

# Influence of Acceptance Security Strategy on Security Enhancement among Non-Governmental Organizations in Northern Kenya

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**Abstract:** This study aimed at assessing the influence of acceptance security strategy on security enhancement among Non-Governmental Organizations in Northern Kenya. The study was based on the Strategic Theory. This study used a positivism approach and descriptive survey design. The target population was 120 NGOs employees of Garissa County out of which a sample of 92 was obtained through stratified sampling. Data was collected using questionnaires. Analysis involved descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics involved the use of frequencies, mean, percentages and standard deviation. For inferential statistics, regression analysis and ANOVA were used by the application of SPSS. The study found that acceptance security strategy had a statistical and significant positive influence on security enhancement among NGOs in Northern Kenya. The study recommends that NGOs in Northern Kenya should work towards involving the local communities in delivering services.

**Keywords:** Acceptance security strategy, security enhancement, Non-Governmental Organizations, Northern Kenya, Garissa County.

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## I. Introduction

The catastrophic international terrorism impacts have mounted pressure on various states worldwide to be able to enhance counter-terrorism strategies along their borders. Even though economic regulations and military defense have conventionally been key border concerns, in some places, countries are restructuring their border regulatory strategies to prioritize appropriate policing to be able to deny any territorial access to both transnational and local terrorists who try to counter the law enforcement initiatives (Clunan & Trinkunas, 2020). Furthermore, because of the high increase in international travels, the border management systems must contend with the additional risks related to such movements, which include mass-casualty terrorism attacks, higher cases of illegal immigration, human trafficking, and consequently exposing the states' weaknesses in their capacity to effectively manage their borders. As a result, some states have significantly invested in various systems of border management that are aimed at facilitating legitimate trade and travel, prevent transnational criminal activity and terrorism, and reduction in the levels of illegal migration (Chumba, Okoth, & Were, 2016).

Because of increased insecurity throughout the globe, acceptance security strategy in security enhancement is crucial. This is an approach applied in security management whereby an attempt is made towards negating the threat through relationships creations with all the concerned parties. Horne, Maynard and Ahmad (2017) noted that acceptance security strategy enhances the security processes. The study found that lack of leadership was a major cause of reduced performance in security by organizations in-charge of provision of security. Chulitskaya and Matonyte (2018) also demonstrated that leaders who were paternalistic could be viewed as passive leaders whose orientation was building relationships within the security environment. The study found that leaders who were relationship-oriented as well as transformational strongly and positively affected security environment, leading to improved security within the environments affected.

The acceptance security strategy has been found to be important contributor to the success or failure of a given strategy as argued by Tu, Yuan, Archer and Connelly (2018). These factors become a valuable asset in implementing a given a strategy when it is in line with the visions, missions and culture, and this can be extended to provision of security in any given environment. However, these factors may also be an impediment towards strategic security implementation in cases whereby the culture conflicts with a given strategic plan. This poses greater uncertainty in implementation of a given strategic plan (Smith, 2018).

In Kenya, terror attacks have significantly increased over the last five years, leading to adverse impacts on its stability, peace, as well as socio-economic development initiatives. Studies have demonstrated that the geopolitical position of Kenya has led to increased vulnerability in international terrorist attacks and threats. For

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example, the surrounding countries are considered to be relatively unstable (such as South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, Yemen, Ethiopia and Eritrea). Furthermore, being a partner of the US and Israel in fight against the cases of international terrorism, Kenya has become the greatest target of the terrorist attacks and threats (Posen, 2017). In addition, Somalia, which is considered a failed state has also been a threat to the countries national security, especially because it acts as a conducive environment in terms of the recruitment, radicalization, and training of terrorist masterminds since the early 1990s (Posen, 2017). Therefore, Kenya's vulnerability to attacks by terrorists has worsened with the counter-insurgency pursuit of the Al-Shabaab into Somalia since October 2011.

