



Vol. 4 | Africa Amani Journal (c)
Chief Editor: Dr Sitawa Michael
Web: www.aaj.ipstc.org
Vol. 7 Issue 1 | March 2020
Email: aajeditor@ipstc.org

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(AAJ)
Editing Oversight: International Peace
Support Training Centre

Nexus between Social Cohesion and Prevention of Violent Extremism: A Bold View from the Status of the Informal Sector in Kenya.

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Abstract

Social cohesion is a critical multidimensional construct that delivers social bonds characterized by high indices of trust across diverse societal groups irrespective of their stratifications. The informal sector of Kenya is a critical actor in the stratified stakeholders in the social cohesion equation core towards national safety and security. This emanates from the sector's; perceptions, knowledge, and consequent behaviors related to social inclusion or exclusion by; national and county governments, and private sector. The study then set out to identify the extent to which social inclusion of the informal sector in Nairobi City County, a sector where members are targeted for recruitment into violent extremism, perceives, social inclusion, partnerships with government, and existence of ungoverned spaces within their spaces of operations. It used a mixed methods approach. Multistage and purposive samplings were carried out to get relevant cross-sectional representativeness of the population of study. Descriptive statistics was used as the main method of data analysis. Findings showed the existence of ungoverned spaces, social exclusion, and need for inclusive partnership approaches. There is need for innovative social inclusion frameworks and partnerships to address the ungoverned spaces with resultant social cohesion core towards prevention of violent extremism.

Keywords; *social inclusion, ungoverned spaces, partnerships, prevention of violent extremism.*

INTRODUCTION

“Across the government, there were failures of imagination, policy, capabilities, and management. . . . The most important failure was one of imagination.”

— The 9/11 Commission Report

Following the 9/11 terror attack involving a multi-mode method that used hijacking and consequent crashing of planes, coupled with a Bio-Terror Attack (BTA) of lacing postal mail with *anthracis* microbes (Hugh-Jones, Rosenberg, & Jacobsen, 2012), with correspondent mass fatalities, casualties, and massive destruction of facilities, the global war on terror (GWOt) took a new turn (Aronson 2013; Goepner 2016). Actors of GWOt represent a unique but determined matrix of international actors in regard to many elements including their vulnerability in relation to; foreign relations with Western nations, perceived role in fighting violent extremists and Jihadists, and their global obligations as members of global security bodies such as the United Nations (UN).

Kenya is one such nation that has suffered numerous terror attacks directed at High Risk Targets (HRTs) by virtue of its wide spectra of strategic international relations with the United States of America (USA) as seen in the bombing of the US Embassy in Nairobi in 1998 that resulted in disruption of civil, business, and national continuity. Further attacks of similar nature in relation to Kenya’s regional and global security role in Somalia followed as witnessed at the West Gate Mall, 2013, Mpeketoni town in Lamu county, 2014 and Garissa University, 2015, (Aronson 2013; Goepner 2016) and 14 Riverside Complex terror attacks of 2019. Although the 1998 attack on US embassy was by Al Qaeda terrorists, the subsequent attacks were by Al Shabab with a change in both mode of attack, narratives used to justify the heinous acts, as well as the nature of targets. This alludes to the evolutionary trend adopted by the violent extremist organizations in regard to their extreme and skewed justifications which form part of their ideological narratives.

Pursuant to some of these complexities, Kenya developed in line with the strategic Countering of Violent Extremism (CVE) practice of the GWOt actors, a National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism (NSCVE). Collaborative efforts across the different actors of the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism (PCVE) pillars within the NSCVE are domiciled within diverse actors. From the Kenyan context, a whole of society approach was envisaged under the NSCVE bringing on board; National and County governments, civil society organizations, private sector, the public, and development partners.

Various arguments have been put across with a view of pointing at the factors which drive an individual or a group of individuals to join violent extremism. These factors are divided into push and pull factors. Although a number of push and pull factors have been identified as traditional drivers to VE, in Kenya, there are emerging contexts of perceived new drivers, recruitment methods, tactics and strategies, and narratives by violent extremist organizations (Ndzovu, 2014; Speckhard & Shajkovci, 2019). Traditional drivers focused on alleged historical injustices and invasion of Somalia by the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) in the war against terrorism (Ndzovu, 2014; Speckhard & Shajkovci, 2019), with a raft of new drivers emerging (Cooney & Bigman, 2015). This has seen the radicalization of a wide group/category of Kenyans having diverse demographic characteristics unlike the previous one that was predominantly of Muslim faith (Speckhard and Shajkovci 2019). As witnessed in the attack on 14 Riverside Complex in 2019,

the planners and attackers were of Kenyan origin (Bryden & Bhara, 2019), from hitherto non-traditional family backgrounds, and religion, with a female who had been a university student being one of the operatives.

The emerging drivers into VE include political extremism, quest for identity by the youth through violent criminal gangs and even wanderlust, with criminal gang members becoming easy prey for recruitment into terrorism (Hamm & Spaaj, 2017; Valasik & Phillips, 2017). Such approaches defy the assertions of social deprivation theory, instead bringing on board a nexus between criminality and VE (Ljujic, van Prooijen, & Weerman, 2017). This is supported by the research study carried out by Basra and Neumann (2016) which revealed that that 80% of those who undertook terror attacks had a history of violent criminal behaviour in their own home areas.

