EFFECT OF REMOTE SECURITY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF NGOs IN SUDAN

Mohamud Abass Amin

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

P. O. Box 62000, 00200 Nairobi, Kenya.

Dr. Dennis Juma

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

P. O. Box 62000, 00200 Nairobi, Kenya.

Corresponding Author email: mohamudabass@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

As attacks against aid workers continue to rise in some of the world's most violent environments, international humanitarian agencies are left with only two options, withdraw completely or apply remote management strategy. Many organizations that still want to fulfill their mission opt for remote management strategy. However, reports question the success of the strategy as it has previously encountered mixed results in Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia. It is because of this dilemma that the current study sought to determine the effect of security management strategy on the performance of NGOs in Sudan. This study employed a descriptive research design. The study targeted an NGO operating in Sudan. The study used a formula to come up with a sample of 96 respondents in the study. Purposive random sampling was then used to select the sample of 96 respondents. The study used quantitative data gathered by use of closed ended questions. Data analysis involved both descriptive and inferential statistics. The study findings indicated that remote security management is positively and significantly related to performance of NGOs in Sudan. Based on the study findings, the study concluded that remote security management is positively and significantly related to performance of NGOs in Sudan. The study recommends that the management of NGOs operating in Sudan should put in measures to manage and improve the remote security better since it has the largest effect on performance. Among other measures, the management should make its employees understand their security responsibilities.

Keywords: Security management, NGOs, Sudan, Organizational performance

INTRODUCTION

As attacks against aid workers continue to rise in some of the world's most violent environments, international humanitarian agencies have increasingly adopted remote management arrangements as a way to continue assisting civilian populations while removing portions of their staff from harm's way. The severity of the attacks, according to Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf (2010) leaves the organizations with only two options, withdraw completely or apply remote management. Since most organizations still want to fulfill their mission, they opt for remote management strategy. Remote management is an operational response to insecurity and involves withdrawing or drastically reducing international and sometimes national personnel from the field, transferring greater programme responsibility to local staff or local partner organizations, and overseeing activities from different locations (Stoddard, 2010). In agreement largely with the same definition is Tsitrinbaum (2012) who defines remote management as operational response to security threats to staff and particularly to international staffs. He says it involves the drastic reduction of staff presence and specifically international staff in the field.

From this angles of definition, then it means different aspect or elements of programming in the field will be affected. These mainly include but are not limited to compromised full access or proximity to the target beneficiaries; low quality of programming because in essence, top echelons of management are not close to the ´heartbeat´ of the projects; missed opportunities of strategic direction that could otherwise would have been clearer if the management were present in the field; transfer of risk and responsibilities to the national or local staff in different senses but notably related to security and decision making responsibilities. These responsibilities would likely overburden these staff if the organization did not anticipate this management style and lastly introduction of ad hoc systems not tried and tested earlier (Tsitrinbaum , 2012).

In the past two decades, humanitarian assistance has realized changes "both its composition and its presumed universality. Civil wars in Sri Lanka and Syria have highlighted the lack of consistent political solutions to situations of extreme violence and restricted humanitarian access" (Davey, Borton and Foley, 2013). As such "Providing humanitarian assistance amid conflict has always been a dangerous and difficult endeavor; however, over the last decade aid worker casualties tripled, reaching over 100 deaths per year. From 2005 onwards the largest numbers of violent attacks on humanitarian personnel have been concentrated in a small number of countries representing the most difficult and volatile operating environments. Attacks in some of these settings have also grown more lethal and sophisticated and the number of kidnappings has risen dramatically" (Egeland, 2011).

In the unstable countries, different demography's in the populations find themselves in distressful situations. This creates need for humanitarian interventions forcing organizations to implement their projects remotely "wherein intervening aid organizations have responded to heightened risk by withdrawing key senior international staff and upper national management from the conflict zone, and instead relying on local staff or partners to continue programming at reduced levels" (Chudacoff, 2015). Before aid organizations resort to withdrawal from project areas, there is whole process, most of the times, they go through to assess their security situation and avoid occurrence of incidence as they aim to stay put implementing their mandates.   Such include prevention and deterrence strategies. However, "these efforts have not proven sufficient to ensure their security in the most violent operational environments" (Stoddard , 2010).

