

**DETERMINANTS OF YOUTH RADICALIZATION AND THE DE-
RADICALIZATION PROCESS: A CASE STUDY OF MANDERA EAST SUB-
COUNTY, MANDERA COUNTY, KENYA**

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Degree of Master of Science in Governance, Peace, and Security in the Department
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Sciences of Africa Nazarene University**

APRIL 2025

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented at any other university for academic work.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this Thesis to my wife, Kadija Madker Maalim, and my children, Khalid, Harun, Adnan, Sumeya, Ilhan, and Safia.

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I am deeply grateful to the Almighty God, whose guidance and strength have sustained me throughout my academic journey. Balancing the responsibilities of parental care within the dynamic context of an extended family has presented challenges that have enriched and mirrored life's realities, adding depth to my academic experience.

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ABSTRACT

Youth radicalization poses a significant challenge to peace and stability in Mandera East Sub-County, a region in Kenya that borders Somalia and is highly vulnerable to extremist influence. This study explores radicalisation's underlying drivers, evaluates counter-narrative strategies' effectiveness, and identifies the barriers to their implementation. Root causes include economic deprivation, high unemployment, social and political marginalization, and targeted ideological manipulation by extremist networks. These issues are compounded by strained relationships between communities and security agencies, limited access to education, and weak institutional support systems. This study is guided by the Staircase Model of Radicalization, Social Identity and Framing Theory and targeted a population of 13,511 individuals. The study employed a descriptive research design and gathered data from 384 participants, including youth, local leaders, religious figures, civil society actors, and security personnel. Data collection methods included semi-structured questionnaires and key informant interviews, with a pilot study conducted to ensure methodological rigour. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS, while qualitative responses were thematically examined. The findings reveal that educational outreach, mentorship, economic empowerment initiatives, community policing, and psychosocial support are critical in preventing and reversing radicalization. Religious and civil society actors play a pivotal role in delivering these interventions. However, the success of these initiatives is hindered by inadequate funding, lack of trust between stakeholders—particularly between communities and security agencies and ongoing exposure to extremist narratives and actors. The study recommends a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach to countering violent extremism. This includes strengthening education systems, expanding livelihood opportunities for youth, enhancing trust and cooperation between communities and security agencies, and investing in rehabilitation and reintegration programs. Moreover, regional collaboration across the Mandera Triangle is essential to address cross-border threats. This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge by contextualizing radicalization and de-radicalization within a fragile border region, offering empirical evidence to inform policy and programming. It underscores the need for holistic, locally driven solutions to build resilience against violent extremism and promote sustainable peace.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Al-Shabab: The Harakat -Shabaab al-Mujahidin, commonly known as al-Shabab, is the militant wing of the Somali Council of Islamic Courts.

Counter-radicalization: Preventive strategy of blocking young people or recruits from entering radical recruitment.

De-radicalization: Measures aim to encourage individuals who have already undergone radicalization to disengage from militant ideologies and abandon extremist perspectives.

Ideology: A system of ideas and ideals, normative beliefs, and attitudes may be conscious or unconscious by an individual, group or society that forms the basis of society, culture, values, economics, politics, and government; they underline and justify either the status quo or movements to change it.

Intimidation: To frighten into submission, compliance, or acquiescence

Jihadist: Refers to a person who believes that an Islamic state governs the entire community of Muslims.

Radicalization: An individual who adopts or advocates an extreme belief system to perpetrate ideologically motivated violence for the purpose of achieving political, religious, or social change commits a criminal offense and, upon conviction, may face imprisonment for a term of up to thirty years.

Terror attacks: Planned attacks conducted by terrorist individuals or groups to achieve their objectives.

Terrorism: The unlawful application or threat of force or violence against individuals or property, intended to coerce or intimidate governments or societies, is frequently employed to advance political, religious, or ideological objectives.

Threat: A religious proclamation expressing the resolve or decision to mete out retribution, harm, or similar consequences as a response to, or contingent upon, a specific action or set of events.

Violence radicalization: Behavior characterized using physical force with the intent to harm, damage, or cause death to an individual or object.

Youth: A person between the ages of 15 and 35 according to the Kenya constitutional definition (2010) and the African Union definition (2006)

ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

AMISOM	African mission Somalia
BRAVE	Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism
CI	Counterinsurgency
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CT	Counterterrorism
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
HUMINT	Human intelligence
ICCT	International Centre for Counterterrorism
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IS	Islamic State
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISM	Islamic State Movement
KECOSCE	Kenya Community Support Centre
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
LIFG	Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
KMYA	Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NCIC	National Cohesion and Integration Commission
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NIS	National Intelligence Service
PDI	Peace and Development Initiative
PPP	Public-Private Partnerships

RAN	Radicalization Awareness Network
SIT	Social Identity Theory
SUPKEM	Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of youth radicalization, including global, regional, and local insights. Furthermore, it underscores the significance of counter-narratives and their function in addressing the issue of youth radicalization. The subsequent chapter provides a more detailed exposition of the problem statement, encompassing an elucidation of the problem itself, the existing gaps in knowledge, the aims of the study, and the research questions to be addressed. This section addresses several aspects of the study, including its significance, study hypothesis, scope, delimitations, limitations, assumptions, theoretical framework, and conceptual framework.

1.2 Background to the Study

The global community faces the persistent threat of extreme violence, often preceded by processes of radicalization. The present-day society is currently facing a concerning issue: the widespread danger of excessive violence. A comprehensive comprehension of the problem demonstrates that violent actions are frequently preceded by complex processes of radicalization, in which individuals embrace extreme ideas and employ violence as a method of articulating their grievances or pursuing their goals (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008).

The process of radicalization is multifaceted and ever-evolving, encompassing the assimilation of extremist ideologies, mindsets, and actions. Provide an academic summary: Extremism, violence, and terrorism have all been linked to radicalization (Neumann, 2017). According to Stephen (2016), radicalization is rejecting or undermining the current quo, modern concepts, and individual freedom of choice by social or religious beliefs and aspirations. According to Robin Smith (2018),

the process through which people are exposed to an explicitly ideological message and belief system promotes a shift from moderate mainstream ideas towards radical viewpoints. According to McCauley and Moskalenko (2008), radicalization unfolds along a continuum from initial exposure to radical ideology to endorsement and active engagement in extremist operations.

It is imperative to acknowledge that the process of radicalization is not homogeneous; instead, it exhibits distinct variations within various socio-political frameworks. According to Horgan 2000 individual, social, and structural variables contribute to radicalization. Personal grievances, perceived injustices, and identity crises are individual variables, whereas peer influence, family dynamics, and extremist networks are social. Political instability and economic inequality foster extremist ideologies. According to this work, radicalization can occur in both violent and nonviolent ways, indicating that a person or organization might be radical without necessarily practising terrorism or violent extremism.

Nevertheless, the predominant emphasis has primarily revolved around the phenomenon of radicalization, which subsequently culminates in the manifestation of violent extremism (Borum & Neer, 2017). Both rich and developing nations have observed a rise in the radicalization of their young populations, leading to their involvement in internationally connected terrorist networks as well as domestic extremist organizations. Developed nations such as Germany, England, Sweden, France, and the United States of America have had instances of terrorist acts or threats. A portion of the younger population is associated with committed individuals who have undergone radicalization and received training from Al-Qaeda. This organization maintains its operational

presence in various Middle Eastern nations such as Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, and Iran (Schattschneider & Edinger, 2016).

According to Cohen, Kruglanski, Gelfand, Webber, and Gunaratna (2018), radicalisation is high in Pakistan due to the use of scapegoating, emotive appeals to shame, anger, fear, and honour, and simple narratives by radical groups. The messages are strategically designed to capitalize on the identity struggles that several young individuals may encounter, serving as a foundation for developing their aggressive and exclusive ideas.

In recent times, a discernible trend of radicalization has been observed in various countries in Africa that possess a significant Muslim population. These nations include Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Somalia, and, more recently, Nigeria. According to Maghereb Economic Forum-Think- and- do tank study report (2022) Tunisia has become a disproportionate source of jihadist recruits. The report indicates that since 2016, fighting radicalization has also been adopted by the Tunisian governments using preventive measures that target extremely violent political and religious ideologies to embrace more moderate views. Policy brief Egypt-2 Radicalization report suggests Youth activists who had previously embraced non-violent tactics have become radicalized because of harsh state persecution, which includes rape and torture in detention. An entire generation has been left adrift and susceptible to extremist ideas and practices because of the Muslim Brotherhood's dissolution and the leadership shortcomings of the movement's highest level.

Libya is also among the countries affected by youth Radicalization. Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) operates in Libya. Internal militias are addressed by the Libyan government, which also oversees the disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) process, which indeed calls for a strict application of the law. The animosity of the displaced fighters will only grow if the

disarming phase is not followed by successful reintegration and efficient demobilization. Somalia similarly suffered the brunt of radicalization, and according to the Somalia Institute of Development Research and Analysis (SIRDA 2019), Internal militias are addressed by the Libyan government, which also oversees the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) process, which surely calls for a strict application of the law. The animosity of the displaced fighters would only grow if the disarming phase were not followed by successful reintegration and efficient demobilization. The government's efforts to address the threat posed by Al-Shabab in Somalia are bolstered by the support of UN-mandated AMISOM forces. According to Dyrenforth (2018), there has been a significant increase in youth radicalization and the emergence of aggressive militant Islamist organizations in Northern Nigeria and Uganda. The internal security situation in Nigeria has been compromised due to the presence of armed non-state actors, composed of radicalized youth groups that serve as their primary operatives.

According to Romaniuk, Durner, Nonninger, and Schwart (2018), the proliferation of radical groups in East Africa can be attributed to their effective dissemination of messages that resonate with individuals, considering their specific geographical context and local grievances. According to Badurdeen's (2016) research, terrorist groups, namely Al-Shabaab, demonstrate a propensity for tailoring their message to align with the beliefs and values that are most likely to resonate with their target audience. Furthermore, extremist organizations employ several frames to communicate with their target audience effectively. How terrorist groups' ideology and propaganda are presented and disseminated through online and offline channels contributes to the process of radicalization. The presence of Al-Shabaab in Kenya has become a significant concern due to its extensive efforts in radicalizing and recruiting young individuals around the nation. According to Gatimu (2014), it is claimed that Al-Shabaab has exploited perceived or actual instances of marginalization to

radicalize and enlist individuals into its ranks. An illustrative example can be found in the case of Abdirahim Mohammed Abdullahi, the individual responsible for orchestrating the attack on Garissa University. Prior to his self-radicalization and subsequent recruitment by Al-Shabaab scouts, Abdullahi dedicated a significant amount of time to online research, explicitly engaging with materials about jihad (Abdi, 2015).

The project titled "Countering Violent Extremism through Multimedia and Forum Series" was executed in Mombasa, Kenya, under the auspices of the Kenya Community Support Centre (KECOSCE). The project utilizes discourse and multimedia to actively engage young individuals in communicating important countering violent extremism (CVE) messages. These messages aim to challenge and refute the narratives presented by Al-Shabaab. Nevertheless, research conducted by Badurdeen and Goldsmith (2018) has revealed that the efficacy of this Endeavor is deficient in developed nations.

Ringquist (2011) asserts that several areas of Kenya, including the Northeastern and Coast regions, exhibit susceptibility to radicalization, which manifests in the adoption of separatist or extremist ideas. The regions of Northeastern Kenya and certain areas of the Coast Region are characterized by a dearth of essential services, including educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and transportation infrastructure, which can be attributed to persistent and recurrent wars. Moreover, Kenya's regions are grappling with a surge in population growth, a dearth of economic opportunities for the younger generation, widespread poverty, and overall instability. The circumstances contribute to a heightened level of anger towards the government, resulting in the proliferation of illicit organizations that offer alternate sources of income to the populace.

Mandera County still faces several peace and security issues, especially terrorism and radicalization, even though Interpol named Mandera one of the most dangerous locations in East

and Central Africa in 2009 (Botha, 2016). The radicalization of young people from many sections of the county, particularly the Somali-dominated refugee camps in Garissa County, has been used by Al Shabaab. Counterinsurgency (CI) and counterterrorism (CT) strategies have consistently dominated responses to the risks posed by radicalization (Villa-Vicencio, Buchanan-Clarke & Humphrey, 2016). These methods frequently downplay or disregard regional differences and can intensify complaints that could lead to a rise in radicalization and even recruitment into violent extremist organizations.

In 2003, Kenya's parliament introduced the Suppression of Terrorism Bill, but it was forced to be postponed because of strong resistance from Muslim and civil society groups (Badurdeen & Goldsmith, 2018). Only nine years later, when former President Kibaki elevated the Terrorism Act into a statute with a preventative focus, did appropriate legislation come into force. This Act supplemented other laws that controlled anti-corruption, gun licensing, money laundering, and the prosecution of suspected criminals (Davis, 2016). To handle terrorism-related matters, Kenya additionally set up a national counterterrorism centre and a dedicated section within the Kenyan police (the Anti-Terrorism Police section; ATPU).

Youth radicalization remains a pressing security concern in Mandera East Sub-County, a region strategically located along Kenya's porous border with Somalia, making it highly susceptible to extremist influences from groups like Al-Shabaab. The intersection of economic hardship, political marginalization, and ideological manipulation has contributed to an environment where vulnerable youth become targets for radicalization. In collaboration with regional and international stakeholders, the Kenyan government has made efforts to counter violent extremism (CVE) through policy interventions and grassroots initiatives.

At the regional level, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has played a pivotal role in coordinating counter-radicalization efforts by operationalising its Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) Policy Framework. This framework emphasizes a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, promoting multi-sectoral strategies that integrate law enforcement, civil society, and community-based interventions (IGAD, 2017). Kenya has aligned itself with this approach, mainly through the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism (NSCVE), which was developed by the National Counter-Terrorism Centre (NCTC) to enhance a structured, multi-stakeholder response (NCTC, 2016).