Because of the increased cases of terror attacks and transnational activity within the East African region, the developed economies such as the United States collaborate with the regional countries, including Kenya in boosting their ability in the implementation of appropriate measures to counter the threats of violent extremism (Chumbaet *al.*, 2016). However, the lack of certain counter-terrorism strategies that focus on addressing the underlying causes of terrorism has led to missed opportunities to prevent cases of extremism activities in the region.

Strategic security management planning is an iterative process that involves a humanitarian organization to forecast and estimate challenges that are likely to be met by an organization due to changes in the external factors (Udugama& Grant, 2017). Organization and variety of tasks, changing priorities of beneficiaries, government changes in legislation, comparability, greater rivalry with other emerging as well as existing ones, developing non-government foreign donor competition, transparency in different classes of stakeholders, including public officials, lawmakers, and people, workers and volunteers, and the persistent inability of the government to meet public needs form part of strategic challenges encountered by the humanitarian aid providers. The public demands the services rendered by such organizations (Poister&Streib, 2018).

Notwithstanding the adoption of various counter-terrorism procedures by the national police service such as intelligence gathering, patrols, raids and ambushes, the actions of extremism continues to be unabated within Garissa County. This contributes to the loss of humanitarian aid workers as well as the destruction of properties belonging to the humanitarian organizations. Indeed, terrorism remains the key threat to security and peace globally. It leads to the defilement of the fundamental philosophies of law, civil rights, order, as well as freedom among other things (Akhlaq, McKinstry, Muhammad, & Sheikh, 2016).

It is recognized that every organization shall be committed to ensuring that reasonable steps are taken to safeguard the staff health. Every humanitarian organization shall have a duty of care policy that encompasses, health and safety, psychosocial care, stress management, and security management. If the duty of care is not in place and not implemented, there will be consequences for the organization (Kemp & Merkelbach, 2016). From these background, case studies analysis on security enhancement among Non-Governmental Organizations in Northern Kenya in Garissa County, Dadaab camps, the largest refugee camps in the world, the study aimed on assessing the influence of acceptance security strategy on security enhancement among Non-Governmental Organizations in Northern Kenya.

## **II. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of acceptance security strategy on security enhancement among Non-Governmental Organizations in Northern Kenya.

## **III. Theoretical Framework**

The study used the Strategic Theory. In the strategic theory of the 21st century, Wolf and Floyd (2017) provide a concise and fundamental basis for studying the social characters associated with situations where actors are focusing on securing their interests as well as their values against the priorities of the other political opponents. According to Shaik and Dhir (2020), strategic theory offers coherent insights on how to bridge the gap between the existing realities and the desired future developments.

Strategy refers to the disciplined calculation of the overarching concepts, objectives, as well as resources in acceptable bounds of risks to create favourable future, which hardly happens when left to chance (Shaik & Dhir, 2020). It is regarded as the association of how resources can be applied to achieve the desired outcomes in a certain strategic environment. Concerning the state, a strategy refers to the adoption of particular instruments of power which includes diplomatic, political, military, security, economic and informational to achieve certain objectives. The strategy involves distinct characteristics of planning its assumptions, scope, and premises that demonstrate the parameters and attributes for a more detailed short and long-term planning.

In this research, this principle is valid because it asserts that the host government must provide its citizens and anyone within its territory with security as well as the employees, assets, and programs being run by both governmental and non-governmental institutions. This can be achieved through relationships creations with the local communities as well as the various stakeholders within the area of operation; and ensuring they accept

and consent to the operations of an organization in their community. However, most conflict areas where humanitarian organizations are operating tend to have challenges of insecurity. Therefore, this theory helps to make it successful.

#### IV. Literature Review

To achieve and sustain recognition, humanitarian aid organizations follow a wide variety of mechanisms. The most frequently used mechanisms arising from the investigation relates programs value, and if they fulfil the prioritized needs of the group. Therefore, workers and societies prefer to use acceptance for mutual partnership that leads to effective addressing of the desires of the community and better partnerships in the societies in which they operate. The latest works emphasize the principles as central to acceptance and staffing, consultation, and efficient communication (Biscop, 2016).