Despite the vibrant NSCVE with county action plans prepared in line with the legal mandate of the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC), there have been a number of attacks by violent extremists that would have been thwarted had the various actors and audiences of safety and security in different spaces acted accordingly. As seen in the attack on 14 Riverside Complex in January 2019, which left in its wake 21 fatalities, many casualties and threat to business continuity, the attackers were of Kenyan origin (Bryden & Bahra, 2019). During their planning they interacted with a number of actors in different spaces who could have nipped this in its bud. Among the actors in such spaces were managers and employees of housing estates, hotels and restaurants, private security, car hire, public service transport, retailers of Subscriber Identification Module (SIM) cards and graffiti artists specialized in the automotive industry. Many of these operate businesses in ways that depict informal practices that have frailties in the linkages with the critical government actors mandated with the security of critical infrastructure and high risk targets such as highly trafficked physical and virtual spaces. The main focus of the different actors is profits and business gains oblivious of their critical roles in the potential provision or compromise of national safety and security.

This indicates a populace and ecosystem within different urban spaces that lacks both national consciousness and ethos towards the threat of violent extremism and terrorism on people's lives, businesses, and national safety and security postures. National consciousness is an outcome of social cohesion. Hence the need to find out the extent to which, gaps in the predictors of social cohesion core towards safety exist across the spaces of the informal actors. This is as viewed in this study, from the epistemological lenses of; social inclusion, partnerships, and ungoverned spaces, in relation to violent extremism.

Research Objectives

The overall objective was to identify existing social cohesion practices targeting the informal sector in Nairobi City County by county and national government actors.

The specific objectives are;

- i. To determine the presence of ungoverned spaces across the informal sector actors within Nairobi City County.
- ii. To establish the extent to which the informal sector is involved in partnerships core to social cohesion within Nairobi City County.

- iii. To find out the social inclusion practices in the informal sector by county and government actors within Nairobi City County vital for social cohesion.

Research hypothesis

H₀₁: The combined effect of partnerships between informal sector and government and social inclusion of the informal sector has no significant relationship with social cohesion.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed method approach with quantitative being the main method. The research designs involved in this study are; descriptive, correlational, and the survey methods. Correlational design was used to identify the relationship between behaviours of social inclusion and partnerships from the government actors and related perceptions of the same from the informal sector. The survey method was used in collecting data across different sub-sectors of the informal sector.

Sampling method

The study used a multi-stage clustering with the first stage being the geographical areas in which the populations of the informal sector are, and the second level cluster being sub-sectors of the informal sector. Purposive sampling using different types of livelihood engagements was undertaken in order to give a sample representative of the livelihood activities of the informal sector.

Research design

The research designs involved in this study are; descriptive, correlational, and the survey methods. Correlational design was used to establish the relationship between partnerships and social inclusion on one hand and social cohesion on the other. This involved the use of empirical statement of a null hypothesis, and consequent testing of the combined predictive effect of the two variables on social cohesion. The descriptive design involved description by participants and respondents of; circumstances, events, situations, experiences, practices, behaviours, feelings, perceptions, and attitudes pertaining to relational practices, service delivery, and partnerships with relevant county and national government actors. This was from both the qualitative and quantitative research methods applied with percentages and numbers representing frequencies showing numerical values of behaviors, perceptions, and experiences relating to ungoverned territories, partnerships between informal sector and county government, informal sector with National government, and social inclusion. Descriptions of the lived experiences and perceptions of the participants were captured and quoted verbatim followed by relevant descriptions in line with the theme of study. The survey method was used in collecting data across different sub-sectors of the informal sector. The sub sectors included; boda boda, mechanics, bar attendants, stall operators, mechanics, care takers, drone operators, and cemeteries. This is because they are key actors across the entire space of the informal sector with diverse interactions with the following sectors; public, private, and people.

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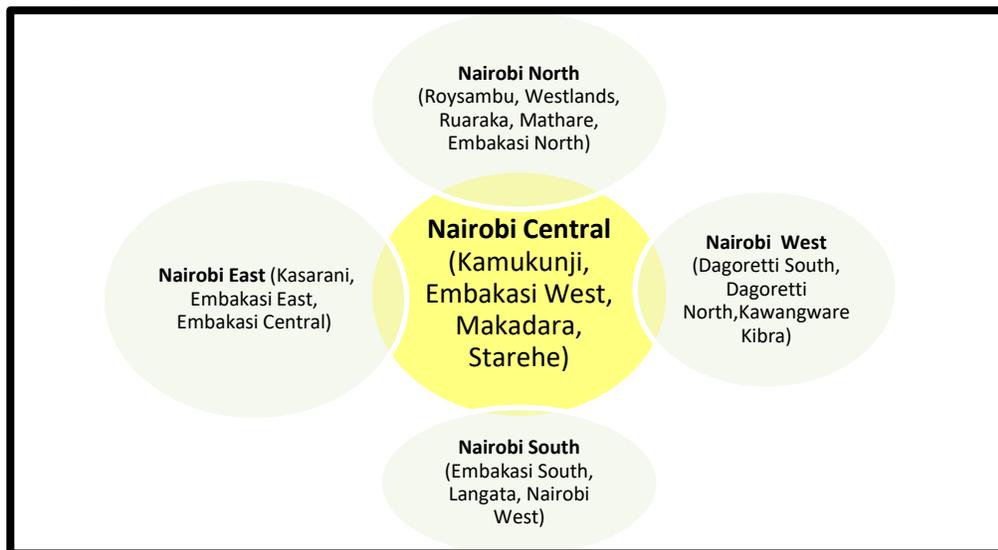


Figure 1: Multistage and purposive sampling

RESULTS

Reliability testing

The scores on the items measuring the same constructs were looked at for consistency. To minimize random errors and increase the reliability of data, a Cronbach’s Alpha test was computed using SPSS. The coefficient score was 0.972 as shown in Table 1. As discussed by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a coefficient of 0.972 implies that there is high reliability with the data.