Further, partnered initiatives such as BRAVE (Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism) have strengthened community resilience. BRAVE adopts a bottom-up strategy, engaging religious leaders, educators, and local influencers in countering radical ideologies and preventing extremist recruitment (Botha & Abdile, 2019). These initiatives highlight the increasing recognition of soft power interventions in countering radicalization—beyond traditional security measures—by focusing on youth empowerment, education, and economic inclusion.

Despite these efforts, challenges such as limited funding, community mistrust in security agencies, and the adaptability of extremist networks persist. Understanding the factors influencing youth radicalization and de-radicalization in Mandera East is crucial for refining these approaches and ensuring their effectiveness at both policy and grassroots levels.

In northeastern Kenya, Mandera County has experienced challenges related to radicalization and the subsequent need for deradicalization efforts. Several factors shape the context of radicalization and deradicalization in Mandera County. Mandera County shares open borders with Somalia and Ethiopia, making it vulnerable to cross-border movements and the influence of extremist

ideologies. Historical ties, trade, cultural connections, and porous borders contribute to the flow of radical groups' ideologies and the recruitment of individuals into extremist groups. Mandera County faces significant socio-economic challenges, including elevated levels of poverty, unemployment, and limited access to education and essential services. These conditions can make individuals more susceptible to radicalization, as extremist groups often exploit grievances and offer perceived solutions to these challenges.

Diverse ethnic and religious communities characterize Mandera County, including Somalis and Ethiopians. The interplay of different ethnic and religious identities can contribute to youths' vulnerability risks, tensions, and potential radicalization dynamics, mainly if grievances and identity-based conflicts are not effectively addressed. Historical marginalization and perceived political exclusion can create an environment conducive to radicalization. Perceptions of inadequate representation and lack of access to resources or decision-making processes can fuel grievances and increase vulnerability to extremist narratives. The above materials prompt the need to study youth radicalization and de-radicalization in Mandera East sub-county, Mandera County, Kenya. Youths in the area perceive they are neglected and undermined when it comes to decision-making, resource sharing, economic empowerment, and support and are politically sidelined, hence increasing their vulnerability to radical groups' false promises.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Radicalization remains a persistent global challenge, with many nations grappling with its multifaceted impacts. Among the most affected are young people, who often find themselves targeted by extremist groups. Youth radicalization has profound socioeconomic consequences, particularly in vulnerable communities. Many young individuals are drawn into radical movements, often leading to acts of terrorism. Beyond the immediate violence, the fear of

radicalization also contributes to the social and economic exclusion of entire communities, depriving them of critical development opportunities (Robinsmith, 2018). In response, various governments, policy think tanks, and civil society organizations have increasingly adopted counter-radicalization strategies. These efforts range from policy reforms to community awareness programs and strategic communications intended to counter extremist narratives. However, much of the documented success in countering radicalization is drawn from interventions implemented in other countries, especially in Western contexts. Research indicates that such strategies have not been adequately adapted or assessed in the Kenyan context, limiting their relevance and impact (Robinsmith, 2018; Davis, 2016). Even in regions like the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), where the threat of radicalization is similarly acute, scholars such as Faris and Zeiger (2017) have called for more localized and culturally grounded approaches. Kenya, and particularly its northern counties, is no exception to this need. In northeastern Kenya, Mandera County shares porous borders with Somalia and Ethiopia. Its proximity to Somalia—especially the conflict-prone Gedo region—has made it particularly vulnerable to infiltration by extremist groups. Over the past few decades, the region has experienced repeated attacks, threats, and ongoing efforts to recruit local youth into radical movements. Due to its geographic closeness to unstable border regions, the Mandera East sub-county has emerged as a focal point of concern. In these communities, young people face a combination of poverty, chronic unemployment, political exclusion, and systemic corruption. Such conditions have created a fertile ground for radicalization. The effects of radicalization in Mandera are visible and deeply concerning. They manifest not only in sporadic violence and destruction of property but also in increased drug abuse, fear, and a breakdown in law and order. These impacts ripple through the community, weakening social cohesion and threatening national security. Furthermore, many of the youth affected are in the adolescent age

group, already dealing with identity crises and developmental challenges. The outcome is often devastating when radical ideologies fill the void left by a lack of opportunity, support, or inclusion. Despite the problem's urgency, several gaps remain in Kenya's approach to addressing youth radicalization. One major shortcoming is the lack of localized research evaluating counter-radicalisation strategies' effectiveness, specifically in Kenyan contexts like Mandera. While broader policies exist, their implementation often fails to consider the affected regions' cultural, social, and economic nuances. Community structures such as elders, religious leaders, and grassroots organizations are often underutilized, yet they hold immense potential for early intervention and rehabilitation. Moreover, there is limited attention given to the different ways radicalization affects young men and women. Gender-specific drivers and consequences remain largely unexplored. Another overlooked area is the psychological and emotional impact on youth, including trauma, disillusionment, and mental health issues, all of which may push individuals toward extremism. In the digital age, the role of online platforms in spreading radical ideologies cannot be ignored either, yet it receives little focus in national strategies. Kenya must adopt a more holistic, evidence-based, and locally grounded approach to combat youth radicalisation in regions like Mandera. It is not enough to borrow counter-narratives from abroad; instead, interventions must be rooted in the lived realities of Kenyan youth, tailored to local contexts, and inclusive of community voices. Only then can the country hope to reverse the tide of radicalization and secure a more peaceful, stable future for its young people.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

This study aims to examine the dynamics of youth radicalization in Mandera East Sub-County, Mandera County, focusing on the counter-narrative strategies employed to prevent its spread. Specifically, the research seeks to assess the nature and scope of counter-narrative interventions

implemented within the Mandera Triangle, evaluate their effectiveness in addressing youth radicalization, and explore the challenges faced in developing and implementing these strategies. Through this investigation, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of locally grounded solutions to radicalization and inform more effective policy and community-based responses in the Kenyan context.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

1.5.1 General Objective

The research aims to investigate the factors influencing youth radicalization in Mandera East Sub-County and contribute valuable insights to developing effective counter-narratives strategies tailored to the local context.

1.5.2 Specific Objective

The following specific objectives guided the study:

- i. To examine the key factors driving youth radicalization in Mandera East Sub-County, Kenya, and their socio-economic, political, and ideological influences.
- ii. To evaluate the effectiveness of existing counter-radicalization strategies in preventing youth involvement in extremist activities within Mandera East Sub-County.
- iii. To analyze the role of de-radicalization initiatives in rehabilitating and reintegrating radicalized youth into society in Mandera East Sub-County.

1.6 Research Questions

The study objectives were achieved by answering the following questions.

- i. What are the key factors driving youth radicalization in Mandera East Sub-County, Kenya, and their socio-economic, political, and ideological influences?
- ii. How effective are the existing counter-radicalization and de-radicalization strategies in preventing and rehabilitating radicalized youth?
- iii. What is the role of de-radicalization initiatives in rehabilitating and reintegrating radicalized youth into society in Mandera East Sub-County?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The relevance of a study refers to the description of the contributions that a research study makes to the existing body of literature and the broader educational issues it addresses once it is completed (Ary, Jacobs, Irvine & Walker, 2018). The study's findings hold importance for policymakers in peace and security, as youth radicalization is a matter of national concern that impacts both the well-being of individuals and the overall state of peace and security. Policy agencies stand to gain significant advantages and derive substantial value from a comprehensive examination of the feasibility and advantages associated with implementing a counter-narrative strategy to address the issue of radicalization and extremism in Kenya. This study aims to aid the learning process for these agencies by examining counter-narrative campaigns implemented by governments in various countries. It explored the strategies employed in these campaigns and provided insights on how local campaigns might be effectively designed, considering the limited presence of government-facilitated campaigns. The study results generate a need for organizations to compare their efforts with successful counter-narrative initiatives and explore strategies to enhance the effectiveness of these campaigns.

The implications of these findings are significant for scholars in the field of security management, as they offer valuable insights into the development and dissemination of counter-narratives aimed at countering the influence of radical groups on Kenyan youth. Furthermore, this research endeavour will facilitate the community in discerning narratives about terrorism and radicalization, comprehending appropriate responses, and determining actionable measures to achieve the intended influence on the specific target audiences effectively. This study will benefit governmental entities, organizations, and scholars by addressing research gaps related to the efficacy of counter-narrative initiatives in mitigating the process of youth racialization.

1.8 Scope of the Study

According to Mills et al. (2017), the study's scope defines the research parameters in terms of the issue being studied, the sample size, the geographical area, the time period, the theoretical framework, and the breadth of the investigation. Mandera East Sub-County, which is situated in Mandera County, Kenya, was the focus of this study. The choice of this area makes it easier to conduct a thorough analysis of the regional factors that influence youth radicalisation in Kenya as a whole. The main goal of this study was to conduct a thorough and in-depth analysis of juvenile radicalisation and de-radicalization processes in the Mandera East Sub-County.

Acknowledging the in-built limits and ethical considerations inherent in conducting such studies is essential. The study was to assess the different countermeasures employed in Mandera East Sub County, Kenya, to mitigate youth radicalization and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies in helping the process of youth deradicalization while also addressing the challenges faced during their development and implementation, henceforth propose practical solutions for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders involved in counter-radicalization efforts within the Mandera East Sub-County region.

1.9 Delimitations of the Study

Although the researcher has control over delimitation, it might also have an impact on the findings of the study. This feature establishes the parameters of the investigation and restricts its scope (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The study is limited to Kenya's Mandera County and Mandera East Sub-County. Its exclusion from other sub-counties or parts of the nation restricts the findings' applicability to the larger Kenyan context. The study primarily concentrates on Mandera East Sub-County's youth demographic (ages 15-35). While this age group is a key focus due to its susceptibility to radicalization, the study may not capture nuances in other age groups. The evaluation of counter-radicalization and de-radicalization programs was selective and based on the programs operating in Mandera East Sub-County.

This study finding is based on content analysis and expert interviews conducted with county and national government departments, such as county cohesion, integration and deradicalization, and anti-terror security units. The study may not encompass all relevant initiatives, and the effectiveness of programs outside the study area will not be thoroughly assessed. The research is conducted in English and Swahili. Limitations in linguistic diversity may affect the inclusion of perspectives from communities using other local languages in Mandera East Sub-County. While the study aims to adhere to ethical standards, potential cultural differences and sensitivities may impact the depth of information participants share. The study recognizes the importance of respecting cultural norms and may, therefore, encounter limitations in some areas of inquiry. The study acknowledged that external factors such as geopolitical events and international influences may impact the local dynamics of radicalization. While recognized, these factors may not be extensively explored within the scope of this study.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

According to Bryman and Bell (2015), limitation is a result of variables that the researcher has no control over but may impact the study's conclusion. Representativeness of the sampled population may affect study results. Results may not be generalizable due to the sample size and selection procedure not capturing Mandera East Sub-County's diversity. Participant resistance, recollection bias, and social desirability bias can hinder data collection. This challenge was mitigated by assuring the respondents of the confidentiality of the information given, using careful and accurate sampling, clearly explaining the objective to obtain participants' consent, and minimizing travel to risky areas. Participants may not want to discuss radicalization, resulting in underreporting or incomplete data. This challenge was mitigated clearly by the research assistant by explaining the study objectives because radicalization changes over time and quickly. Therefore, the study's conclusions may become outdated.

Limited or inaccurate data limits the research's availability and reliability. Incomplete or obsolete data may impair historical trend analysis and cause research gaps. Participants' information may be limited by cultural sensitivity, especially about radicalization. The researcher trained and recruited a local research assistant who understood the local language, context, dynamics, culture, and norms. This phenomenon served as a partial explanation for cultural dynamics. The analysis was limited to a particular case by focusing on Mandera East Sub-County. The findings may lack cross-cultural and regional comparisons of multi-case research, but they provide depth. Knowing these limitations is crucial to comprehending the study's results. Despite efforts to overcome these issues, they highlight the necessity for critical interpretation and awareness of the study's context when applying the findings to policymakers or broader contexts.

1.11 Assumptions

Assumptions are statements assumed to be accurate, often temporarily or for a specific goal, like creating a theory, and constitute statistical conditions that give valid results (Weber, 2017). The study assumed that Mandera East Sub-County's cultural, social, and political dynamics strongly impact young youth's radicalization and de-radicalization. These assumptions underpin the investigation's approach, scope, and goals. The study assumed that targeted respondents would give the researcher transparent, honest, and bias-free information. The researcher will presume the role of counter-narrative affecting radicalization, whether positively or negatively. The researcher also expected the targeted respondents to be familiar with local youth radicalization prevention efforts. The researcher expects the instruments to be valid, measure desired outcomes, and be accessible to the targeted site.

1.12 Theoretical Framework

According to Head and Noar (2014), a theory is a collection of related concepts, definitions, and assertions that offer a methodical perspective on phenomena by defining the relationships between variables and explaining and predicting the phenomena. The study's foundation will be the framing and social identity theories covered in this part. The two ideas help people and groups understand how to categorise themselves and how to move through the radicalisation process.

1.12.1 The Staircase Model of Radicalization in the Context of Youth Radicalization and De-Radicalization in Mandera East Sub-County, Kenya

The Staircase Model of Radicalization, developed by Fathali Moghaddam (2005), provides a framework for understanding how individuals progress toward extremist violence. This model conceptualizes radicalization as a multi-stage process, likening it to a staircase where only a few individuals reach the final stage of committing violent acts. The model is particularly relevant in

analyzing the factors influencing youth radicalization in Mandera East Sub-County, where socio-economic and political vulnerabilities create conditions conducive to extremism.