The application of the strategy in Countries like Iraq, Somalia and Afghanistan has faced mixed results. Some organizations even refuse to dedicate resources to the strategy in those countries. The question that therefore rings is whether the strategy is viewed as a weak strategy in realization of the organization's mission. What really is the effect of remote security management strategy on performance of NGOs?

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Attacks upon aid workers have been on the rise for much of the past decade, according to the Aid Worker Security Database. Such a trend has increasingly led international organizations, NGOs, donor agencies, private firms and other implementing agencies involved in insecure environments to develop "remote" programming models (Cordesman, 2012). Violence in Sudan makes organizations face difficulties working in specific areas which are war prone. Many humanitarian organizations face almost the same predicament because of insurgence and fights between government forces and rebels. In some parts and because the government has been very assertive and restrictive with movements of international staffs, different organizations have resorted to manage programs remotely from Khartoum or even go further and station support teams in countries like Kenya.

The Afghanistan in Transition report (2012) on remote control project management stated that the success rate of remote management is still questionable. The report further states that a previous report on "Trends in Violence against Aid Workers and the Operational Response" stated that international stakeholders often and without evidence believe that local staff members are less likely to be attacked or that they fully recognize the security threats that they could face under a remote programming arrangement. This was however contrary to what happens. The national staff and their families reportedly face significant security risks. Furthermore, the report indicates that there is a correlation between growing adoption of remote programming and an increase in attacks against national staff members. That is, it becomes more likely that armed groups will target local staff members when fewer international personnel are present, hence bringing the ability of remote management to question.

The failure of the strategy to yield required results has been experienced by NGOs in Iraq, Somalia and Afghanistan. Even some NGOs operating in Sudan have opted to withdraw instead of adopting the strategy. This is to imply that the effect of the strategy on their performance is doubtable. This is a critical aspect that necessitated conducting of this study, to try and bring answers to the ability of remote management strategy in fostering an improvement in performance of NGOs. As Antonio and Daniel (2013) put it, remote management signifies less than desirable adaptation by an organization because of insecurity or risk. What this means is organizations are 'forced' by externalities to engage in remote management model. For this reasons it was important to measure how effective remote management approach is by measuring it against the desired result or achievements by a given organization. This is what motivated the current study to investigate the effect of remote security management strategy on the performance of NGOs in Sudan.

The study was also motivated by the existence of research gaps in the field of remote management strategy. Available studies have mostly been conducted by international consultancy firms and they mostly focused on general scenarios at wider contexts (Geographical grounds). Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf (2010) conducted a study to establish the lessons and challenges in remote management of humanitarian operations for insecure areas while Egeland, Harmer and Stoddard (2011) conducted a study to establish the good practice for humanitarians in complex security

environments. The studies covered a large contextual ground and looked at the concept from a wider point without focusing on the same variables as the current study. This therefore portrayed both contextual and conceptual research gaps which the current study sought to fill. No local study has been carried out on the effect of remote security management strategy on performance of NGOs in Sudan. The current study sought to fill these research gaps.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Self-efficacy Theory

The theory is one of the components of Bandura's (1986) general social cognitive theory, which suggests the behavior, environment, and cognitive factors (that is outcome expectations and self-efficacy) of an individual are all highly inter-related. According to Bandura and Schunk (1981), people with strong self-efficacy beliefs exerts greater efforts to master a challenge while those with weak self-efficacy beliefs are likely to reduce their efforts or even quit.