Table 1: Reliability Test Results

| Cronbach’s Alpha | Cronbach’s Alpha Based on Standardized Items | Based on N of Items |
|------------------|--|---------------------|
| .967 | .972 | 63 |

Data collection

The number of participants and respondents was 128 as shown in Table 1 covering the sub-sectors of motor cycle riders (boda boda), hawkers, bar hostesses, caretakers, mechanics, and stall operators from across Nairobi City County. Quantitative data was collected using survey instruments, while observations, interviews and focus group discussions were methods used to collect qualitative data.

Table 2: Table of Frequencies and Geographical Areas of Respondents and Participants

| Sector | Quantitative | Qualitative | N |
|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------|
| North | 16 | 3 | 19 |
| South | 11 | 7 | 19 |
| East | 17 | 7 | 18 |
| West | 21 | 9 | 30 |
| Central | 24 | 6 | 30 |
| Total | 89 | 39 | 128 |

**Ungoverned spaces
Boda Boda**

Among the respondents who were boda boda operators, 60% (12) were not legally registered with the authorities in charge of public transport, 35% (7) lacked motor-vehicle insurance cover (comprehensive or third party). Up to 90% (18) of them had unrestricted access to such high risk targets such as hospitals and dispensaries, learning institutions, shopping malls, stadia, National Police Service (NPS) stations, and highly crowded events. As one respondent stated,

“..We also drop our clients to big hotels where we are searched by gate security officers before we are allowed to enter, but for golf clubs, horse races and churches we just get in with no security search.”

Source: Respondent A. (2019)

This shows that there are high risk targets where the riders are never frisked, an indicator of ungoverned spaces within the private sector.

The boda boda operators also mentioned that they also transport a wide range of cargo including food, corpses, animals, and vehicle spare parts. The data further revealed that close to 20% (4), of them did not check the client’s luggage while 70%, (14), breached the laid down city zoning regulations. Close to 70% (14) of them were aware of riders’ involvement in organized crime with 40% (8) indicating that they had knowledge of fellow riders being involved in the peddling and trafficking of drugs and other forms of illicit trade. About 75 % (15) of the boda boda riders indicated regular and high levels of harassment by the administration police service officers with a similar percentage indicating high levels of harassment by traffic police officers.

In incidences where one of the boda boda operators was threatened, they worked as a cohesive group as one respondent posited.

“..... we have a case of one of our members who was attacked by organized thugs who stabbed him and took off with the motor bike. Luckily, the motorbike was installed with a tracker which assisted us in identifying the signal in and we went

for it. We were thirty riders each carrying two men ready to kill the said thief. The motor cycle was found. We didn't report the case to police since we didn't find it important."

Source: Respondent C. (2019)

The capacity to mobilize, guided action in hunting for the culprit, with clear intent to kill, without involving the police clearly indicates a group that is operating as per its own rules away from the laid down laws, a clear indicator of the motor cycle transport sector as an ungoverned space. The boda boda space was characterized by operators who had a common mindset and behaviour of instant justice through members with no space for the involvement of formal security systems and processes: a total disregard of existing laws, processes, and systems.

Nonetheless, it is commendable that they had adopted the use of technology for the security of their assets; an initiative that can be leveraged on in the GWOt if they could be involved through relevant safety and security actors.

Mechanics

The findings revealed that 60% (9) were neither registered to operate nor licensed by the Nairobi City County, with all of them 100% (15) indicating that they were not aware of any database for mechanics within their areas of operation. Further, 86.7% (13) stated that their employers never asked for national identity cards or any other relevant identification documents at the time of employment. It was also noted that 66.7% (10) confirmed that the past records in regard to need for a certificate of good conduct were never asked for. Where they were requested to submit such documents, there were no mechanisms for their verification or confirmation on authenticity as revealed by participants during focus group discussions. Moreover, all of them, 15, stated that customers are allowed to bring their own spare parts, with 93.3% (14) confirming that they carry out vehicle modifications in accordance to the customers' instructions as narrated by one participant.

"We do modifications of vehicles like replacing engines of one model of a car with another and other parts."

Source: Respondent I. (2019)

This revealed that they did undertake illegal activities using their skills. Approximately 33.3% (5) stated that the police did not question them as they moved their spare parts across the city, with 46.7% (7) indicating that they drove repaired vehicles to the owners' offices, while 60% (9) indicated doing the same to the owners' areas of residence.

Stall Operators

Of the stall operators who took part in this study, 60% (12) were aware of cases of insecurity whereby stalls were broken into at night. It was observed that a group referred to as the Nairobi Business Community had formed a group that offered security services on geographical location clusters where the business operators therein would be required to send Ksh 1,000 via the Mpesa as protection fee. One element of security was against harassment by the enforcement officers of

the City County. 40% (8) were aware of organized crime by fellow stall operators with 20% (4) being involved in bribery for services that they are entitled to. Observations were made to the effect that there were leadership levels among the stall operators. Their leaders were suspicious of the researchers and went ahead to ask for the researchers to identify themselves. Further they questioned the stall operators who had introduced the researchers on how well they knew the researchers. This is an indicator of a social identity among the stall operators with established and functional leadership and group norms. In one of the focus group discussions it was noted that in the midst of the stall operators were actors who partnered with thieves who specialized in theft of high-end phones. This showcased how deep crime had been accepted as a way of life and as a social identity. During an operation by police and anti-counterfeit officers, it was observed that there was an on-going counterfeit trade under the disguise of registered trade, a further indicator of an emerging context of ungoverned spaces and their utilization for propagation of counterfeit trade.