Step 1: Ground Floor – Perceived Deprivation and Injustice

At the base level, individuals experience feelings of economic, social, and political injustice. Many youths in Mandera East face high unemployment rates, marginalization, and lack of access to quality education and economic opportunities (Botha & Abdile, 2019). These grievances create a sense of relative deprivation, making them more susceptible to extremist narratives that promise empowerment and belonging (Moghaddam, 2005).

Step 2: First Floor – Search for Solutions

As frustrations build, individuals seek solutions to their grievances. In Mandera East, extremist groups like Al-Shabaab exploit these vulnerabilities by offering financial incentives, ideological justification, and a sense of purpose (Kagwanja, 2018). The absence of effective government interventions and limited trust in state institutions can push youth toward alternative movements that claim to address their socio-political struggles (Botha, 2014).

Step 3: Second Floor – Displacement of Aggression

At this stage, individuals begin attributing their frustrations to a perceived external enemy, often influenced by extremist propaganda and ideological indoctrination. The recruitment process intensifies as radical groups exploit religious, ethnic, and political divisions, framing violence as a necessary response to oppression (NCTC, 2016). In Mandera, radical recruiters use social networks, online platforms, and religious discourse to solidify extremist worldviews among vulnerable youth (Opondo, 2021).

Step 4: Third Floor – Moral Disengagement

Here, radicalized individuals justify violence as a legitimate response to their grievances. They undergo a process of dehumanizing perceived enemies and developing a strong in-group identity that opposes mainstream society. In Mandera East, this is facilitated by peer influence, extremist mentorship, and exposure to violent ideology (Botha & Abdile, 2019). The state's use of excessive force or indiscriminate counter-terrorism measures can also fuel resentment, reinforcing extremist narratives (Kagwanja, 2018).

Step 5: Fourth Floor – Recruitment to Violent Action

By this stage, individuals are prepared to take violent action and actively participate in terrorist activities. Extremist groups provide training, weapons, and operational guidance, turning radicalized youth into active members of insurgent networks (NCTC, 2016). In Mandera, youth who reach this stage are often involved in cross-border terrorist activities or sleeper cells operating within local communities (Botha, 2014).

Step 6: Fifth Floor – Engagement in Terrorist Acts

At the final stage, individuals commit acts of terrorism, viewing them as the ultimate means of achieving their ideological goals. The cycle of radicalization is complete, and intervention at this point becomes extremely difficult. The presence of returning fighters from Somalia and the reintegration challenges they face highlight the need for effective de-radicalization and rehabilitation programs (Opondo, 2021).

Applying the Staircase Model to De-Radicalization in Mandera East

De-radicalization efforts must target individuals at each stage of the radicalization process to prevent progression toward violent extremism. Community-based interventions, mentorship programs, economic empowerment, and religious counter-narratives can help disengage youth at different steps of the staircase (Botha & Abdile, 2019). Additionally, a whole-of-society approach

involving government agencies, civil society, and religious leaders is crucial in addressing radicalisation's push and pull factors (IGAD, 2017).

The Staircase Model of Radicalization provides a useful framework for analyzing how youth in Mandera East become radicalized and how interventions can be tailored to prevent their progression toward violent extremism. Understanding the multi-stage nature of radicalization helps policymakers, security agencies, and community leaders design targeted interventions that address underlying grievances while promoting social cohesion and resilience against extremism.

1.12.2 Social Identity Theory

According to Tajfel and Turner's (1979) Social Identity Theory, people create "us versus them" attitudes by grouping themselves and other people into social groups based on characteristics they have in common. The hypothesis is crucial to the investigation since it describes a phase during which people become radicalised. This involves people forming radical collectives, which emerge in actual places like bookshops, prisons, shisha bars, mosques, and sports groups. When people believe that their social group is being threatened or marginalized, they may become radicalized and adopt extreme ideas in an attempt to defend or fortify their social identity.

According to Bakker (2015), push factors for men and women are comparable. These include the belief that Muslims are oppressed globally, the strong belief that supporting jihad is their religious and ideological obligation, the desire to create a new state and change the world, and the allure of travel and adventure that come with visiting a foreign country (Saltman & Smith, 2015). Others contend that women are motivated by aspirations to revolt against their surroundings, marry valiant warriors, and find romance or love (Bakker, 2015). Although groups influence them, pull factors

vary by gender. This is because extremists use the group as a focal point. The glitz of the jihad battle, which is seen as having a purpose, is one of the contributing causes (Peresin, 2015). The theory's indicator-based methodology is criticized for being readily applicable to profiling procedures (Monaghan & Molnar, 2016). The idea will be applied but does not address the difficulties preventing youth radicalization.

1.12.3 Framing Theory

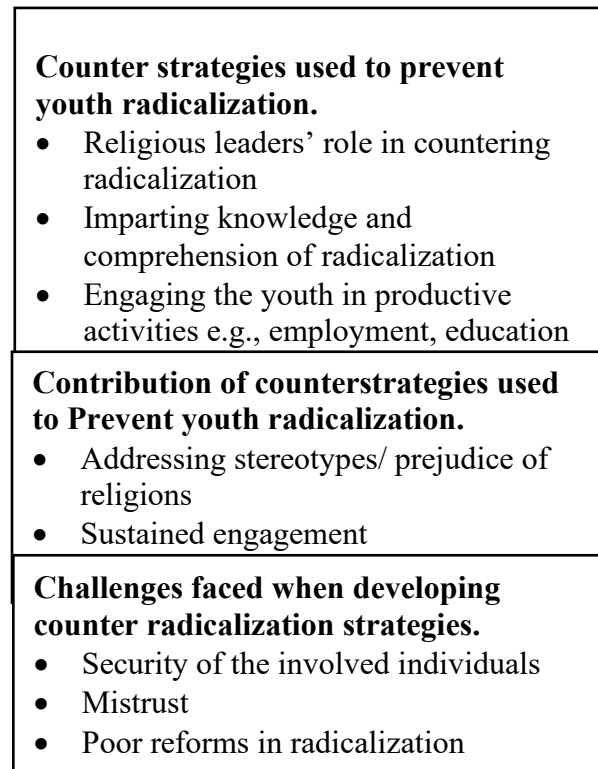
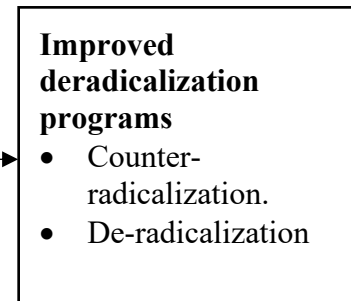
The theory of framing asserts that how information is presented, commonly referred to as "framing," significantly impacts individuals' interpretation and comprehension of the information (Goffman, E. 1974). Frames serve as a framework for humans to comprehend and interpret various events, issues, or themes. Frames play a crucial role in story construction as they highlight specific elements while diminishing or eliminating others, influencing how audiences perceive and react to the conveyed information. Within radicalization, framing theory explains how messages that stress grievances, injustice, or narratives centered around identity might potentially foster the acceptance of extremist ideas. How socio-political issues are presented, perceived threats are communicated, and the calls to action that are made can significantly impact how individuals view these situations and make decisions. This theory helps comprehend radical groups' narratives and how narrative campaigns are framed in this context. This method looks into how radical organizations use historical circumstances and events to organize radicals and reinterpret, magnify, and expand their ideology. Additionally, framing defends or supports violent acts against radical groups. Despite being employed in this research, the theory does not address the difficulties of creating counter-narrative tactics to address youth radicalization.

1.13 Conceptual Framework

According to Mills et al. (2017), a conceptual framework is a schematic representation that illustrates the link between independent and dependent variables. The independent and dependent variables and their interactions are displayed in the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework of the study is shown in Figure 1.1. The proposed study has three independent variables, which, when they interact, will produce improved deradicalization programs. Countermeasures to stop young people from becoming radicalized, Counterstrategies' role in lowering youth radicalization and Obstacles encountered when creating counter-radicalization tactics. Engaging religious leaders or faith practitioners in propagating counter-narrative perspectives at institutions such as mosques, Madrassas-Islamic schools, playgrounds where youth meet and sermons in mosques during Fridays and other Islamic celebrations in Edd festivals can reduce youths' radicalizations. Engaging young people in meaningful and productive activities such as technical training centres where they learn life skills activities and earn a living can reduce radicalization and result in deradicalization.

When youths are stereotyped, targeted, and identified as a threat when developing counter-strategy plans of deradicalization, then these will result in more harm than good. Therefore, it is paramount to develop strategies that address stereotyping and prejudice and promote constructive and sustained strategies that address and improve deradicalization programs.

The interactions between radical youths and institutions dealing with deradicalization joint counter-strategy development rebuild trust and change youths' marginalization perceptions; hence, independent and dependent variables speak to each other and address the challenges of youth radicalization.

Independent Variables**Dependent Variable**

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter examines relevant literature on the topic under study, as given by different authors, researchers, scholars, and analysts. The study uses resources from studies that are related to its goals and subject. Additionally, a theoretical assessment of the literature is provided. The study objectives guide the empirical review, which is structured as follows: causes of youth radicalization, strategies used to prevent and counter youth radicalization, effects of strategies campaigns on youth radicalization, and the challenges faced in countering youth radicalization. A summary of the reviewed literature and research gaps is presented as well.

2.1.1 Theoretical Review of Literature

According to Tajfel and Turner's Social Identity Theory (1979), people create "us versus them" mentalities by grouping themselves and other people into social groups based on characteristics they have in common. This theory describes how people become radicalized in the setting of radicalization. People may adopt extremist beliefs to defend or fortify their social identity when they feel that their group is being marginalized or threatened. Real-world settings like jails, mosques, and other public areas are familiar places for radical collectives to emerge. Perceived oppression of Muslims worldwide, a strong sense of need to assist jihad, and the attraction of adventure in foreign countries are all push factors for radicalization. Gender differences exist, with women sometimes radicalized due to desires for love, romance, or rebellion against their environments. Critics argue that the theory's indicator-based approach can lead to profiling practices. Additionally, it does not fully address the challenges of countering youth radicalization.

The Framing Theory, proposed by Goffman (1974), emphasizes how information presentation (framing) significantly influences interpretation. Frames shape how individuals perceive events, issues, and themes. In the context of radicalization, framing theory explains how messages emphasizing grievances, injustice, or identity narratives may foster acceptance of extremist ideas. How socio-political issues are framed impacts how individuals view situations and make decisions. Radical groups use framing to mobilize followers, reinterpreting ideologies and justifying violence as a defence or cause. Framing theory helps comprehend extremist narratives, but it falls short in addressing the difficulties of creating counter-narrative tactics to combat juvenile radicalization.

2.2 Empirical Review of Literature

2.2.1 Contributions of Counter Strategies Used to Prevent Youth Radicalization

The fundamental ideas that support the strategic logic of radical groups' media operations campaigns are known as counterstrategies (Abbas, 2017). According to Rompuy, Bonazzi, Frontini, Ritzmann, Manea, Goodwin, and Abbas (2017), such strategies must first dismantle the messages, then work with messengers who can reach a wide range of people crucially, bringing vulnerable individuals on the verge of radicalization with them and lastly, actively collaborate with the media to support the messengers and aid in dismantling the harmful messages. Depending on different opportunity frames, this can take different forms (Stuart, 2017). The above scholars are keen to collaborate with messengers but overlooked what exact message will reach the radicalized youth and at which stage of youth's radicalization the message delivered. This research will further examine the type of message required at the various stages of radicalization.

The study conducted by Fishman and Lebovich (2011) examined the phenomenon of fighting domestic radicalization, with a particular emphasis on the implications for intelligence gathering and community engagement. The authors observed that a previous study had documented the

identification and referral of 1120 kids deemed to be at risk to the intervention program between 2007 and 2010. Based on the research, it was seen that British authorities had a strong inclination towards employing an outreach strategy that placed significant emphasis on fostering connections with leaders and influential figures within the Muslim community. The strategy was formulated to create a cohesive community characterized by active involvement, assimilation, and harmonious cohabitation between Muslim and British people. The study highlights the lessons for intelligence derived from the works of Fisherman and Lebovich.

Additionally, it reveals the interest of British officials in implementing outreach tactics to foster links between Muslims and British populations. This finding demonstrates the robustness of the study. However, it should be noted that the study did not investigate the extent of the relationships, trust, and sustainability inside the communities. Therefore, this will guide the implementation of well-considered counter-narrative techniques.

Kosseim (2011) analysed the best practices in the US and learnt from other experiences in his research on counter-radicalization. He underlined how successful community-oriented police are at thwarting radicalisation, especially in Britain. The effectiveness of the "Channel Project," a community outreach initiative created as part of a broader strategy to stop radicalisation in the nation, was covered in the report. Law enforcement officers and other Muslim community members were effectively inspired by the program to recognise people who were at risk of radicalisation and carry out the necessary interventions. Effective community policing tactics have demonstrated success in numerous locations that are impacted by the operations of radical groups. The inquiry pertains to whether the best practices have been disseminated across the Horn of Africa, encompassing Kenya, Somalia, and Ethiopia, and the specific counties in Kenya that have been impacted by incidents involving extremist groups. However, the study did not confirm this.

This study examines the optimal strategies that can be implemented in the region to effectively oppose the narratives that contribute to the radicalization of youth in Mandera East, located in Mandera County, Kenya.