The theory is well suited to studying virtual organizations or remote employees. Staffs working under remote management work under minimal supervision and rely heavily on their own abilities and initiative to perform their tasks. Information technology is a typical medium used to communicate with management since face-to-face interaction is rare or infrequent. Some employee works in locations with few or no co-workers, so the potential for isolation can be high and the availability of co-worker advice is often low. Since remote employees enjoy considerable work autonomy, the potential impact that their own motivation and beliefs in their abilities (that is, self-efficacy judgments) can have on their outcomes may be considerably more than for employees whose behaviors are under tighter supervision. Therefore, virtual organizations that learn how to maximize employees' self-efficacy with respect to working remotely may reap greater benefits from a remote working environment.

Transformational leadership theory

Transformational leadership theory was developed in the late 20[th]century by Burns (1978) in his analysis of political leaders. Prior to this time much attention had been given to the examination of the approaches of leaders who successfully transformed organizations. Burns (1978) characterized transformational leadership as that which "occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality". Transformational leadership serves as a means to "create and sustain a context for building human capacity by identifying and developing core values and unifying purpose, liberating human potential and generating increased capacity, developing leadership and effective followership, utilizing interaction-focused organizational design, and building interconnectedness" (Hickman, 1998). Transformational leaders generate commitment from followers which results in a sense of shared purpose (Waddock and Post, 1991).

Transformational theory is relevant to this study since it informs one of the independent variable which is leadership. However, the general setting of remote management cannot be successful without a combination of the four aspects of transformational leadership of Inspirational Motivation, Idealized influence, Individualized Consideration and Intellectual stimulation for a better performance of the whole project. Motivation and morality is key to the success of the whole strategy because working in harsh environments is sometimes hard when there is no motivation.

The success of the strategy also relies heavily on morality of the employees since working under little supervision can make some employees engage in activities which are against the code of the organization. Transformational leadership creates positive change in the followers whereby they take care of each other's interests and act in the interests of the group as a whole therefore contributing to overall success of strategy implementation.
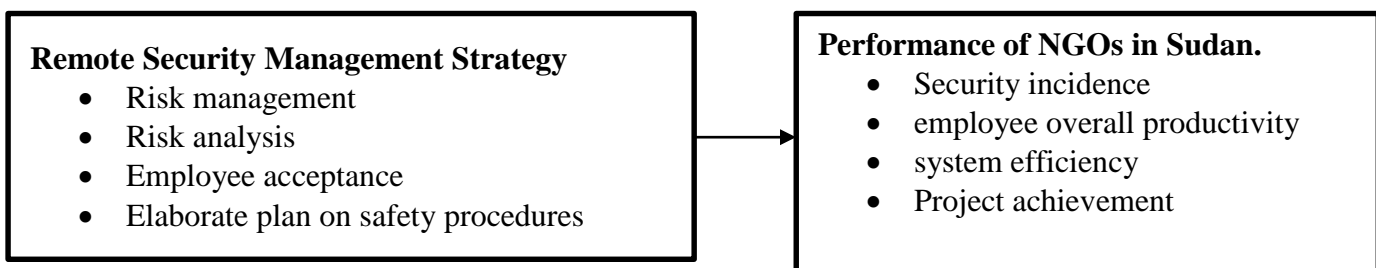
The McKinsey 7S Framework Theory

The McKinsey 7S Framework is a management model developed by Robert and Tom (1980) as a strategic vision for groups, to include businesses, business units, and teams. The theory focuses on Structure which is the way the organization is structured and who reports to whom, Systems which are the daily activities and procedures that staff members engage in to get the job done , Shared Values which are the core values of the company that are evidenced in the corporate culture and the general work ethic , Style which shows the style of leadership adopted , Staff which are the employees and their general capabilities and Skills which are the actual skills and competencies of the employees working for the company.

The model is used by organizations to assess the internal situation of the organization and monitor its changes. According to the model, for an organization to perform well, these seven elements need to be aligned and mutually reinforcing. The model is hence used to identify the needs that should be realigned to improve performance or to maintain it when an organization is incorporating changes. The model informs the study as it helps in understanding how the combination of various variables and factors can successfully be done in order to achieve success in the project.

Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable   **Dependent Variable**

Remote Security Management Strategy
- Risk management
- Risk analysis
- Employee acceptance
- Elaborate plan on safety procedures

Performance of NGOs in Sudan.
- Security incidence
- employee overall productivity
- system efficiency
- Project achievement

Figure 1:   Conceptual Framework

Empirical Review

Queensland Government (2012) argue that security management is the process of identifying, implementing and monitoring systems and processes for the protection of people and building assets against loss, misuse, damage or deprivation of use caused by deliberate acts. Building assets should have adequate security systems and processes in place to protect people, property, operational capability and information. Security management is made easier when security is seen as an integral part of the operation and not as an additional element. This means that the organization or an operation has a developed security culture, where security is automatically considered part of the overall planning and management process. This simply means that people

behave in a manner consistent with established operational standards (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2011).

Good safety and security management requires clarity about authority and responsibility, lines of communication and decision-making. Good practice holds that authority and responsibility are vested in line managers, and that safety and security are managed 'close to the ground'. However, decentralized organizations risk losing overall consistency, and the checks and balances that headquarters provide. At field level, safety- and security-related tasks tend to be delegated to other staff, notably logisticians, field security officers and/or administrators. This should not result in an abdication of responsibility by the head of the field operations. The more 'focal points' on safety and security there are in headquarters and the field, the more important it becomes to maintain streamlined communications, so that managers can retain overview and responsibility for decisions (Van Brabant, 2000).

A Humanitarian Policy Group report on mainstreaming the organizational management of safety and security based on consultation with 20 organizations, including NGOs, the Red Cross Movement and UN agencies points out that the security of aid-agency staff is of growing concern to managers of aid organizations and their donors. The fact that agencies increasingly find themselves working in violent environments and particularly the perception that they are being targeted has given rise to a range of internal measures as well as inter-agency initiatives. After an initial emphasis on security (acts of violence), staff safety (accidents and health) is attracting renewed attention (Van Brabant, 2001). According to Eguren (2000), security management confronts the risk of violent and rapidly changing scenarios and addresses the vulnerability of humanitarian agencies in the midst of such a risk: It therefore must be a dynamic and "ever green" system, a framework to guide and provide consistency for future decisions made incrementally. To act otherwise would be to deny that further information could have a value. Some of the most effective humanitarian agencies have a Security Plan carefully stored in the fifth drawer of the senior manager desk (of course in many agencies that fifth drawer is full with other documents, and there is no a drawer for security plans). Even that Security Plan may consist of a series of protective measures, contingency plans and safety rules, which may be useful as security guidelines but do not grasp the fact that that security requires an adequate overall management, and it means much more than a security plan.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2011) state that, primarily, security management is about determining the risks facing the operation, developing effective security plans that will mitigate these risks and then implementing the plans in the best possible way. In order to ensure that the organization fulfils its responsibility to create an operational environment that is as safe as possible, while at the same time enabling its humanitarian mandate to be achieved, a set of minimum security requirements (MSRs) has been established. These MSRs outline the key requirements that must be included in security plans, while reinforcing the implementation of the layered security framework that has been adopted.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The study target population included all employees of an NGOS operating in Sudan at all levels of management. The study however targeted one NGO operating remotely with 163 employees both in Kenya (Nairobi) and Sudan.

Table 1: Target Population

Staff Category	Number
Coordination	5
Field coordination team	2
Field middle management team	4
Support team (Nairobi)	6
Field staff	146
Total	**163**

The study used a formula to come up with a sample of 96 respondents in the study. Purposive random sampling was then used to select the sample of 96 respondents. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) observe that purposive sampling technique allows the researcher to use cases that have the required information and convenience with respect to the objects of his or her study. The 96 respondents represent a sample percentage of 59% of the total population of 163. This is supported by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) who agree that a sample size more than 10% of the total population is a good representation. Fostgate (2005) recommends that a formula can be used to draw a sample. Other studies that have used this formula include; Fostgate (2005), Georgiadis, Johnson and Gardner (2005) and Dohoo, Martin and Stryhn (2003).