Bars attendants

The entire lot of bar hostesses (who were women) reported that none of them was registered as a bar hostess by any government agency. Bar hostesses in a focus group discussion narrated the lack of profiling by the bar management as indicted in the verbatim quote below;

“...one bar maid was employed recently but it was noted that one of the names on her national identity card was Nuru which is not part of the names she had given and on checking the national identity card photograph, it appeared like she was not the one....next day she sold Ksh 740 and took off with the money.....it happens..”

Participant K. (2019)

This was indicative an employee who was already into criminal activity and who was exploiting a space that lacked data-based governance in relation to critical employee's data and information collection and consequent verification. This was a further indicator of existing ungoverned spaces within the informal sector ecosystem. It further indicated the lack of a culture of data collection and management, indicative of gaps in policy and legislation in the employment processes of informal employees.

Caretakers

The research study observed that none (0%) of the caretakers was registered to work as in the profession, besides none (0%) having attended any course pertaining to skills and knowledge core towards caretaking. Their behaviour in the management of rental houses in informal areas was reflected in the high percentages in the lack of profiling of residents and their significant others. The findings showed that all (100%) the welders and spray painters are never asked for family details by the caretakers in the business premises they occupy within the informal sector. The main document asked for is the national identity card with no; skills, technology, process, requirement, or means for verification of its authenticity as explained by caretakers in interviews. The study showed that 12.5 % (1) of welders and spray painters in rental houses, and 50% (2) of welders and spray painters in rented business premises indicated that the caretakers ask for their original national identification cards during the engagement to be a tenant.

Cemeteries

It was observed that the two Lang'ata cemeteries neighbouring each other, serve as ungoverned cemeteries through methods of both observation and interviewing of the informal actors who included hawkers, grave diggers, and kiosk-owner-cum-managers. None of these actors was either licensed or had permits to do business within the cemetery spaces. By extension, as detailed by county government officials, there is no database of the same actors, further attesting to the extent to which the space in which they operate remains ungoverned. In spite of the heavy funeral traffic that gets into the two sections of the cemetery-Christian and Muslim- there are no safety and security services to the mourners, burial sites, and the bodies.

In the neighbourhood of this space, are critical infrastructures of; air transport for planes landing at Wilson airport, Lang'ata road, by-pass linking Lang'ata road and Ngong road, Lang'ata military barrack, Lang'ata police station and high value natural resources under the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS). There are also neighbouring estates, Lang'ata Women's prison, and St Mary's hospital although at a distance, but which can be targets of violent extremists and terrorists through use of the ungoverned spaces to recruit, train, reconnoitre, hide their arsenal and ultimately undertake a terror attack.

Other than the national security threat posed by these ungoverned spaces, lack of county government services such as sanitation and national government services such as security, also pose an opportunity for perceptions of neglect as narrated by the public, further alienating the two governments from the very public that is a critical PCVE actor. It is worth noting that many of those who rely on informal spaces for their livelihood also bury their relatives in such spaces. This threatens social cohesion from the relational and hence social cohesion contexts of partnerships between public and county government, and public and national government.

Drone operators

Interviews with the drone operators and installers of television aerials and satellites brought to light that they were not registered under any institution in government or private sector as a regulatory authority. The drone operators narrated that they readily bought the drones online and used them in a variety of events. They included shooting of videos during weddings, funerals, graduations, music recordings, and being hired by real estate companies. One participant narrated that he had several drones and was highly passionate about and skilled in drone assembly using locally available materials. Nevertheless he had heeded to the national government's directive on non-use of drones.

Bearing in mind the emergence of the weaponization of drones besides use in reconnoitre as well as being possible vehicles for the delivery of items into target spaces, their use from an ungoverned space perspective illuminates a serious threat, even if used at very low scale. Further taking cognizance of the fact that drones can be used as aerial, ground and aquatic vehicles, it makes the choice of their use through informed experiences by violent extremists highly probable. Drones have been weaponised by terrorists with resultant fatalities, casualties, and destruction (Rassler, 2016). Adding this to the identified possibility of easily using drones to spread microbes as aerosols through air (Newman, 2018), coupled with the documented weaponization of microbes as witnessed during the 9/11 terror attack (Hugh-Jones et al., 2012), the need for relevant governance on drone acquisition and utility becomes pronounced. Furthermore, the attempt by

Abdi Ali, a Kenyan medical intern, to weaponize *anthracis* (Zadock, 2016), is an indicator of the existing threat of weaponizing microbes as a BTA weapon within the Kenyan space.

Social inclusion of actors of drones most of whom as observed and narrated by the KIIs have passion and unique assembly talents through partnerships with relevant government agencies including the ministry of ICT, under which Youth Affairs department is domiciled, is a possible linkage towards social cohesion. It would insulate such individuals and groups from being targeted for radicalization and consequent utilization of their skills by terrorist organizations. It also makes them identify well with the government and relevant private sector and public sector actors against possible negative dichotomy of social exclusion with correspondent threat to harmony, a factor of social cohesion. .