The prevention of youth radicalization in East Africa was the subject of research by the Africa Center for Strategic Studies in 2012. The research emphasized the critical need to foster interagency collaboration as a means of addressing the challenges associated with teenage radicalization. The report suggests that youth ministries should align their efforts with security authorities and institutions, such as the police, gendarmerie, army, and intelligence organizations. The report additionally emphasized the importance of maintaining constant communication between security organizations and non-defence entities, such as education, health, and labour ministries. According to the study, civil society groups, including religious organizations, neighbourhood associations, recreational clubs, sports teams, and similar entities, played a crucial role in countering extreme ideology. These groups possessed the capability and aptitude to augment their engagements with the younger generation in manners that state institutions could not do. The study suggests that both governments and foreign donors have the potential to assist in the establishment of mentorship programs, which civil society organizations might implement. Additionally, it is suggested that a conducive regulatory framework be established to facilitate the engagement of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in their activities and contacts with young individuals. The study did not emphasize the setting and the complexities within that environment, including the interplay between counter-narrative institutions such as security agencies, civil society groups, and other significant actors in the individual locations. This gap has prompted the need for this research to shed light on and analyze the context and dynamics of de-radicalization in Mandera East.

In a study by Abdikadir (2016), the use of youth radicalisation to encourage terrorism in East Africa was examined. Kenya was the study's specific emphasis, and a case study was carried out there. The study recognised the efforts made by religious organizations and leaders as a calculated tactic to counteract radicalization. According to the research, counterterrorism efforts within the Muslim community have been implemented in large part by the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM). To better understand the fundamental causes of radicalization, the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) carried out a survey in the coastal area.

Furthermore, SUPKEM supported the creation of an amnesty regulation guide in partnership with the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC). The rehabilitation of young people who had previously been affiliated with the *Al-Shabaab* organization was covered in this booklet. Representing the largely Muslim Somali and Borana groups, the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) has worked with the Council of Elders and the Council of Imams. To combat the development of extremist ideology spread by radical sections within the Muslim community, this coalition has partnered with the Kenyan government. These efforts aim to address the severe consequences of such ideologies, which have led to the tragic loss of numerous innocent lives. Although both Mandera and the coastal regions of Kenya are counties that have been affected by youth radicalization, a survey conducted by SUPKEM focused specifically on the coastal areas. Consequently, it is necessary to develop counter-narrative strategies tailored to each region's needs and circumstances. This study will focus on the techniques employed to address young radicalization in Mandera County, thereby contributing to developing counter-violent extremism (CVE) policies.

In a study conducted by Yarrow (2016), the author investigated the impact of counter-radicalization efforts on the security of East African countries, explicitly emphasizing the

implementation of diplomatic strategies in Kenya. This study aimed to examine the effects of Kenya's diplomatic endeavours in addressing the issue of radicalization. The research emphasized that due to repeated threats and their negative impact on national security and the economy, the government has implemented both multilateral and bilateral strategies to establish collaborations with countries that have experienced similar challenges, both within the area and internationally. As part of its regional counter-terrorism initiatives that centre on counter-radicalization efforts, the government has arranged a number of talks within regional organizations, such as the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the Commonwealth, and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) (Yarrow 2016). However, the effectiveness of the government's cooperation with bilateral and international programs is still up for debate.

This study will examine the potential impact of enhancing, establishing connections, and coordinating partnerships on the efficacy of counter-narrative endeavours inside the border regions of the Mandera triangle; according to Davis (2016), a prominent diplomatic endeavour involved establishing bilateral collaboration between the Kenyan government and the United States. This collaboration aimed to enhance Kenya's preparedness to counter radicalism and terrorism through military training. These actions have been designated as a "top priority" to combat radicalization and terrorism in the region.

In a study by Ratemo (2015), an analysis was conducted on African counterterrorism, emphasizing the strategies employed to prevent radicalization in Kenya. The research employed a qualitative methodology, utilizing content analysis as the primary method of data analysis. The research emphasized the significant contribution of public-private partnerships (PPP) in mitigating radicalization in Kenya through disseminating narratives and messages discouraging violence. Based on the study's findings, this method additionally provided an alternate and non-violent

means of achieving shared objectives while concurrently fostering diversity within institutions dedicated to combating radicalization. The study highlighted the necessity for Kenya to cultivate trust among communities and actively engage them in efforts to combat radicalization effectively and harness the resources within a community. The study's findings indicate that law enforcement organizations must acknowledge that one of the critical principles of countering violent extremism (CVE) is establishing trust with individuals most susceptible to radicalization. The present study highlights a gap in the trustworthiness of the qualitative data collection approach.

Similarly, the report did not provide explicit details regarding public-private partnerships. Similarly, establishing trust across communities with diverse interests and economic backgrounds will require a significant allocation of resources and a considerable amount of time. This study examines effective ways and strategies for creating community trust to promote social cohesiveness.

In a scholarly article, Qureshi (2014) examines Kenya's counter-radicalization approach, highlighting its focus on addressing the specific strategies employed by terrorist organizations to radicalize young individuals. Qureshi asserts that the events in Kenya served as evidence for implementing a comprehensive and multifaceted intelligence-driven approach to counterterrorism. The effectiveness of the National Intelligence Service (NIS) in East Africa was demonstrated by its successful efforts to counter radicalization and prevent indoctrination into terrorist cells and groups, as highlighted in the research. This accomplishment is evidence of the NIS's implementation of a comprehensive and multifaceted approach. The Intelligence Service has also engaged in the practice of profiling various individuals involved in the recruiting of terrorists through online platforms, resulting in the apprehension of a considerable number of these agents. There was an increase in the extent of human intelligence (HUMINT) activities conducted between

the last quarter of 2014 and 2015, explicitly targeting terror cells affiliated with the Somali Islamist group Harakat Al-Shabaab Al Mujahideen.

In a scholarly discussion, Kumba (2016) looked at how important the judicial system is to Kenya's fight against extremism. According to the author, there was a significant shift in Kenya in 2014, a nation that strongly opposed the implementation of counterterrorism legislation after the September 11 attacks. The Security Laws were developed and enacted during this time by the Kenyan government, particularly the executive branch and its legislative allies. Regardless of whether the person in question actually commits an act of terrorism, the court has the power to sentence someone to a maximum of 14 years in prison for making remarks that could be construed as encouraging or motivating someone else to commit or prepare for terror effects.

An additional provision was bestowed onto NIS officers, conferring them with the power to seize anyone whom the officers possess a reasonable belief of engaging in any action or possessing any material that may pose a threat to national security. This provision, therefore, affords a considerable degree of discretion in its interpretation. The bill includes additional provisions that diminish legislative oversight of the NIS, grant the organization the authority to request information from any government entity, extend the permissible duration of suspect detention to 90 days, and enable repeated arrests of individuals for the same offence without the need for new evidence or a warrant.

The Institute of Strategic Studies (2013) acknowledged the effectiveness of the Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance (KMYA), which was founded in November 2003, as a counter-radicalization tactic in its evaluation of Kenyan youths' vulnerability to radicalization and extremism. Young Muslim activists who thought Muslims might communicate with other Kenyan societies created this

partnership. Since Muslim teenagers were the primary targets of radical organizations, the alliance was established to address the particular issues they faced. Through its civic education and engagement initiatives, KMYA aimed to create a forum for Muslims to understand a range of ideas, including jihad, democracy, gender equality, human rights, freedom of speech, and religious tolerance. Muslim professors had taken advantage of their widespread public backing to mislead and confuse Muslim youngsters into thinking that ideas like democracy were anti-Islam. KMYA aimed to rectify this misperception. By highlighting the critical role that CSOs play in preventing radicalisation, KMYA consistently used the media and established networks of moderate Muslim scholars to refute the narratives of extremist organisations.

In his study on radicalization and terrorist recruiting among the youth in Kenya, Hellsten (2016) emphasized the significance of prioritizing the youth demographic through expanding educational opportunities, career prospects, and involvement in political activities. The study emphasized the significance of involving young individuals constructively within politics. This involvement aimed to foster a sense of unity based on shared values while also promoting a vision of change through democratic means. The study further suggested that these ideologies could be effectively countered by depriving radical groups and extremists of new recruits. The research findings provided evidence supporting endorsing young leadership exchange programs by international and regional collaborators. Additionally, the research acknowledged the pivotal significance of organizations operating within slums and informal settlements regarding their support for educational initiatives, youth engagement, vocational instruction, and employment opportunities.

2.2.2 Contribution of Counter Strategies Used to Prevent Youth Radicalizations

The contribution of counter strategies used to prevent youth radicalization plays a critical role. Counterstrategies aim to elucidate the deficiencies inherent in the narratives put out by radicals

and extremists and to effectively challenge and refute their ideologies (Neumann, 2017). According to Bizina and Gray (2014), counter-narratives can prompt individuals susceptible to radical propaganda to reassess their perspectives by exposing the flaws, falsehoods, and inconsistencies present within such propaganda. The primary objectives of these programs are to confront extremist ideologies and influences inside society, advocate for principles of tolerance, moderation, and democracy, and tackle elements that contribute to an individual's susceptibility to radicalization (Danish Government, 2014). Numerous initiatives aim to foster self-awareness and cultivate critical thinking skills among the youth.

Funk and Said (2014) focused on the link between Islam and the West in their transformation narratives and conflicts analysis. The study used a narrative analytic technique to examine the dominant narratives that groups who identify as Western and Islamic use to frame their understandings of conflict. In particular, two prevailing storylines surfaced, one of which focused on intercultural conflict and the other on multicultural harmony. It is clear from the study's conclusions that the assertions made by the Muslim and Western narrators of these tales are comparable. Considering this, it is suggested that introducing a "new story" that highlights intercultural complementarity could benefit individuals involved in conflict transformation. This approach would involve reinterpreting differences and promoting the pursuit of peaceful coexistence. The study emphasized the importance of adopting a positive perspective towards the connections between Islam and the West. It said this approach should prioritize peace as a shared objective between the two civilizations while acknowledging the ongoing presence of choice in these interactions. The study acknowledged that both Muslims and Westerners held certain similar ideals. However, they expressed and practiced these principles in many ways due to their cultural traditions, which were fully compatible. From the Western perspective, peace is defined as a state

characterized by the absence of armed conflict, acts of terrorism, and severe infringements against fundamental human rights. According to the Muslim perspective, genuine peace is characterized by justice, self-determination, and societal equilibrium or concord.

In a study done by Bukar (2017), the focus was on the transformation of violent extremism. Based on the study's findings, the potential for enhancing narratives rests in amplifying authoritative voices within a community that promotes inclusive principles and emphasizes nonviolent transformation methods. The study highlighted the potential for developing resilient and multicultural societies that actively reject violence through media, peer-to-peer outreach, and interpersonal contacts in new ways. As indicated by the research, the potential risk lies in the potential to foster disconnection and distrust within interactions with vulnerable communities by strategically addressing their deeply ingrained ideas and values through counter-messaging techniques. The study proposed that choosing voices as role models to empower society should maintain ideological neutrality and be based on promoting constructive methods to address issues. Their ideas will be studied further.

Heffelfinger (2010) conducted an assessment that examined the evolution of effective counterstrategies against Jihad. After analysing the jihadist narrative and its main elements, the study highlighted that the best strategies to refute such narratives would continually claim that Islam is compatible with democracy and pluralism. Additionally, it would contend that the ideology spread by al-Qaeda and other jihadist organisations is a perversion of conventional Islamic doctrine and that its followers have shown a disrespect for the sanctity of both Muslim and non-Muslim life. The report also noted that a successful counterstrategy would carefully target vulnerabilities and emphasize controversial subjects to undermine the religious legitimacy and

intellectual grounds of jihadists' violent activities. This strategy would weaken Muslim public support and popular opinion, both of which are essential to the jihadists' ability to survive.

Ensor (2017) looks at violent extremism and peacebuilding, emphasizing the main takeaways and lessons from a global consultation. Deconstructing the extremist narratives as they surfaced and simultaneously creating narratives of peace, unity, and cohabitation was a preventive strategy for peacebuilders, according to the study. Humanizing marginalized groups, balancing diversity with strength and unity, bolstering the idea that violence and war were neither inherent nor inevitable, and fostering an inclusive society and national identity were some tactics employed in rewriting narratives that advocated peaceful coexistence. According to the report, local peacebuilders in Myanmar have used a variety of strategies to combat hate speech and advance ideas of peaceful coexistence. The study found that certain organizations had transformed the roots of intolerance through the application of peace education initiatives. In contrast, others worked through social media to fight hate speech and deliver alternative strategies. The above idea will be explored further in this study.

In their study, Faris and Zeiger (2017) examine the potential strategies for countering violent extremist narratives in the Middle East and North Africa. The authors highlight the significant role that religious leaders can play in challenging the religious and ideological narratives propagated by Daesh. By offering counterarguments and refutations, these religious leaders can effectively undermine the justifications put forth by Daesh to legitimize violence in the name of Islam. From a cultural perspective, it can be observed that famous religious individuals commanded a profound level of reverence among their respective local adherents. The counsel and guidance of these revered figures influenced the communities they served. Numerous Islamic scholars from the

Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region are actively involved in efforts to refute the propaganda disseminated by Daesh. This study will further the ideas poised by Faris and Zeiger. Beutel (2016) argued in her discussion of the guiding principles for countering and dispelling extremist narratives that instead of being caught up in ideological conflicts, counter strategies messages should acknowledge the problems that supported a large portion of the empathy for radical or extremist groups without verifying the methods that these groups frequently advocate, which can include violence. In contrast to the violent solutions offered by radical and extremist groups, he mentioned an example of creating narratives that acknowledged the complaints or grievances of a specific group while proposing other (and lawful) ways to handle a given situation. People were less likely to argue against the counter-message when the strategy acknowledged them and their worries. Beutel (2016) makes a compelling case for refuting and dispelling extremist narratives, providing a sophisticated viewpoint on how to create successful counterstrategies. By detecting complaints and providing non-violent alternatives, Beutel's argument offers a deliberate and practical strategy for refuting extremist narratives. Although the suggested approach seems promising, its success can hinge on deftly handling complications and projecting sincerity when addressing the target audience's issues.