The study used quantitative primary data gathered by use of closed ended questions. The researcher used self-introduction letters with the help of research assistants. SPSS was used to produce frequencies, descriptive and inferential statistics which was used to derive conclusions and generalizations regarding the population. A linear regression model was used to test the significance of the effect of remote security management strategy on the performance of NGOs in Sudan. All the statistical tests were conducted at 0.05 level of significance.

The linear regression model is as laid below.

$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + e$

Where:

Y = Performance of NGOs in Sudan.

X_1 = Remote Security management

e=Error term, α= constant and β=coefficient of independent variable

RESULTS

Results of Pilot Test

The reliability of an instrument refers to its ability to produce consistent and stable measurements. Reliability of this instrument was evaluated through Cronbach's Alpha which measures the internal consistency. Cronbach's Alpha value is widely used to verify the reliability of the construct. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Reliability Coefficient

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
Remote Security management	0.868	7
Performance of NGOS in Sudan	0.942	6

The findings indicate that remote security management and performance of NGOs in Sudan had Cronbach's alpha's values of greater than 0.7 thus the study was reliable (Kothari, 2004). This represented high level of reliability and on this basis it was supposed that scales used in this study was reliable to capture the variables.

Response Rate

The results for response rate are as indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: Response Rate

Response	Frequency	Percent
Filled	51	53.13%
Unfilled	45	46.87%
Total	**96**	**100%**

The number of questionnaires that were administered was 96. A total of 51 questionnaires were properly filled and returned. This represented an overall successful response rate of 53.13% as shown. This confirms an argument by Kothari (2004) that a response rate of 50% or more is adequate for a descriptive study. Babbie (2004) also asserted that return rates of 50% are acceptable to analyze and publish, 60% is good and 70% is very good. Based on these assertions from renowned scholars, 53.13% response rate is adequate for the study.

Demographic Characteristics

This section analyzes the demographic characteristics of the respondents. This section presents the descriptions of the respondents in terms of their gender, age and duration of work with the NGO.

Gender Composition of Respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their gender. The findings are as presented in Figure 2.
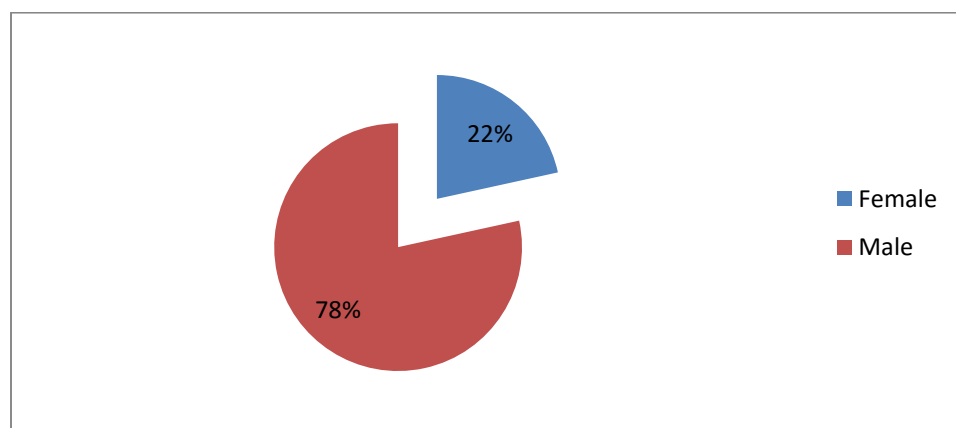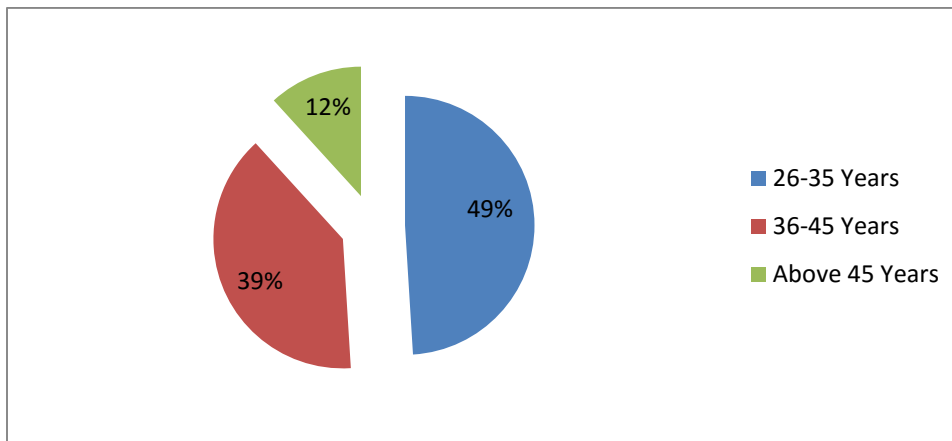