Partnerships

Boda Boda

About 95 % (19) of the boda boda riders indicated that they had never been invited for any county security meetings even at their ward levels where they operate from. The findings further showed that 57.7% (12) would not agree to partner with police on security matters. About 75 % (15) agreed with the need for partnership with different actors in the provision of sanitation services, with all the respondents (100%) (20) indicating that they have no partnership with the National Youth Service (NYS), although 90% (18) of the respondents indicated that they would be readily available and willing to partner with NYS in order to better their business skills. Through discussions it was evident that they have positive perceptions, respect, and liking for the NYS, unlike their perceptions of the other county and national security actors.

Hawkers

All (100%) (15) of the hawkers who participated in this study stated that there are no meetings with County Government enforcement department (*kanju*) on working relations and security-related matters. Similarly none of the respondents (0%) was registered as a bona fide trader operating within the city county. A key informant expressed how that it seems that the city county government has no space or thought about the services that such traders need. The participant lamented as follows when asked about the causes and nature of the frequent fire outbreaks in the largest open market in the city known as Gikomba;

“...it is possible that some of the fires in Gikomba market are deliberately set by interested players in the business so that they most probably be paid by insurance...however i cannot say that with certainty.... unfortunately in this market (Dagoretti) we have had fires burning our merchandise since we don't have a nearby response by government...the nearest one has never responded to our emergencies...”

Source: Participant T. (2019)

This indicated lack of partnership in safety practices and failure of the county government to avail relevant safety services. Safety and security are outcomes of partnership and as observed in studies failure by government to avail anticipated safety and security services leaves a space through which narratives of violent extremists thrive. It was observed that the hawkers' businesses lacked

insurance, with traders stating in a focused group discussion that the insurance firms only insure traders with permanent structures. This nature of exclusion enhances the propagation of a negative social identity against those insured, their businesses, the government, and the insurance companies. It further increases the justification of the ‘us’ versus ‘them’ narrative; a fertile ground towards recruitment, quest for significance, and revenge through violent extremism (SFCG, 2017).

Bar attendants

Though 71.4% (5) of the bar workers had never received any form of training on improvement of their business from the county government, 85.7% (6) would be interested in receiving such training. The findings further showed that 85.7% (6) indicated that there was no practice of the police training them on issues of security. Among the bar attendants, 71.4% (5) of the respondents had never participated in drills for evacuation procedures in case of a security emergency, 42.9% (3) were not aware of any safety room for refuge and 71.4% (5) did not have any information of any security emergency call line/numbers.

In a focused group discussion, one of the participants whose job was washing bars narrated how she noted smoke from the bar upon which she narrated

“..I checked my credit calling balance called the manager who informed me that he was inside the bar upon which I warned him that the bar was burning....the fire fighters were late in responding and within 45 minutes everything except keg beer was burnt down...it also spread to a neighbouring bar ...

Source: Participant M. (2019)

Another participant indicated that although they had no fire extinguishers in the bar and have never been trained on such,

“...training in first aid for us would help when a drunkard falls and is bleeding...or when a drunkard faints....it helps the victim reach hospital.”

Source: Participant H. (2019).

This indicated a desire to partner with relevant bodies which deliver such learning opportunities in health and safety. In reality, these practices were not part of the culture of partnership between the county and national governments or even the private sector with the informal sector actors.

Mechanics

Majority of mechanics, 86.7% (13), indicated that they would be interested in partnering with the NYS in business continuity training, with participants in a focused group discussion indicating a strong desire to benefit from the skills and resources of the NYS. Nearly 93.3% (14) indicated that there was no partnership with the police on issues of security. Further, 73.3 % (11) indicated that the government had had no efforts to bring registration services closer to where they operated from. A total of 93.3 % (14) and 73.3 % (11) of the mechanics indicated that they had positive relationships with street families, and boda boda operators respectively. Among themselves were

strong bonds of benevolence as shown by 73.3% (11) who indicated that they usually contributed to supporting their members during bereavement, ailment, and need for children's school fees.

Stall operators

As shown by 70% (14) of the stall operators, there is a general unwillingness to partner with the police on security matters with only 30% (6) of the stall operators indicating willingness. A stall operator stated;

“I don't trust the police. I can't partner with police, how can I partner with people I don't trust? I don't want to get victimized. I fear them..... “we are charged for fire extinguishers by county government but neither fire extinguisher nor training on the same is accorded. In case of fire in our stalls, the only thing one can do is to run.”

Source: Respondent R. (2019)

This was in support of the findings on fire fighting skills showing that 80% (16) of the respondents do not know how to use a fire extinguisher.

Overall partnership posture

The high preference for partnership between informal business traders-car washing, mechanics, welding, and spraying- and the National Youth Service serves a critical role towards nurturing social cohesion. By leveraging on the existing infrastructure, knowledge delivery and contextualized skilling processes of NYS, it sets to build inclusive and dignifying social resilience bridges between the said actors, county governments, and the national government through the NYS platform. Key outcomes from the training, skilling, awareness, and identity development include positive identities as significant changes against diverse vulnerabilities of recruitment to criminal gangs and violent extremism. It adds to the desired national security posture.

