to deal with workplace stress, depression, anxiety, and decreased productivity. Thus, there is need for the National Police Service to embrace and strengthen effective employee counselling management strategies for employee engagement amongst the law enforcement officers. Provide employee counselling with a goal of discussing their emotional problem to reduce psychosocial impact in the long-run. Such an emotional problem could be as a result of mal-adjustment of the employee because of organizational factors or personal factors. There is need for awareness creation on utilization of counselling services to abate the impact of maladjustments.

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