In his analysis of radicalization and extremism in Eastern Africa, Devine (2017) argued that religious organizations had a duty to prioritize the ideals of justice, mercy, and truth over lies and division. Given that their domains of influence and possibilities to persuade others were frequently, for instance, more extensive and psycho-spiritually more profound than governmental organizations, religious leaders and their followers had a need to promote tolerance consistently. At the core of conflict and bloodshed, there was frequently a "war of ideas." The study found that religious leaders needed to be more knowledgeable about and experienced in international

relations, comparative religion, development, and peace studies. Devine's exploration of radicalization and extremism in Eastern Africa, particularly emphasizing the role of religious institutions, provides a compelling perspective on countering the roots of conflict. The assertion that religious institutions have a vocational responsibility in fostering values such as truth, justice, and mercy over deception and division underscores the potential impact of religious leaders in promoting peace and tolerance. Devine's perspective on the role of religious institutions in countering radicalization offers valuable insights into the potential influence of religious leaders. While acknowledging the unique impact they can have, it also points to the necessity of a well-rounded education for religious leaders to address the multifaceted challenges associated with extremism and conflict.

Mwangi (2017) emphasized how crucial it is to advance religious tolerance by candid communication and economic integration. The study found that interreligious dialogue forums for candid discussions between leaders of various religious communities and civil society actors were necessary to improve mutual respect and address harmful preconceptions and attitudes that resulted in stigmatisation and marginalisation. For Islamic religious instruction, the study suggested standardizing the religious curriculum. To promote religious tolerance, it further suggested that the Muslim and Christian communities engage in productive discussion by exchanging knowledge and advocating for harmony and peace rather than conflict. Mwangi's (2017) focus on promoting religious tolerance through open dialogue and economic integration offers valuable insights into addressing interreligious tensions. The emphasis on interreligious dialogue forums to foster mutual respect and combat negative stereotypes and attitudes is commendable. Such forums have the potential to bring together diverse religious leaders and civil

society actors to engage in constructive conversations, potentially dispelling misconceptions that contribute to stigmatization and marginalization. Mwangi's focus on interreligious dialogue, education, and economic integration as pathways for fostering religious tolerance is valuable to the scholarly discourse on promoting peaceful coexistence among diverse faith communities. Addressing negative stereotypes and fostering mutual respect through open deliberation is a crucial step, and the study provides constructive recommendations for building understanding and unity among religious communities.

2.2.3 Challenges Faced in the Development of Counter Strategies

In their comprehensive analysis of programs aimed at countering strategies of violent extremism, Briggs and Feve (2013) identified a significant shortcoming in the government's approach. Specifically, they emphasized the government's failure to establish effective coordination among its various departments and establish partnerships with strategic allies. This lack of coordination and partnership-building has hindered the development and implementation of impactful counter campaigns. The factor above impacted the cohesiveness of disseminating the opposing messages. Additionally, it was observed that the inability of governments to eliminate bureaucratic impediments, enhance their services to promptly address the communications of radical factions, and increase awareness regarding potential dangers from such factions constituted significant hurdles.

Additionally, it was noted that governments have failed to equip their communication staff with the necessary tools and abilities to address emerging difficulties effectively and proactively. Briggs and Feve's critique highlights critical challenges in government programs to counter violent extremism. Emphasis on coordination, bureaucratic obstacles, and awareness campaigns is crucial for refining and strengthening these initiatives. To enhance the critique further, providing specific

examples and proposing actionable solutions would contribute to a more comprehensive analysis, which this study will explore.

When analyzing the use of narratives to counter the radical right, Dafnos (2014) observes that while governments have the capacity and resources to promote alternative narratives, they often lack the credibility and trustworthiness necessary to communicate with target audiences effectively. Government endorsements can sometimes have a detrimental effect on potentially valid messages or messengers, leading to their rejection. Additionally, he referred to the risk aversion exhibited by governments, specifically in relation to the messages they were willing to endorse, such as those that offered critiques of foreign policy or possessed a highly radical bent. Dafnos's analysis offers significant insights into governments' difficulties in confronting the extreme right using narratives. Including credibility, risk aversion, and the potential adverse consequences of government intervention enhances the depth of the analysis. To further enrich the critique, it would be beneficial to integrate specific instances as evidence and provide practical remedies. This approach would lead to a more thorough comprehension of the prevailing concerns.

In his analysis of Al-Qaeda's "single narrative" and counter strategies, Schmid (2014) argues that the effectiveness of government counter initiatives may be constrained. Instead, he advocated for governments to prioritize enhancing and supporting community-led efforts in generating positive narratives. Additionally, he suggests that governments could employ alternative messages in public discourse, which may be delivered by political personalities and public declarations. This should be done alongside a commitment to align their actions with the content of these messages to avoid contradictions. Schmid's analysis provides valuable insights into countering extremist narratives by highlighting the potential limitations of government initiatives and advocating for

community-led efforts. The recommendations on alternative messages and aligning actions with messaging contribute to a well-rounded approach. Addressing potential challenges and providing more specific guidance on supporting community-led efforts would contribute to a more comprehensive analysis.

Head and Noar (2014) argue that it is crucial for anyone involved in creating counter-narratives in the context of countering violent extremism (CVE) to exercise caution when selecting the target audience, namely those individuals who might be categorized as being "at risk". The research emphasized that in certain instances, these producers employed a broad definition of "at risk," resulting in the potential for shows to cater to a significantly broad audience. For example, specific initiatives that specifically focus on segments of Muslim communities that are considered socially marginalized have had significant success in engaging with the broader Muslim population. Consequently, these types of activities were susceptible to the potential consequence of stigmatizing entire segments of Muslim communities as 'suspicious'. Consequently, this effort resulted in the estrangement of Muslims who perceived themselves as being subjected to unjust profiling. Inherently, rather than effectively mitigating radicalization, such approaches proved detrimental.

According to Berger (2016), counter-strategy effectiveness was decreased by not focusing on smaller, more precisely defined audience segments and by not employing extremely complex segmentation techniques that may distinguish people according to the problems at hand. A lack of thorough and organised audience research also hampered audience analysis. Colaert (2017) investigates de-radicalization for policy from a scientific standpoint. He claims that organising and carrying out effective online counterattacks could weaken the post source or message. He explained the difficulty of determining the origin of an organization's message that a Facebook

buddy picked up from a blog by another friend, who might or might not have mentioned the source. The study discovered that by adding to, changing, and rephrasing the text to express their ideas, these various sources perplexed readers and made things more difficult. According to Colaert (2017), this changed the counter-messages. The study will examine the necessity of combining initiatives for online and in-person counter strategies.

Technology, social media, and creative marketing and advertising companies could use their skills to develop and disseminate online and offline counter ideas and alter views, according to the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) Centre for Excellence (2018). Instead of understanding extreme trends and radicalization, these corporations concentrated on shareholder accountability. The identified corporations, crucial stakeholders in countering radicalization, lacked time and resources to create counter efforts. These corporations are concerned about working in a challenging and contentious region and damaging brand names by working too closely with governments. It was challenging to create and implement effective counter-strategies.

According to Zeiger and Aly (2015), it was difficult to create and implement successful counter-strategic operations because there was insufficient research on how audiences reacted to, understood, decoded, internalized, and, in some situations, acted upon radical and extremist group narratives and propaganda. The study discovered that counterterrorism policies were predicated on the erroneous notion that communications from terrorist organizations affected a subservient audience. The target audience may be misled into thinking they are foolish and naïve by general counter-narrative initiatives that seek to correct misinformation and establish a "true reality." That wasn't a very good method to persuade people to pay attention.

Uhlmann (2015) examined the pros and cons of building effective counter-narrative methods against the "Islamic State" Movement. According to the study, creating a tale that promoted inclusion was a two-way process. The main issue was the primary narrative of Muslims as "the other." The opposing view of Muslims and Islam hindered interactions between non-Muslim mainstream societies and Muslim communities. It gave those who wanted to separate themselves from Muslims and non-Muslims a narrative. External forces like the Islamic State exacerbated the stigmatization. Negative labels were used to create a resistant persona. The study clearly describes the issues, but exploring ways to create counter-narratives that undermine primary narratives would be helpful. Policymakers and practitioners could benefit from the study's stigma-reduction and inclusive narrative recommendations. Uhlmann's paper analyzes the difficulties of creating counter-narratives against the "Islamic State" Movement. Identifying primary narratives and studying stigmatization strategies helps explain the complications.

2.3 Summary of the Reviewed Literature and Research Gap

The literature research has demonstrated that young radicalisation is a concern in various countries throughout the world, including Kenya. Creating public-private partnerships is one of the tactics mentioned in the Kenyan context (Ratemo, 2015). This diplomatic strategy includes both bilateral and multilateral efforts to strengthen ties with countries that have experienced these threats both locally and internationally (Yarrow, 2016); improve intelligence operations and eliminate terror cells through the National Intelligence Service (Qureshi, 2014); and work with the Kenyan government in conjunction with SUPKEM, the Council of Imams, and the Council of Elders to eradicate any false ideologies propagated by Muslim extremists (Abdikadir, 2016).

The examination of the body of research has also revealed that numerous studies have been carried out to demonstrate the function of different counter-campaigns in halting radicalisation. Everyone

agrees that these tactics and initiatives have an impact on preventing radicalisation. These include Heffelfinger (2010), Funk and Said (2014), Bukar (2017), Ensor (2017), Faris and Zeiger (2017), Devine (2017), Uhlmann (2015), and Doosje and Eerten (2017). Comparing the Kenyan situation to the global approach, the analysis of extant literature reveals that research on the effectiveness of such campaigns in preventing radicalisation is minimal. Few of the examined research, including those by Zeiger and Aly (2015) and Devine (2017), were conducted in Kenya; instead, they concentrated on East Africa as a whole. The literature research also reveals that the most well-known counter-initiatives have been carried out in other countries, with less attention paid to the campaigns that have been carried out in Kenya. The deficiencies will be examined, current counterstrategies will be highlighted, and recommendations for their design will be provided where they are lacking.

The literature further shows that the design and delivery of effective counter-narrative campaigns have been hindered by, among others, poor coordination and partnership among key/strategic stakeholders, bureaucratic constraints and lack of adequate resources from the government (Briggs & Fave, 2013), governments lacking credibility or trustworthiness as effective messengers (Dafnos, 2014), challenges in target audience segmentation and analysis (Noar, 2012), dilution of the message or post source on online environments (Colaert, 2017), lack of capacity in terms of funds, resources and expertise among civil society groups, the lack of emphasis on flexibility in designing the campaigns (Ginkel, 2015) as well as lack of research or evidence on the effectiveness of these campaigns (Zeiger & Aly, 2015).

The study has a conceptual gap because it focuses on radicalisation, which can be both violent and peaceful, whereas most of the examined studies, including Bukar (2017) and Ensor (2017), examine counterstrategies regarding violent extremism. The review also shows that the focus has been on religious and ideological narratives as well as emotional and psychological counter-narratives, with little attention paid to some counterstrategies, such as factual, peaceful, and inter-ethnic narratives and Islam as peaceful and non-violent narratives. Additionally, the research methodology, demographics, sample strategy, research instruments, and data processing techniques used by various researchers vary. Furthermore, empirical research reveals methodological, contextual, and conceptual shortcomings. From a methodological perspective, most of the research has been either qualitative or quantitative. Additionally, the research methodology, demographics, sample strategy, research instruments, and data processing techniques various researchers use vary.

Conceptually, radicalization ideas are not well studied, creating a gap in understanding radicalization. Radicalization research conducted in the Mandera context, particularly Mandera East sub-county, is limited, hence the contextual gap. The research intends to fill these gaps by exploring more about how Islam as a religion is peaceful and non-violent. It will also investigate factual gaps in radicalization activities in the study area, which has not come out clearly in the reviewed literature and the need for more studies. The study will analyze how inter-clan conflicts in the study area relate to and aggravate the border youths' radicalisation process. The present study combined quantitative and qualitative data, hence improving the findings.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter comprehensively overviews this investigation's research methodologies and processes. It details the research design, study site, population, and sampling techniques used, providing a structured framework for the study. Additionally, the chapter outlines the data collection instruments, data processing and analysis procedures, and the legal and ethical considerations integrated throughout the research process.

3.2 Research Design

A descriptive research design was employed in the study. Taylor, Bogdan, and DeVault (2015) state that a descriptive research design gathers data by interviewing or surveying a sample of people to learn more about their attitudes, beliefs, or behaviour regarding social issues. This ensured that the problem was examined from several perspectives rather than just one, making it possible to uncover and comprehend the various aspects.

3.3 Research Site

The chosen physical borders from which the study's target population is taken constitute the research site (Klenke, 2016). Mandera East Sub County, one of the sub-counties in Mandera County that shares an open border with Somalia to the east, served as the study's research site.

Most of the research locations' inhabitants' livelihood depends on livestock rearing, which is the main economic activity. Recurrent droughts and conflicts periodically affect them, and they lose many of their animals; hence, many become pastoral dropouts. Youths from such areas are among the youths affected by the impacts of drought and conflicts on their livelihood, and they become idle, hence increasing their vulnerability to radical groups recruits. The choice of the sub-county is based on the recent attacks by the radicalized *Al Shabab* terror group in the area, including the

Mandera quarry radical terror attack, Mandera bus attack, Mandera governor convoy attacks, destructions of Safaricom communication Masts and Garissa University College which is a neighbouring county. The concerned authorities involving county and National governments have also implemented measures to impart knowledge and comprehension of radicalization and engage the youth in productive activities, e.g., employment, engaging youths in meaningful activities such as “kazi youths mtaani” radicalization, according to the County Commissioner of Mandera county, 2022. Therefore, the site borders the Gedo region of Somalia, with a long open porous border and minimal security checkpoints. The open border is believed to be a hideout for the groups and suitable for the study.