The return on social inclusion investment through increased access and absorption of government services is reciprocity in partnering with both National and County governments, and private sector; indicators of improved social cohesion. It is through such relationships that social inclusion through partnerships can be catalysed with consequent formation of strong affiliation. Strong affiliation as a result of positive perceptions, followed by positive behaviors as social exchanges within the social relations are antecedents of social cohesion owing to the trust bonds developed. These bonds define social cohesion between and among contextual demographics, and socio-economic strata irrespective of the socio-economic challenges facing the entire nation. This would deliver the much-desired safety and security through prevention and countering of vulnerability to recruitment to violent extremism. This plays a pivotal role to national safety and security through the established social cohesion driven national ethos.

Social inclusion

Harassment by government security officers

All the boda boda riders (100%) (20) reported very high levels of harassment from the city county enforcement officers, 80% (16) reported harassment from the traffic police while another 80% (16)

reported harassment from the administration police. One of the respondents who took part in the study narrated how there was lack of initiative to building bridges through partnerships.

“no single moment we have ever been invited by police to have any meeting with them relating to road safety and use.”

Source: Respondent R. (2019)

This indicated failure of the National Police Service to involve them (the boda boda) despite their major role in public transport. 75% (15) of the hawkers who took part in the study indicated very high level of harassment by enforcement officers, while 50% (10) indicated high levels of harassment by the police, with an observation of actual harassment resulting in the loss of hawkers merchandise besides life-threatening encounters while in their hands.

Lack of basic services

The data reveals that most of the informal sector actors lacked basic sanitation and other important facilities that would contribute to their health and well-being in their working spaces. 85% (17) of the boda boda riders affirmed that there were no designated parking spaces for their motor cycles. About 65% (13) of stall owners and 55% (11) of mechanics had no access to washrooms in their operational spaces. In an interview with one of the boda boda operators who took part in the study, the following was reported

“The county government has built shades for us but no sanitation, no toilets and bathrooms and in case you have an urge to help yourself to a call of nature, you have to find your own way to do it.”

Source: Participant M. (2019)

All the mechanics, boda boda riders, bar hostesses, and hawkers indicated that there was the lack of free medical check-up programs near their areas of operation with one woman participant in a focus group discussion retorting on the issue of screening for cancer

“...if they brought those services close to our working areas we would not hesitate to even avail ourselves for checks such as cervical cancer...but to tell me to go all the way to some of those places like the city centre is to tell me to abandon my source of livelihood...”

Source: Participant J. (2019)

Majority of the informal sector members did not have National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) medical cover as indicated by 50% (10) of the boda boda riders, all 100% (7) the bar hostesses, hawkers(15), and mechanics (15). Some of them on discussion indicated that they had the cards but due to the informal nature of their employment with no fixed and regular monthly income, their accounts were not up-to-date at the time of the study, leaving them vulnerable in the event of ailments requiring medical attention.

Disaster preparedness and response is another aspect of social exclusion identified in the informal sector with all indicating that they had not been involved in any first aid training, fire fighting drills

and responses to disasters. Further there was poor solid waste management, lack of water and sanitation services, insecurity, and increased licenses and permit fees. There is a deep feeling of total neglect and exploitation by government, making many live from hand to mouth. As one of them narrated "...*Kenya ilikufa kitambo...*" meaning "Kenya died a long time..." This indicates lack of national identity in an individual, one of the key vulnerabilities that narratives by violent extremists and recruiters leverage on.

Trust of legal enforcement authorities

The findings on the relationship between government and the informal sector revealed a high level of mistrust of the government and the security personnel. For example 60% (12) of the boda boda riders, 70% (14) of the stall operators, and 30% (6) of the mechanics were not willing to partner with the police on security-related matters. Moreover, 100% (15) of the hawkers and 55% (11) of stall operators stated that they could not rely on the government to provide them with security. One of the respondents mentioned the following.

"We rely on private security not national police. The owner of the premise has hired Maasai from Tanzania as our security."

Source: Respondent Z. (2019)

In the slums small business ladies also stated as evidenced by the verbatim quote below;

"When it comes to matters of security, you have to take care of yourself and your family. There are no police patrols and due to that we avoid moving around during certain times and in particular very early in the mornings and late at night. We only see police when they are coming for the corruption money from bars and drunkards in the drinking dens."

Source: Respondent P. (2019)

Social exclusion on insurance

It was observed that the hawkers' businesses lacked insurance, with traders in Gikomba market stating in a focus group discussion narrating how the insurance firms chose to insure traders with permanent business structures. This was an indicator of viewing the informal sector as high-risk, to a point of not deserving business continuity interventions from the view of the insurance actors. It catalysed disruption of social cohesion.

Social inclusion and partnerships

H₀₁: The combined effect of partnerships between informal sector and government and social inclusion of the informal sector has no significant relationship with social cohesion.

Table 3: Model 1 Summary for H_01

| Model Summary | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1 | .606 ^a | .367 | .352 | 1.77498 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), partnership, Social inclusion

The R-value of .606 shows a high level of prediction of the dependent variable, social cohesion, by the predictors; social inclusion and partnerships. As presented in Table 3, the coefficient of determination, R Square, was 0.367 and R was 0.606, 0.05 significance level. The coefficient of determination indicates that 35.2 % to 36.7 % of the variation on social cohesion in the study is influenced by a combination of social inclusion and partnerships.

The *F*-ratio in the analysis of variance is 23.224{ $F(2, 80) = 23.224$ } and a significance level of .000, $p < 0.05$, shows that the independent variables, social inclusion and partnerships, statistically significantly predict the dependent variable, social cohesion. This implies that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between social inclusion and partnerships combined and social cohesion. Hence reject H_01 .