Van Veen (2016) argued that programming's primacy in obtaining acceptance leads to two unexploited chances to achieve the potential of acceptance as an approach to security administration. To start with, organizations appeared to neglect the need and potential to incorporate acceptance within the organization as a deliberate and systemic strategy. Second, organizations seemed to prioritize community members as key stakeholders, often excluding other actors. Aid workers, community representatives, and government informants were strikingly clear in their views that humanitarian aid organizations and their employees rapidly miss acceptance without successful programming. Pahnla et al. (2013) stated, successful Programmes have fulfilled the needs of beneficiaries.

In South Sudan and in northern Uganda where the emergency responses were emphasized by the humanitarian aid organizations, meeting the basic needs was considered a general priority by the informants (Yates et al., 2020). In comparison, the informants respected the equal distribution of program benefits among various community members in the country, where development programming was prevalent, based on preferences they helped to define. How the organization's program efficacy was achieved in each of the two countries was different. Engagement, providing adequate policies, as well as accountability were key factors for program success (Yates et al., 2020).

The importance of a participating method has been cited by many informants to develop more efficient programs to establish respectful relationships. The security management strategy of acceptance has traditionally meant different things to different organizations (Barry, &Elmes, 2017). It is historical basis part on the side of humanitarian action to seek the consent of the warring parties. At the epicentre of the values and the mission of greater set of humanitarian agencies is the achievement of general community acceptance through good work and upholding humanitarian principles. The acceptance strategy is the most desirable sort of security administration. Acceptance cannot, however, be assumed; it should be won and retained. The humanitarian personnel have tried to expect that they will be accepted readily, simply due to what they do, unlike the journalists and human rights institutions, who are more aware of their work is not most likely to actually please anyone. This is no longer the situation in parts of the globe for a number of reasons.

Acceptance has become much harder to accomplish in various contexts (Barry, &Elmes, 2017). Whether it is possible to acquire approval from when and from whom is now a significant operational issue, much or all organizational and security practices are the foundation of the idea of an acceptable strategy. However, they do not always have advice on the specific steps they can take to develop and sustain acceptance or how to determine whether they would have accomplished it or not. By design, acceptance may not be specified in the negative or embraced.

Bourne (2016) claimed that it is possible to gain acceptance as follows: Creation and management of relationships with key stakeholders and partners: Anyone who may formally or informally exert a major impact on whether an entity can function safely in a given setting. This might entail non-state and state actors, private enterprise, international and local media, community representatives, state agencies, government officials, non-state armed actors and state parties. Some actors might be hard to locate sometimes because they seek to remain anonymous or relatively hard to reach. Understanding these stakeholders entails evaluating and mapping these actors, which foreign and national workers can conduct jointly. This can be equalized to cooperating social responsibility in the NGOs part utilizing security acceptance strategy.

Acceptance needs to be acquired from all the relevant parties, not limited to those who for political, military, religious, cultural, economic reasons might mistrust the institution, feel being intimidated by it or harbouranimosity actively. These should be recognized by situation risk analysis (Barry, &Elmes, 2017). The NGOs national staff will carry out a paramount role in defining the stakeholders in liaising with them and getting in touch with them. National liaison staff who are dedicated in environments which are challenging may be required. In specific cases, utilizing a respected intermediary such as community leaders, group heads or religious leaders will offer the organization local respectability (Aid, 2017). Communication and working together with groups would increase acceptance.