3.4 Target Population

Taylor et al. (2015) define a population as a complete group of people or elements that share at least one characteristic or as a collection of humans, objects, or items from which samples will be measured. The target population for the study make up 13,511 people. Key informant interviews were conducted with 270 youth in Mandera East Sub County, six local community leaders in Mandera County, 31 security officers from the Kenyan Anti-Terrorism Police Unit, 71 religious leaders, and six representatives based on information from NGOs and civil society organizations that are involved in counter-radicalization initiatives. Because counter-narrative campaigns and counter-radicalization initiatives include various stakeholders and different counter-narratives can be effectively controlled by different parties, it makes sense to target these discrete groups of people. This made sure that the topic being studied was thoroughly investigated.

3.5 Study Sample and sample techniques

According to Taylor et al. (2015), a sample is a subset of a population chosen to reflect or represent the population's characteristics. Which participants to choose and how many to choose in a study depends on the goals of the investigation as well as the size and diversity of the study group.

3.5.1 Study Sample Size

In this study, the researcher recognizes that the population for the study is 13,511 according to (KNBS. 2022). Since the population is large, the researcher will adopt Fisher's sample size determination method from populations of more than 10,000 (large populations) as follows.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2},$$

Where.

n = sample size.

Z = normal standard deviate (at 95% confidence level z=1.96)

p = estimated proportion of an attribute present in the population (taken as 0.5 in this case),

q = 1-p and

e = is the desired level of precision (0.05).

In this regard, therefore, the estimated sample size was;

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 (.5)(.5)}{.05^2} = 384$$

Therefore, a sample of 384 respondents will be selected for this study. Based on the strata formed, the sample size for the study will be determined, as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.1 Sampling Framework

Category	Target Population	Sample Size
Youth	9,509	270
Local Community Leaders	197	6
Security Officers	1,090	31
Religious Leaders	2,507	71
Civil Society Organizations' Representatives	208	6
Total	13,511	384

Source: KNBS (2022), NPS (2022) and County Commissioner, (2022)

3.5.2 Sampling Procedure

The techniques and methodical process of gathering data from a smaller group inside a larger one is known as the sampling procedure, according to Creswell & Creswell (2017). Techniques for stratified systematic sampling were employed in this investigation. Mandera East Sub County's population was selected using systematic sampling, which selects every tenth respondent until the desired sample size is reached.

3.6 Data Collection

The creation of the research tools, their pilot testing, validity, and reliability are all covered in this part. The following subheadings address each sub-section.

3.6.1 Data Collection Instruments

Key informant interview guides (KIIs) and semi-structured questionnaires will be used to gather primary data for the project. Mandera East Sub County's children, security personnel, and religious leaders will all receive the questionnaire. In parallel, key informant interviews were carried out with sub-county CSO representatives and local community leaders. There were four sections on the questionnaire. General information on the respondents was provided in the first part. The questions in sections two, three, and four, on the other hand, addressed the specific goals of the deradicalization tactics used to stop youth radicalization, the degree to which counter-narratives

have helped to lessen youth radicalization, and the difficulties encountered when creating counter-narrative tactics in the context of youth radicalization in Kenya's Mandera East Sub County. The respondents filled in the questionnaire as the research assistants waited to reduce non-response. The schedule for the interviews with KIIs was 40 minutes each. An interview protocol, a set of rules and guidelines, was used for conducting the interviews and aligned based on the study's specific objectives. Structured questions were also used. The interview was taped and transcribed into words before analysis.

3.6.2 Pilot Testing of Research Instruments

Pre-testing elements like the questionnaire are pilot testing (Garg & Kothari, 2014). The researcher carried out a pilot study, which included 38 respondents from the Mandera North sub-county. This represents ten per cent of the sample size. Mandera North Sub County was chosen for pilot research because it shares traits with the study area. The pilot study's findings helped clarify the questions, content validity, and administration time of the final questionnaire.

3.6.3 Instrument Reliability

The degree to which the instrument can produce consistent outcomes after multiple trials is known as reliability (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to evaluate the internal consistency of the items and estimate the reliability of the test instruments because the pilot only included one test treatment. It was determined that the study would benefit most from a reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher.

3.6.4 Instrument Validity

Validity assesses whether the research instruments measure what they are supposed to measure or how accurate the research findings are, as claimed by Garg and Kothari (2014). The researcher

employed content validity in the study's context. The subjective determination of whether a concept's measures will seem to measure what they are supposed to measure is known as content validity. To gain their opinion on whether the data collecting tools are appropriate for measuring the things the researcher wants to measure, the researcher shared them with specialists, including fellow researchers and university supervisors. Project managers significantly improved validity.

3.6.5 Data Collection Procedure

Before data collection began, the researcher sought permission from the relevant authorities to access the respondents. This step was essential to ensure ethical compliance and build trust with the participants and institutions involved.

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Quantitative data was gathered through the use of structured questionnaires. These questionnaires were designed to collect standardized information across a broad sample, allowing for statistical analysis. Research assistants were trained to handle the distribution and collection of the questionnaires to support this process. They were explicitly instructed to be flexible in their approach—adjusting to the respondents' schedules and needs to encourage participation and maximize response rates.

For the qualitative component, the study employed key informant interviews. These were conducted with individuals selected for their specialized knowledge or experience related to the research topic. The interviews provided richer, more detailed insights that complemented the numerical data from the questionnaires, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the issues under investigation.

Throughout the data collection process, the research assistants followed clear guidelines to ensure consistency, ethical conduct, and respect for the participants. Their training prepared them to navigate the practical and interpersonal aspects of fieldwork effectively, contributing to the overall quality and credibility of the research.

3.7 Data Analysis

To guarantee the accuracy and dependability of the data gathered, the surveys were closely examined. Quantitative data was uploaded to SPSS version 24 for analysis after being coded according to the research goals and recorded into a datasheet. To capture the distribution of responses on the important problems included in the study goals, quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, which include frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Tables, pie charts, graphs, and figures are used to display the results of quantitative data.

Thematic analysis was used to examine the qualitative information gathered from KIIs and the open-ended questionnaire questions. The thematic analysis focuses on finding, analysing, and documenting patterns or themes in data (Guest & Greg, 2012). A narrative report containing the data gathered from the study is given. Getting acquainted with the data, looking for themes, evaluating themes, identifying and labelling themes, and creating the report were the phases included in the data analysis process. How the themes connect to the study's goals will determine how they are interpreted.

3.8 Legal and Ethical Considerations

The moral principles the researcher upheld throughout the study are known as ethical considerations. Before the procedure started, university approval forms were requested. The researcher avoided being biased by purposely trying to hide what they found in their study or by

emphasizing something that contradicted its presence. Additionally, the researcher refrained from employing unethical study methodology, such as choosing a highly biased sample. Inaccurate reporting or presenting the results in a way that alters or biases them to fit one's or another's interests was something the researcher avoided.

Prior to beginning the data collection process, the researcher obtained consent, approval, and clearance from the appropriate authorities, including the Ministry of Education, the County Commissioner, the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) (see Appendix III), and Africa Nazarene University (see Appendix II). The different research participants were asked to give their informed consent. Given the delicate nature of the study issue, the researcher enlisted the help of two skilled research assistants to help with the data-gathering process. The researcher did not ask respondents for information that could be used against them, for example, or utilise it in any other way that could negatively impact them directly or indirectly. After providing the respondents with the necessary information, the researcher gave them the freedom to choose whether to take part in the study. Once more, the researcher was obligated to respect readers and participants by ensuring non-discriminatory terminology was used.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the interpretation of data linked to study-specific objectives, with different themes being presented. The sections present responses on key thematic areas influencing youth radicalization and the de-radicalization process in Mandera East Sub-County, Mandera County, Kenya.

4.2 Presentation of Findings

The following objectives directed the study: to evaluate the counterstrategies employed to stop youth radicalization, demonstrate the ways in which counterstrategies have aided in youth deradicalization, and identify the difficulties encountered in creating counterstrategies to address youth radicalization in Kenya's Mandera East Sub County. The study employed questionnaires and in-person interviews to gather data. Key informants were contacted by telephone to provide explanations later during the data coding process. The results were displayed as tables, pie charts, percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations.

4.2.1 Response Rate

Out of the 384 questionnaires, 319 were returned duly filled and merited inclusion in the study.

Out of 319 questionnaires, 26 were considered spoilt because of unanswered questions.

Table 4.1 Response Rate

Response Rate	Frequency	Percent (%)
Returned	319	91.8%
Spoilt	26	17%
Total	293	100%

From the results presented in Table 4.1, 319 questionnaires were administered to the respondents, of which 293 merited inclusions in the study, accounting for a response rate of 91.8%, considered adequate for analysis. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 50% is adequate for a study; 60% is good, and 70% is perfect; therefore, a response rate of 91.8% was very good for this study. Completed questionnaires were then edited for completeness and consistency.

Distribution of respondents

The distribution of respondents in the study reflects a diverse representation of different stakeholder groups involved in the research. The Youth group constitutes the largest segment, with 112 respondents, accounting for approximately 38.2% of the total. This significant representation highlights the importance of youth perspectives in understanding the issues at hand, likely due to their active involvement and potential impact on community dynamics. Local community leaders followed with 59 respondents (around 20.1%), indicating strong input from individuals who play a pivotal role in local governance and community initiatives. Security Officers make up 48 respondents (approximately 16.4%), reflecting the necessity of law enforcement insights in addressing the issues discussed in the study.

The Religious Leaders group, which includes Imams, pastors, or Khadis, consists of 38 respondents (about 13%), underscoring the relevance of faith-based perspectives in discussions about radicalization and community cohesion. Finally, Civil Society Organizations' Representatives account for 36 respondents (around 12.3%), representing the views of organizations that work towards community development and advocacy.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents

Respondent Group	Number of Respondents
Youth	112
Local Community Leaders	59
Security Officers	48
Religious Leaders	38
Civil Society Organizations’ Representatives	36
Total	293

4.2.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

This section presents the various demographic categorizations of the study based on gender, age, marital status, level of education, occupation, duration of stay, and religion.

4.2.3 Response by Gender

According to the findings presented in Figure 4.1, out of the 293 respondents who participated in this study, 183 respondents (62%) were male, while 110 respondents (38%) were female. This gender distribution reflects a notable male majority among the respondents, which could indicate the broader societal structure in Kenya, where patriarchal norms often influence participation in various social, economic, and political activities. The disproportionate representation of males may also suggest that men are more actively engaged in the contexts relevant to this study, potentially reflecting the gender roles and expectations inherent in a patriarchal community.

KIIs provided additional context to these findings. A community leader observed, *“In our community, men are often seen as the primary breadwinners and decision-makers, which is why you see a greater participation of males in these types of studies. Women, on the other hand, are*

sometimes less involved in formal engagements.” A local youth representative remarked, *“While men are more likely to engage in public issues, women often play a supportive, though less visible, role in the community, especially in family and household matters.”* A gender activist pointed out, *“The gender disparity in participation can also reflect the challenges women face in accessing education and leadership opportunities, which limits their involvement in community-wide initiatives.”* These sentiments highlight the gender dynamics in the region and how they shape participation in social and research activities.

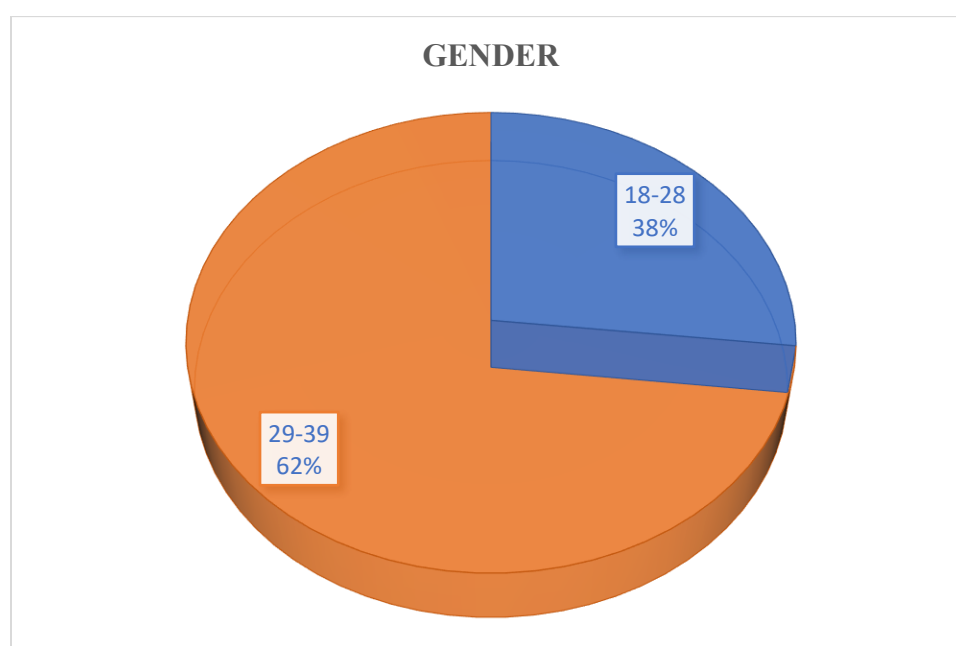


Figure 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

4.2.4 Response by Age

This study also sought to know the respondent’s ages since different age groups are affected in one way or another by youth radicalization in Mandera East Sub-County. The age distribution of respondents is presented in Figure 4.2. Many respondents were 29-39 years old, accounting for 104 respondents, representing 35.4% of the total sample. This was followed by the 40-50 years age group, comprising 95 respondents (32.4%). The 18-28 age group accounted for 38 respondents

(13%), while those aged 51-61 constituted 22 respondents (7.6%). Lastly, respondents aged 62 years and above represented 34 respondents, or 11.6% of the total population. This distribution indicates that most of the sample consisted of individuals in their early and mid-career stages, specifically between the ages of 29 and 50.