This significance illuminates the positive significant relationship between social inclusion and partnerships on one hand and social cohesion on the other. It further shows that social inclusion of informal sector by both the National and County governments as well as partnerships between the informal sector and each of the governments are critical antecedents towards developing social cohesion. High indices of social cohesion as a result of social inclusion and synergistic partnerships result in high indices of positive social identity and in particular national identity. Social cohesion delivers; individual, group, community, and social resilience: a critical factor against vulnerability to the push and pull factors of recruitment into violent extremism and terrorism (Hedayah, 2019).

DISCUSSIONS

Ungoverned Spaces

The findings on the presence of ungoverned spaces in relation to the informal sector depicted a weaknesses in the governance image in regard to safety and security practices core towards optimally leveraging on the value chain of safety and hence security. Within this value chain is both civil and business continuity of not only the informal sector actors but also the private business actors. This is in spite of the private sector having elaborate compliance with laid down legislation, directives, and regulations; right from the registration of their businesses. By extension is the epitome of the value chain on national security. Databases of actors in all spaces play a significant role in mitigating the exploitation of such spaces by operatives of violent extremism and terrorism. Such evidence-based approaches and processes require policy-informed frameworks and relevant legislation for localization across the diverse security ecosystem.

It will further serve a critical detection and prevention role owing to the threat posed by returnees who were foreign terrorist fighters following the collapse of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. It is worth noting that by having no comprehensive databases on the motor cycle transport value

chain, the nation runs the risk of money laundering a major activity for financing terrorism and violent extremism as asserted by (Irwin & Mirad, 2016). Extortion for protection, a finding of this research, is a further letter in the alphabet of money laundering. The criminal aspect of extortion allows for money to exchange hands with the service given being a national government function. The proceeds from extortion are not reflected in the specified national money and finance infrastructure which allows for monitoring and taxation. Such money escapes the formal structures where anti-money laundering legislation and monitoring is effective. Furthermore there is a risk of violent extremists committing crimes using motor cycles whose owners are not in the relevant databases, by exploiting the weak links of government, as witnessed in the case of the terror suspect arrested in Transmara.

In regard to the role of government to provide laid out services, lack of the same irrespective of the reasons, becomes a catalyst for the informal sector actors to develop their own governance systems which are a total deviation from the laid out governance frameworks. From the context of the ungoverned spaces, this resonates with the theory of poverty and social exclusion (Jordan, 1996), where a society develops its own governance structures because it feels; socially, politically, and economically excluded on the basis of being poor.

All the actors of the informal sector spaces discussed above lack prior training and skills relevant towards their roles in the various businesses that they are in charge of. For example vehicle modifications are one of the activities by mechanics that brings out the risks they pose to the security either knowingly or due to ignorance. Many vehicles used in terror and violent extremist attacks have undergone modification through the skills of mechanics to form VBIED and SVBEID.

Cemeteries similarly offer ungoverned spaces that serve as a threat to a multiplicity of both hard and soft targets with an aerial perspective making probable complex attacks very possible. Partnerships between the national government, county government, private sector, and the vulnerable youth are vital in changing the paradigm of the cemetery. From the perception and preference of homogeneity between vulnerable youth and the NYS it becomes easy to have an innovative partnership between the two groups towards the governance of the cemetery space.

State actors including the county governments have been indicted for catalysing the proliferation of ungoverned spaces through clandestine practices such as unquestionable injustice through brutality, bribery and corrupt dealings. These are activities which enhance the continued survival of those who prefer such approaches within the government as well as within the informal sector. This increases the vulnerability of informal, public, and private spaces to the outcomes of illegal and criminal operations and behaviors favoured by ungoverned spaces.

Partnerships

There is an underlying theme of trust in the National Youth Service with many of the informal sector members voicing their desire to have skilling from this state agency. The informal garages, tailors, food kiosks, water valve welders, barbers, and drivers feel that it would be a great boost to their skills and self-esteem if the NYS would roll out a program for them. By devolving the NYS to the areas of operation of such informal actors it becomes easier to bridge the gap between them and the national government, a low-cost partnership and building bridges innovation, for social cohesion. NYS can be deployed and redeployed to diverse areas for tasks in line with their legal

mandates. In this aspect it then becomes feasible to plan and implement partnerships and social inclusion practices between the NYS and the informal sector with focus on social cohesion as an outcome. It is worth noting that majority of the NYS members have had a stint of the informal sector as part of their training thus, have a good understanding of the informal sector dynamics.

By leveraging on transformational partnerships which offer quality relational exchanges between the informal sector actors and state and non-state actors, a whole of society approach towards social inclusion becomes a culture. This adds to the desired posture of national ethos with resultant improved social cohesion owing to the trust, respect, understanding, inclusion, reciprocity, knowledge, opportunities, and transformation achieved. It becomes an effective arsenal against the recruitment, adding value to the role of the nation in the GWOt, besides serving to take control of some of the emerging ungoverned spaces.

Social Inclusion

The findings of this research study show different levels of social exclusion across different informal spaces by different state actors and even non-state actors. Among the key state actors include the; police, those in charge of different types of registration, and county governments and in particular, the county law enforcement officers who are accused of pronounced harassment. In spite of the clearly laid down values of public participation under the County Government Act, 2012, and the Public Finance Management Act, 2012, there is a clear lack of proactive public participation approaches core towards bringing the informal sector on board in the decision-making processes. Alienating such critical stakeholders of peace and security locks them out with consequent welling of feelings and perceptions of denied affiliation and legitimacy. The hatred and anger within afflicted and socially excluded informal sector individuals and groups serve as a critical nexus on which violent extremists can leverage their narratives. This becomes a plausible threat to national security; when viewed from the different contexts through which the violent extremism narratives, radicalization, and actions would be driven.