Figure 2: Gender Composition of Respondents

Results in Figure 2 reveal that a majority of the respondents were male as supported by 78% while 22% were female. The results imply the organization has more male employees than female.

Age of Respondents

The respondents were also asked to indicate their age. The results are presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Age of Respondents

Results in Figure 3 reveal that majority, 49%, of the respondents were between 26 to 35 years of age, 39% were between 36 to 45 years while those who were above 45 years were 12%. This implies that majority of the employees of the organization are aged between 26 to 35 years.

Duration with the NGO

The respondents were asked to indicate how long they had worked with the NGO. The results are as presented in Figure 4.
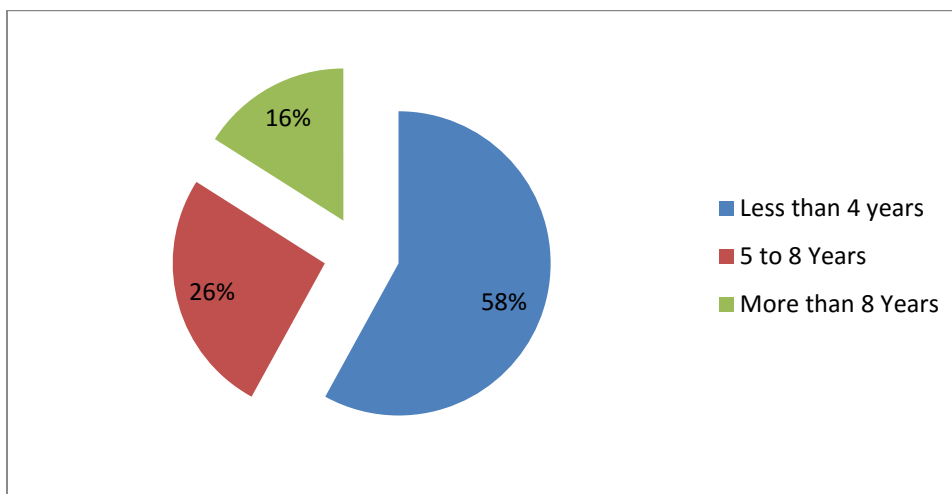
Figure 4:   Duration with the NGO

Results in Figure 4 reveal that majority of the respondents, 58%, indicated that they had worked for a period less than 4 years while those who had worked for a period between 5 to 8 years and for more than 8 years were 26% and 16% of the total number of respondents who participated in the survey. These study findings imply that the rate of turnover in the organization under study in Sudan is moderate.

Remote Security Management

The study assessed the effect of remote security management on the performance of NGOs operating remotely in Sudan.

Descriptive analysis of Remote Security Management

The respondents were requested to indicate their agreement or disagreement with statements concerning security management. The statements were on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 was strongly disagree, 2 was disagree, 3 was neutral,4 was agree and 5 was strongly agree. The results are as presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Remote security Management