KIIs added valuable perspectives to these findings. A local youth leader observed, *“It’s clear that the 29-39 age group is in the prime of their career and personal life, so they feel the pressure of social and economic expectations. These pressures can sometimes make them more susceptible to radicalization.”* A community elder shared, *“People in the 40-50 age group often have more stability in life, but their perspective on radicalization is shaped by their experiences with the community and family.”* A religious leader pointed out, *“The youth, particularly those under 30, face a lot of challenges, including unemployment and frustration. This is when the risk of radicalization is the highest.”* These insights help contextualize the findings and underscore the critical age ranges most vulnerable to radicalization in Mandera East Sub-County.

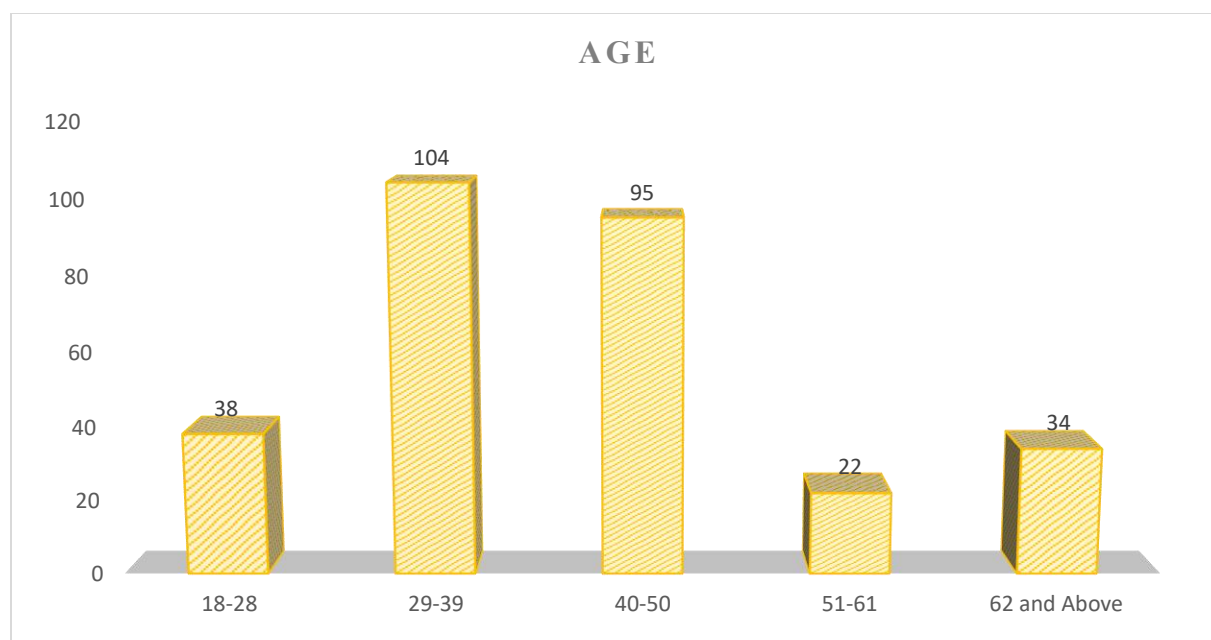


Figure 4.2: Age Distribution of Respondents

4.2.5 Marital Status

Figure 4.3 below illustrates the marital status of the respondents. According to the findings, 48 respondents (16.4%) identified as single, while the majority, 187 respondents (63.8%), were married. A smaller proportion of respondents were separated (22 respondents, 7.5%), with 9 respondents (3%) reporting that they were divorced. Additionally, 27 respondents (9.3%) were widowed. This distribution highlights that most participants were married, with relatively fewer individuals falling into single, separated, divorced, or widowed categories.

KIIs provided further insight into these findings. A community elder explained, *“Marriage is highly valued here, and most people marry early. It's the norm, and those who remain single sometimes face social stigma.”* A young respondent shared, *“The pressure to marry is strong, and people often feel like they don't have many options if they're not married, especially when it comes to social acceptance.”* A local social worker added, *“Divorce and separation are less common*

and often considered taboo in this community, leading to more people staying in unhappy marriages out of societal expectations.” These sentiments highlight the cultural significance of marriage in the community and the social dynamics that influence marital status.

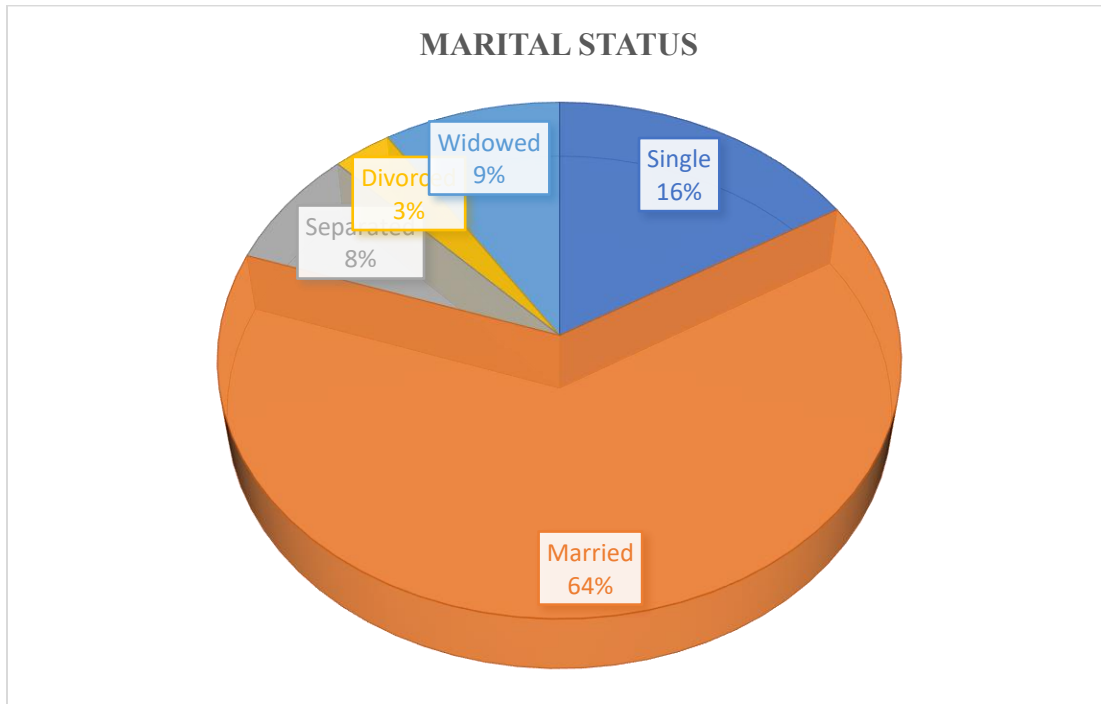


Figure 4.3: Marital Status

4.2.6 Level of Education

Figure 4.4 below presents the educational attainment of the respondents. The data indicates that 64 respondents (22%) had no formal education, while 83 (28.1%) respondents had completed primary education. Additionally, 75 respondents (26%) reported having attained secondary education, and 42 respondents (14.1%) had pursued tertiary education. A smaller proportion, 29 respondents (9.8%), had achieved university-level education. This distribution reveals that most

of the respondents had attained at least primary or secondary education, with a relatively lower percentage of individuals having progressed to tertiary or university education.

KIIs added valuable perspectives to these findings. A local educator noted, *“The level of education here is quite mixed. While many have basic education, it’s the lack of advanced education opportunities that limits progress for many individuals.”* A community leader shared, *“It’s evident that while most people have basic education, higher education remains out of reach for many due to financial constraints and limited institutions nearby.”* A youth representative added, *“We have many young people with secondary education who are eager to further their studies, but they face barriers in accessing tertiary education, like high costs and limited scholarships.”* These insights highlight the education gaps within the community and emphasize the need for greater access to higher education and skills training to address these challenges.

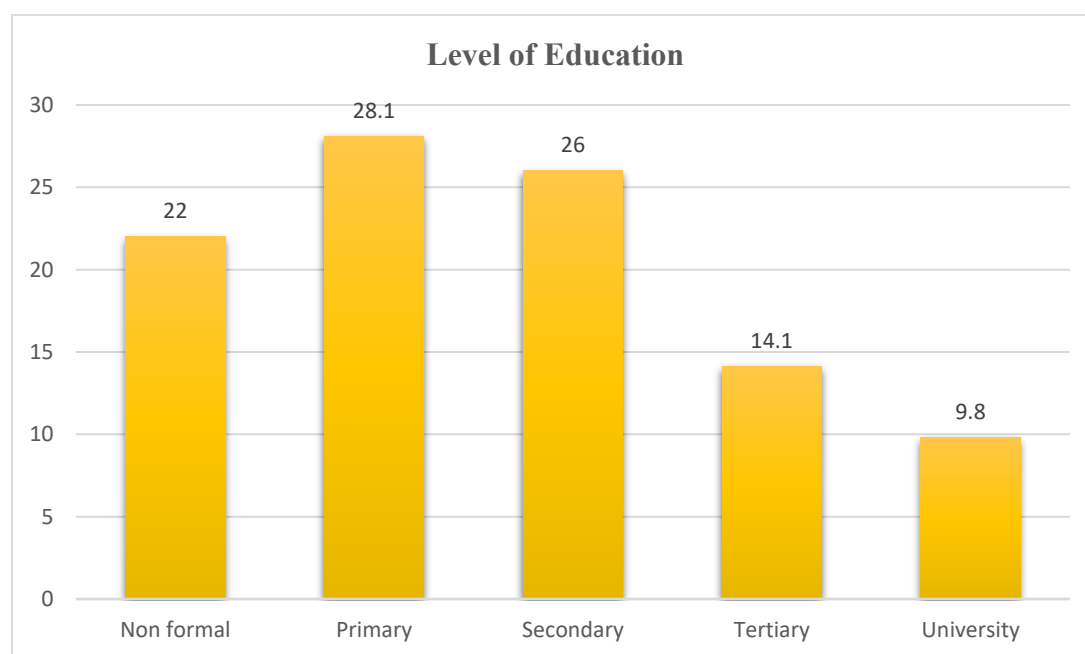


Figure 4.4: Level of Education

4.2.7 Employment Status

Out of the total respondents, 203 individuals, representing 69.2%, reported being unemployed, while 90 respondents, accounting for 30.7%, indicated that they were employed. This significant proportion of unemployed individuals highlights the economic challenges faced by the population, with a majority struggling to find or maintain stable work.

KIIs offered further insight into these findings. A local employer noted, *“There is a severe lack of job opportunities, especially for the youth. It’s a major concern for the community’s well-being.”*

A young resident shared, *“I have been looking for a job for months now. The unemployment rate is high, and it feels like there are few opportunities available.”* A community activist pointed out,

“Many young people end up turning to informal work or, worse, extremist groups that promise them a source of income. It’s a vicious cycle.” These sentiments highlight the pressing issue of unemployment and its potential social and economic consequences, underlining the need for sustainable employment initiatives in the region.

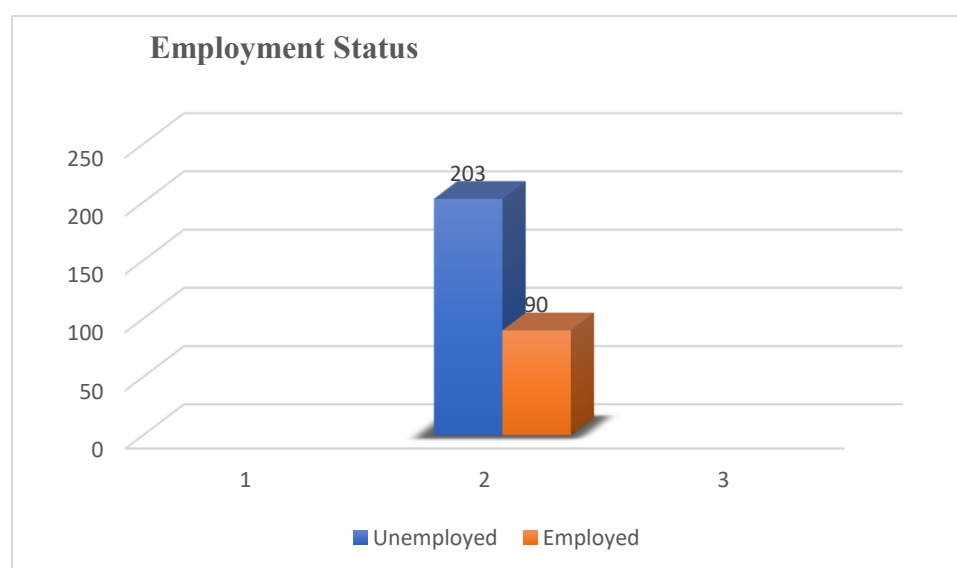


Figure 4.5: Employment Status

4.2.8 Duration of Stay

The distribution in Figure 4.5 shows respondents by the duration of stay in Mandera East, where 4% have lived in the area for less than 1 year, 7% for 1-5 years, 31% for 5-10 years, and the majority, 58%, have been residents for over 10 years. This distribution highlights that the majority of respondents have a long-term presence in the area, which could indicate strong community ties and stability among long-term residents.