Failure to have the corporate social responsibility services well thought by incorporating the recipients within the planning process, through an evidence-based collaborative approach, becomes a waste of corporate resources. Involving the informal sector when planning for social corporate responsibilities delivers; innovative cooperation, better informed approaches, and procedures, with consequent ownership, outcomes and transformation from such interventions. Taking such services to particular mapped and profiled recipients in a manner that delivers self-esteem would be unique and impactful with consequent building of trust, perceptions of being worth and reciprocal behaviors. Handled from evidence-based PVE approaches, they would have transformational outputs and outcomes across the entire informal sector with some of them being core towards the safety of formal businesses and peaceful urban areas.

Social exclusion results in; mistrust, stereotyping, anger and hatred due to being denied legitimacy, affiliation, and participation in terms of their rights of earning a livelihood from designated spaces and existing rules of engagement. It propagates the vicious cycle of poverty and anger indicators of a prime pool of those targeted for radicalization into violent extremism.

Recommendations

The County and National governments should co-design inclusive bottom-up service models with the informal sector in conjunction with the private sector and profiled civil society organizations

focusing on improvement of trust and collaboration indices. Such models should leverage on the willingness of the informal sector actors to adopt social services practices such as affiliation to NHIF, NSSF, SACCOs, and affordable housing.

There should be a formal social cohesion framework put in place by the national government linking the National Youth Service, city county disaster response teams, Kenya Red Cross, St Johns Ambulance among other first responders with the informal sector for innovative partnerships focusing on prevention of violent extremism through capacity building in innovation and health and safety.

Among target recipients should be mechanics who should leverage on the existing engineering infrastructure of the NYS with certification being core as a bridging context for those who may have had no certification. Flexibility by NYS to train mechanics both formally and informally creates further trust in the NYS. Consequent certification coupled with skills learned deliver perceptions and consequent behaviors in mechanics of self-worth; an antecedent towards positive group identity with reciprocity to the NYS in regard to shared information and adoption of security and safety behaviors in the mechanic's daily practices.

Further linkage could be through the Kenya Power Company, an ecosystem that resonates well with some of the livelihood activities and skills of mechanics within which is need for safe and legal utility of electricity. Mapping and profiling of the current; skills, knowledge, and abilities in relation to; electrical, wiring, and welding tasks of mechanics and consequent programs by KPC as part of their corporate social responsibility is vital. It adds to civil and business safety which are at risk owing to illegal connections as well as lack of values in safe utility of electricity. The skills, knowledge and abilities got by the mechanics reduce the risks attendant when such capacities are lacking. The reciprocity can then be leveraged on towards positive behaviour against illegal connections of electricity as well as nurturing whistle blowing behaviors against illegal connections. This model of multiple government stakeholders develops positive self-identity as well as group identity culminating with desirable social identity and national identity. This is core towards positive perceptions of government and consequent reciprocity through readiness to avail their social and human capital for the nation.

A truly inclusive public participation model should be formulated with representation of the different sub-sectors of the informal sector to deliver a vibrant safety mindset and practice involving the sector. Key within this should be a social framework having a civil continuity leadership model covering different socio-economic livelihood engagements of the vulnerable informal sector members. Leadership based on a whole of society approach model, should include the informal sector actors with a differentiated approach that leverages on the skills and experiences of these actors in relation to the desired social inclusion, partnership, and governed spaces.

There should be formulation of psychosocial support systems involving different actors under a well-coordinated mental health and reconciliation model for those afflicted by brutality meted by different state and non-state actors. Trauma-informed healing and consequent wellbeing and resilience practices will go a long way in creating relevant self- and group identities that resonate positively with both county and national government efforts. They deliver transformation of trauma through forgiveness, trust-building, wellbeing practices and self-leadership outcomes.

Kenya Private Sector Alliance, as a critical actor in the insurance industry, should be engaged in partnership with national and county governments to involve the informal sector in coming up with innovative affordable and flexible insurance products focusing on possible disruptive disasters and events. It should leverage on the mobile phony platforms such as Mpesa.

There is need for a policy and legislation to be put in place by the national and county governments on the qualifications and consequent roles and employment terms of caretakers.

The role of innovative PVE programs on training and capacity building, education, and security needs to be packaged wisely in order to have an appeal to these actors in relation to their PVE roles and positions. Such programs need to focus on a prioritized basis on the many individuals and groups in the informal sector having criminal tendencies and impunity in defying compliance with laid down procedures, processes, policies, and legislation. Relevant partnerships with KEPSA, national and county governments, and CSOs will be pivotal in the co-development and implementation of such PVE programs leveraged on; innovative, dynamic, and inclusive social cohesion frameworks. Ungoverned spaces require bold innovative partnerships between all the actors of social cohesion; government (county and national), private sector, publics, civil society organizations, and development partners; rather than the usual arm of criminal justice which has at times fuelled injustice hence becoming a driver towards propagation of crime and violent extremism.

Further research

From the current COVID-19 pandemic complexities a rapid assessment of the effect of the same on social cohesion should be undertaken with a view of exploring innovative social cohesion approaches across the; public, private and people sectors.

Research on the role of a whole of society approach towards enhancing social cohesion during crisis should be undertaken.

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