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Acceptance of local populations: An inclusive acceptance strategy pays attention to community leaders who directly gain benefit from the assistance program. Near cooperation with other aid organizations and united nations bodies in the operating environment would improve organizational acceptance. Keeping communications consistent: Communications must be clear and consistent for all stakeholders and interlocutors. An agency should be aware and be able to clarify who they are, why they are there, what they want to do and how they relate to others in succinct, easy-to-understand terms. Consistency in communication, including website, activism, and spokesperson at the headquarters level, would increase acceptance due to the interconnectivity in the world today. In addition, due to various levels of interaction regularly, all staff members will be able to articulate the objectives and beliefs of the organization. Having formal agreements, to execute operational with multiple players in the operating environment. Meetings and socialization are a good place to relay messages and impact the targeted community (Aid, 2017). Negotiating and making public statements where the task can be well fulfilled by locally recruited personnel. Paying attention to the various forms of contact and negotiation between different social classes that required capital to create and sustain acceptance.

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### **V. Methodology**

With quantitative approaches, this study followed a descriptive survey design. The target population for the research was 120 employees in the twenty humanitarian organizations operating in Dadaab refugee camps. The study applied a stratified sampling method using the Yamane formula (1967) to reach at a sample size of 92. The primary data was gathered using a questionnaire, which facilitated appropriate and quick data gathering. In evaluating errors in the raw files, primary data from the field was modified. To translate them into unique categories, responses from the field were coded. Using tables, pie charts, and percentages, the background information was described and interpreted. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used. A simple linear regression model was adopted.

### **VI. Results**

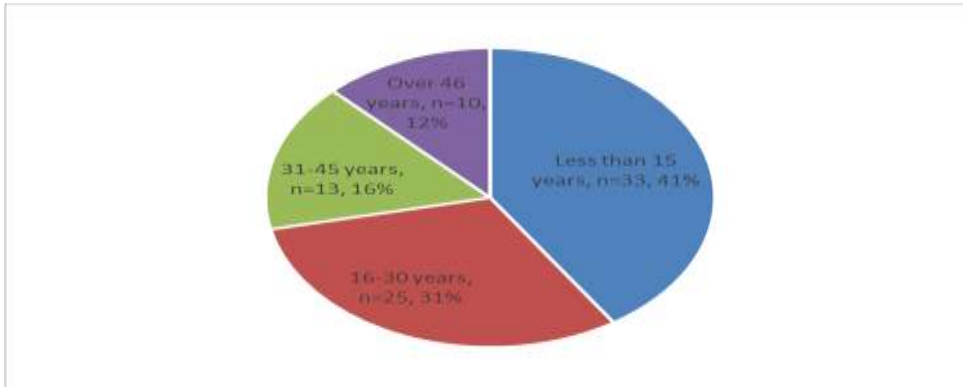
#### **Demographic Characteristics**

The study targeted to collect data from 92 respondents composed of heads of operations, heads of security, human resource managers, supervisors and logistics managers from NGOs in Northern Kenya, focusing on Dadaab refugee camps - Garissa, County. Questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and responses obtained, nonetheless, after review of the responses given for all questions, considering legibility, consistency, homogeneity and completeness, 81 questionnaires had all questions completely responded to and were found suitable and eligible for analysis giving an overall response rate of 88%.

The data on the characteristics of the participants who took part in the study was sought. The information sought was the age of the organization, when the organization started operating in Dadaab refugee camps and whether the organization used a security strategy. These results are shown below;