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std Dev
The staff and locals accept the organization and its projects	0.00%	0.00%	2.00%	51.00%	47.10%	4.45	0.54
My employer makes me understand my security responsibilities and has made me appreciate the same in my work situation.	0.00%	0.00%	14.30%	40.80%	44.90%	4.31	0.71
The organization has an elaborate plan regarding safety procedures in their project.	0.00%	10.00%	24.00%	50.00%	16.00%	3.72	0.86
My employer provides resources for safety and security of their staff	0.00%	0.00%	31.40%	51.00%	17.60%	3.86	0.69
The organization conducts regular risk analysis and involves all employees in its implementation	4.00%	30.00%	30.00%	26.00%	10.00%	3.08	1.07
The locals are aware of the activities of the organization	0.00%	9.80%	17.60%	19.60%	52.90%	4.16	1.05
Locals would accept and cooperate with the organization at all times.	0.00%	3.90%	21.60%	41.20%	33.30%	4.04	0.85
Average						**3.93**	**0.82**

The study findings in Table 4 indicate that majority of the respondents, 98.1%, agreed that the staff and locals accept the organization and its projects, 85.7% agreed that their employer makes them understand their security responsibilities and has made them appreciate the same in their work situation, 66% on the other hand agreed that the organization has an elaborate plan regarding safety procedures in their project, 68.6% of the respondents agreed that the NGO provides resources for safety and security of their staff while only 36% of the respondents agreed that the organization conducts regular risk analysis and involves all employees in its implementation. Those respondents who agreed that the locals are aware of the activities of the organization and also whether the locals would accept and cooperate with the NGO at all times were 72.5% and 74.5% respectively. The

average mean of 3.93 indicates that the respondents agreed on most of the statements concerning remote security management. The standard deviation of 0.82 indicates that the variations in the responses were minimal.

Relationship between Remote Security Management and Performance of NGOs

The study sought to establish the effect of remote security management on the performance of NGOs in Sudan. To achieve this, an ordinary least square regression model was used. The results for the model summary are as presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Model Summary of Remote security Management

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F(1,49)	Sig.
0.618	0.381	0.369	30.203	0.000

The study findings in Table 5 indicate that remote security management explains 38.1% of the changes in performance of NGOs in Sudan as indicated by an R square of 0.381. Furthermore, the findings indicated that the F statistic was significant at 5% level of significance implying that the model for the relationship between remote security management and performance of NGOs in Sudan fit well. The results for model coefficients are as presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Model coefficients of Remote security Management

	B	Std. Error	T	Sig.
(Constant)	0.793	0.508	1.56	0.125
Remote security Management	0.700	0.127	5.496	0.000

Results presented in Table 6 indicates that there is a positive and significant relationship between remote security management and performance of NGOs in Sudan (B = 0.700, P value = 0.000). The finding implies that a unit improvement in remote security management leads to a 0.700 unit improvement in performance of NGOs in Sudan.

The findings of the study are consistent with an argument by Eguren (2000) that security management confronts the risk of violent and rapidly changing scenarios and addresses the vulnerability of humanitarian agencies in the midst of such a risk thus improving their performance. Furthermore, the findings agree with the argument by International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2011) that security management is about determining the risks facing the operation, developing effective security plans that would mitigate these risks and then implementing the plans in the best possible way so as to ensure that the organization fulfills its responsibility and enabling its humanitarian mandate to be achieved.

Conclusion

Based on the study findings, the study concluded that remote security management is positively and significantly related to performance of NGOs operating in Sudan. The study also concluded that security management is positively associated with performance of NGOs in Sudan.

Furthermore, the study concluded that 38.1% of the changes in performance of NGOs in Sudan is explained by remote security management.

Recommendations

The study recommends that the management of NGOs in Sudan should put in measures to manage and improve the remote security better since it has the largest effect on performance. Among other measures, the management should make its employees understand their security responsibilities mainly at the Coordination and Field management level. Because of the unpredictability of the security context, the project should lay emphasis on timely and periodic risk assessment and should in effect review their risk strategies. The plan should be reviewed in line with new developments and reviews of policies. In relation to acceptance, the NGOs should develop a strategy to further improve acceptance in the areas they are operating in. The NGOs should emphasize on community and local authorities acceptance through creating awareness on its activities and achievements. Consistently engaging the authorities at district and regional levels should be a strategy to be employed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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