#### **Age of the organization**

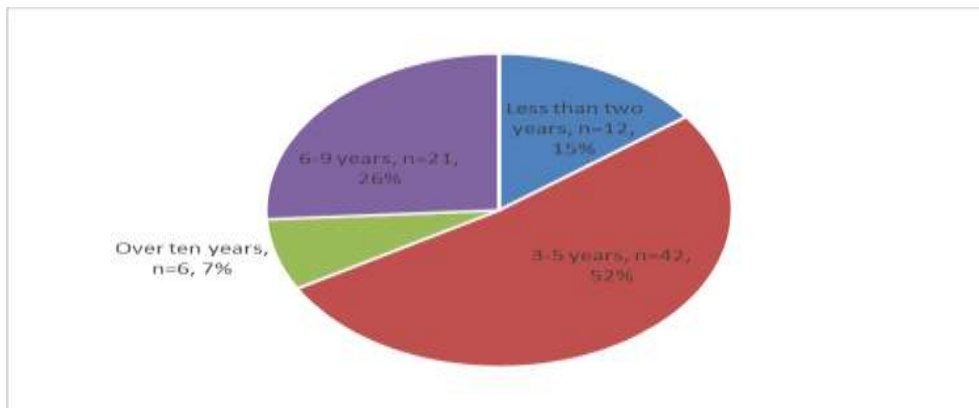
The study wanted to comprehend the age of the organizations studied as this is important in determining the experience the organization has when it comes to matters concerning refugees. The findings shown in Figure 1, show that 41% of the organizations had operated for less than 15 years, 31% had operated between 15 and 30 years while 28% had operated for more than 30 years. This implies that most organizations had operated for less than 30 years, given the fact that the first refugee camp in North Eastern Kenya started in 1991. Similar findings were documented by Kemp and Merkelbach (2016) who found that most refugee organizations have good experience of more than 10 years, as well as Kimathi (2019) who also found that most of these organizations had operated for more than 10 years as well.



**Figure 1: Age of Organizations Studied**  
Source: Field Data, (2021)

**Period when the organizations started operating in Dadaab**

The study sought to determine when the organizations started operating in Dadaab refugee camps. This was important in determining the experience the organizations had in refugee management in North Eastern Kenya. From Figure 2, it was found that most organizations had operated Dadaab for 3-5 years (52%), 26% had operated for 6-9 years while 7% had for more than 10 years. This implies that most organizations had operated between 3 and 9 years in Dadaab, showing mixed levels of experience by the organizations on refugee matters. These findings have also been posited by Kimathi (2019) who found a range length of refugee organizations' operation in Kenya to be between 3 and 10 years.



**Figure 2: Length of Operation in Dadaab**  
Source: Field Data, (2021)

**Organizations using a security strategy**

The study wanted to determine whether the NGOs used a security strategy. As shown in Table 1, 81.5% of the respondents used a security strategy in their organization, while 18.5% did not use it in their organization. These findings are similar to those of Syed and Javed (2017) who also found that the security strategy has been widely adopted globally and has been recognized as the best-used security management technique for personnel, assets, and program security of humanitarian organizations.

**Table 1: Use of a Security Strategy**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	66	81.5
No	15	18.5
Total	81	100.0

Source: Field Data, (2021)

**Descriptive Findings**

The study established that the respondents to a great extent agreed to the following statements: NGOs explain to the local their services, thus reducing threat risks ( $M = 4.00, SD = 0.987$ ); NGOs apply technology acceptance to improve their service delivery ( $M = 3.49, SD = 1.097$ ); NGOs build relationships with local communities, thus enhancing their acceptance ( $M = 3.85, SD = 1.119$ ); and NGOs work with all stakeholders in the operational area and obtain their acceptance and consent for their presence and work ( $M = 3.68, SD = 1.138$ ). The respondents, however, to a moderate extent agreed that NGOs work with the local communities when delivering services, thus enhancing risk acceptance ( $M = 2.79, SD = 1.339$ ). The overall mean for all statements was 3.5630 ( $SD = .66416$ ). The standard deviations obtained for most statements were more than 1, indicating that there were variations in responses from the mean value. Table 2 gives the results obtained from the data collected by means of a Likert scale tool.

These findings support those of Biscop (2016) who determined that field workers and communities prefer to see acceptance as a mutual programming partnership between programming and acceptance, in which acceptance leads to effective programming by addressing the needs of the community, building partnerships, negotiating access to people in need, and respecting the cultural norms and practices of the communities in which they operate. The current study however, showed that the local communities were not so much involved in delivering services. In addition, this finding is also different from that of Pahnlaet *et al.* (2013) who postulated that successful programmes have fulfilled the needs of beneficiaries. Yates *et al.* (2020) also determined that organizations respected the equal distribution of program benefits among various community members, where development programming was prevalent. Further, Bourne (2016) claimed that it is possible to gain acceptance by creation and management of relationships with key stakeholders and partners.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Acceptance Security Strategy**

Statement on Acceptance Security Strategy	N	Mean	SD
NGOs work with the local communities when delivering services, thus enhancing risk acceptance	81	2.79	1.339
NGOs explain to the local their services, thus reducing threat risks	81	4.00	.987
NGOs apply technology acceptance to improve their service delivery	81	3.49	1.097
NGOs build relationships with local communities, thus enhancing their acceptance	81	3.85	1.119
NGOs work with all stakeholders in the area for acceptance reasons	81	3.68	1.138
<b>Composite mean and SD</b>		<b>3.5630</b>	<b>.66416</b>

**Source: Field Data, (2021)**

**Regression Analysis between Acceptance Security Strategy and Security Enhancement**

Table 3 shows that the predictor variable (acceptance security strategy) explains 38.1% of the variation in the security enhancement among non-governmental organizations in Northern Kenya ( $R^2 = .381, F_{(1,79)} = 48.668, p < .05$ ).

**Table 3: Regression Model Summary for Linear Relationship**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
						F	df1	df2	
1	.617 <sup>a</sup>	.381	.373	.54869	.381	48.668	1	79	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Acceptance Security Strategy

**Source: Field Data, (2021)**

As shown in Table 4, the p-value (0.000) was less than the significance level (0.05) which shows that there was a statistical and significant linear relationship between acceptance security strategy and security enhancement among non-governmental organizations in Northern Kenya ( $F_{(1,79)} = 48.668, p < .05$ ).

**Table 4: Regression ANOVA for Linear Relationship**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
DOI: 10.9790/487X-2403055158					
					www.iosrjournals.org
					56   Page

*Influence of Acceptance Security Strategy on Security Enhancement among Non...*

1	Regression	14.652	1	14.652	48.668	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	23.784	79	.301		
	Total	38.436	80			

a. Dependent Variable: Security Enhancement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Acceptance Security Strategy

The regression coefficient findings shown in Table 5 indicate that acceptance security strategy had a statistical and significant positive influence on security enhancement among non-governmental organizations in Northern Kenya ( $\beta = .617, t(79) = 6.976, p < .05$ ). This positive relationship has also been documented in studies such as Biscop (2016), Van Veen (2016) and Pahnlaet *al.* (2013) who all found that acceptance security strategy had a statistical and significant positive influence on security enhancement, and this led to successful programmes being fulfilled and the needs of beneficiaries achieved.

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**Table 5: Regression Coefficients Values for the Linear Relationship**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.296	.346		3.741	.000
Acceptance Security Strategy	.621	.089	.617	6.976	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Security Enhancement

Source: Field Data, (2021)

A linear regression model for Table 5 was adopted:  $Security\ Enhancement = 1.296 + 0.621 \times Acceptance\ Security\ Strategy$ . This implies that a unit increase in acceptance security strategy contributed to 0.621 linear change in security enhancement among non-governmental organizations in Northern Kenya.

### VII. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study concluded that acceptance security strategy had a statistical and significant positive influence on security enhancement among NGOs in Northern Kenya. The study found that NGOs work with the local communities was not sufficient when delivering services. Based on this finding, the study recommends that NGOs in Northern Kenya should work towards involving the local communities in delivering services, as this is the only way to get feedback on the areas where improvement may be needed.

For further study, this research was only done among NGOs in Northern Kenya, focusing on Dadaab refugee camps - Garissa, County. This limited the scope of the study in coverage aspect. The study also measured the viewpoints of heads of operations, heads of security, human resource managers, supervisors and logistics managers only; consequently, the views of residents (locals) were not considered. The study consequently recommends that other studies be conducted on the same subject area using views of locals for comparative results in the future.

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*Influence of Acceptance Security Strategy on Security Enhancement among Non...*

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