KIIs provided additional insight into these findings. A local elder noted, *“The long-term residents are deeply rooted in the community. They’ve witnessed the evolution of the area and are often the ones providing guidance to newcomers.”* A young professional who had recently moved to the area mentioned, *“It’s clear that people who have been here for many years hold a lot of influence—those who’ve lived here less than 5 years still find it hard to integrate fully.”* A community leader added, *“Newcomers, though few, bring fresh ideas, but they still have to adjust to the local norms, especially in areas like social cohesion and cultural practices.”* These perspectives underscore the importance of long-term residents in shaping the dynamic community and the potential challenges newcomers face in adapting to the area.

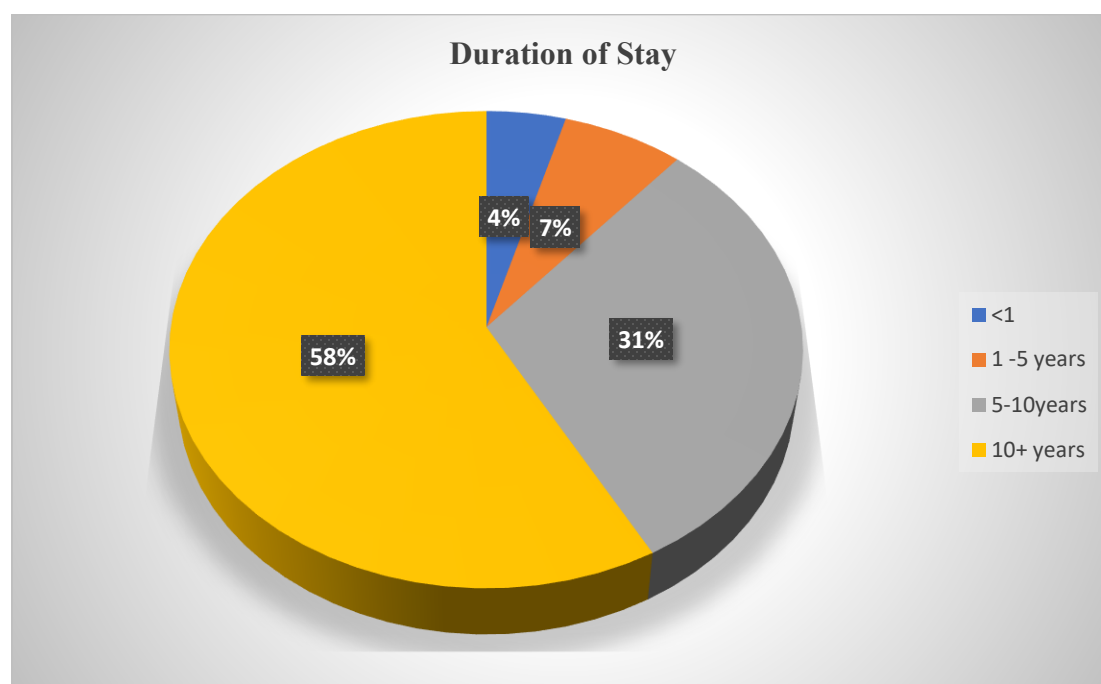


Figure 4.6: Duration of Stay

4.2.9 Religion

Findings in Figure 4.5 indicate that 81% identified as Muslim, 12% as Christian, 5% adhered to traditional beliefs, and 2% belonged to other religions. The findings indicate that most respondents,

81%, identified as Muslim, showing a significant prevalence of Islam in the surveyed population. Christians accounted for 12%, representing a smaller yet notable segment. Traditional beliefs were practised by 5%, suggesting a minor but present cultural influence within the community. Finally, 2% of respondents adhered to other religions, indicating minimal religious diversity beyond the dominant groups. Overall, these figures highlight a predominantly Muslim population with smaller representations of Christianity, traditional beliefs, and other religions.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) added valuable perspectives to these findings. A local religious leader noted, *“Islam plays a central role in the lives of the majority here, and it shapes much of the community's values and interactions.”* A Christian community member commented, *“While we are a smaller group, we have good relationships with our Muslim neighbors, and our religious practices coexist peacefully.”* A cultural expert shared, *“Traditional beliefs are still important to some, especially in rural areas, though the major religions increasingly overshadow them.”* These insights emphasize the religious diversity in the area and the coexistence of different belief systems within the broader social fabric.

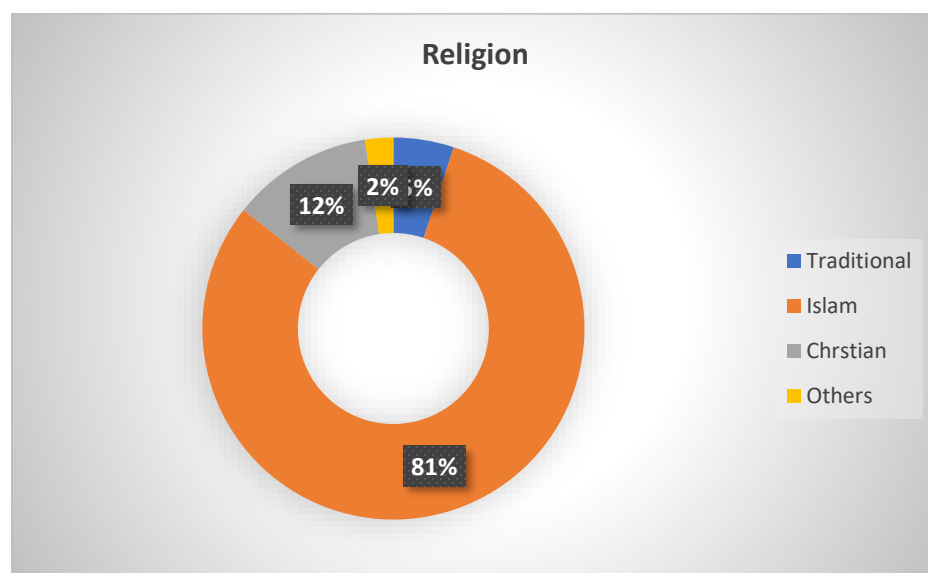


Figure 4.7: Distribution of Respondents by Religion

4.3 Counter Narratives strategies used to prevent youth radicalization

4.3.1 Perception of Youth Radicalization in Mandera

The first objective sought to assess the counter strategies to prevent youth radicalization in Mandera East Sub County in Kenya. The distribution of responses indicates that 72% of respondents perceive that youth radicalization is present in Mandera East Sub-County. In comparison, 28% said “No,” suggesting they do not believe youth radicalization is an issue in the area.

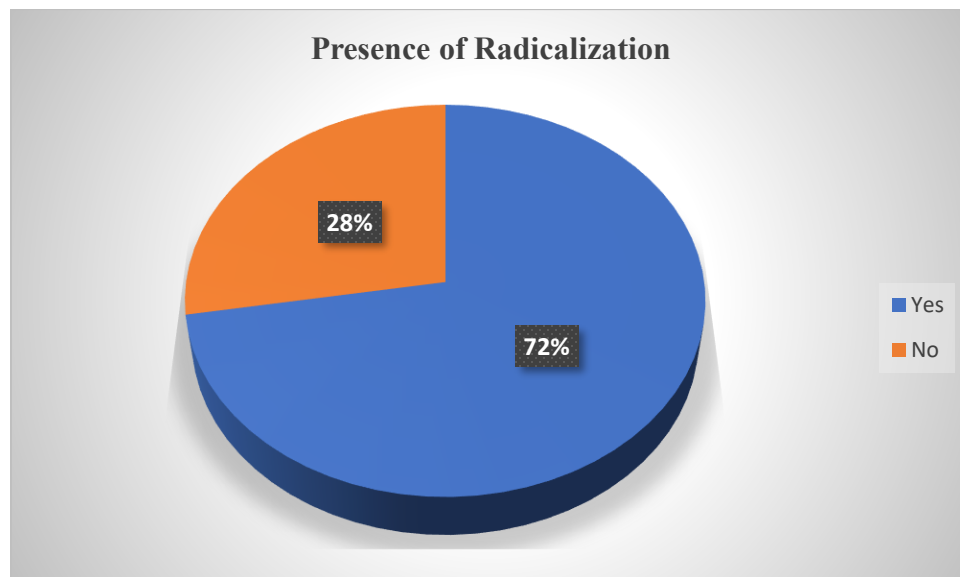


Figure 4.8: Presence of Radicalization

4.3.2 Reasons for Radicalization

The findings in Table 4.2 show that the leading factors driving youth radicalization are Unemployment and Poverty at 35%, indicating that economic hardship is a significant contributor. Religious Extremism and Misinterpretation follow at 25%, highlighting the impact of distorted religious beliefs. Marginalization and Political Exclusion is also significant at 20%, suggesting that social and political isolation contributes to radicalization. Peer Pressure and Influence from

Radicalized Groups account for 12%, reflecting the role of social networks, while Weak Community and Family Structures at 8% point to the influence of unstable support systems. These factors underline the complex social, economic, and political dimensions of youth radicalization.

KIIs provided additional context. A local economic advisor emphasized, *“Without steady income, youth are more vulnerable to being recruited by extremist groups who promise a sense of belonging and financial stability.”* A religious leader stated, *“Distorted religious messages are a major driver. The youth are often misled into thinking violence is justified in the name of faith.”* A community activist added, *“When youth feel politically excluded and disconnected from governance, they are more susceptible to radicalization. Their voices are not heard, so they look for a place where they feel empowered.”* These insights highlight the multi-faceted nature of youth radicalization, emphasizing the roles of economic factors, religious misinterpretation, political exclusion, and weak social support systems in the process.

Table 4.3: Reasons for radicalization

Reason for Youth Radicalization	Percentage (%)
Unemployment and Poverty	35%
Religious Extremism and Misinterpretation	25%
Marginalization and Political Exclusion	20%
Peer Pressure and Influence from Radicalized Groups	12%
Weak Community and Family Structures	8%

4.3.3 Statements on Youth Radicalization

Table 4.3 reveals strong support for several strategies in countering youth radicalization. Building trust among communities is widely viewed as effective, with 75% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that it yields positive results (35% agree, 40% strongly agree). Similarly, religious leaders' roles in this effort are affirmed by 80% (38% agree, 42% strongly agree), underlining their influence in countering radicalization. Educating on radicalization as a preventive measure also receives strong endorsement, with 75% agreeing or strongly agreeing. The use of media for awareness garners 66% approval (32% agree, 34% strongly agree), though it has a slightly higher neutral response at 18%. Lastly, engaging youth in productive activities stands out with the highest support, as 84% agree or strongly agree, suggesting it is viewed as a particularly effective deterrent. These responses highlight a consensus on multi-faceted approaches involving trust-building, religious leadership, education, media, and youth engagement as key to reducing radicalization.

KIIs affirmed these findings. A religious leader commented, *“When we reach out to the youth and provide guidance, it’s not just about doctrine—it’s about showing them a better path, one based on unity, not division.”* A community peacebuilder shared, *“Trust is everything. If the community doesn’t trust one another, or the authorities, it’s much harder to stop the spread of extremist ideologies.”* A local youth organizer added, *“Providing youth with skills and opportunities not only keeps them engaged but gives them a sense of purpose—something that radical groups can’t offer.”* These insights reinforce the consensus on the importance of trust, religious guidance, education, media, and youth-focused initiatives in preventing youth radicalization.

Table 4.4: Statements on Youth Radicalization

Statement	1 (Strongly Disagree)	2 (Disagree)	3 (Neutral)	4 (Agree)	5 (Strongly Agree)
1. Building trust among communities yields positive results in countering radicalization	5%	8%	12%	35%	40%
2. Religious leaders play a key role in countering radicalization	3%	7%	10%	38%	42%
3. Imparting knowledge and comprehension of radicalization is a strategy used to reduce radicalization	4%	6%	15%	30%	45%
4. Use of media to sensitize and increase awareness on radicalization helps reduce youth radicalization	6%	10%	18%	32%	34%
5. Engaging youth in productive activities (employment, education) leads to reduced attraction to radicalization	2%	5%	9%	30%	54%

4.4 Counter Narratives Contribution to Reduction of Youth Radicalization

Table 4.4 reflects strong agreement on the importance of various strategies for preventing youth radicalization. Addressing stereotypes is seen as essential, with 78% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing (35% agree, 43% strongly agree), indicating that breaking down biases is widely considered effective. Similarly, reducing religious prejudice garners 75% support (32% agree, 43% strongly agree), highlighting its importance in countering radicalization. Sustained community engagement is viewed as a crucial long-term strategy, with 83% agreeing (38% agree, 45% strongly agree), reflecting strong confidence in continuous community involvement. Likewise, constructive dialogues between youth and community leaders have broad support, with

82% in agreement (37% agree, 45% strongly agree), emphasizing the value placed on communication and understanding in mitigating radicalization. Together, these findings indicate a strong consensus that reducing stereotypes, prejudice, and fostering ongoing community dialogue are effective strategies against radicalization.

KIIs validated these findings. A community leader emphasized, *“When we engage in open dialogue, we help dismantle the prejudices that lead to radicalization—youth need to feel heard and understood.”* A youth activist added, *“The stereotypes about young people, especially in marginalized areas, need to be erased for them to be seen as contributors to society, not threats.”* A local educator noted, *“Reducing religious prejudice through education helps young people distinguish between faith and the harmful narratives that fuel radicalization.”* These insights highlight the importance of breaking down barriers, fostering inclusive spaces, and providing ongoing opportunities for dialogue to prevent youth from being drawn into radicalization.

4.4.1 Campaigns to Reduce Youth Radicalization

Table 4.5: Campaigns to Reduce Youth Radicalization

Statement	1 (Strongly Disagree)	2 (Disagree)	3 (Neutral)	4 (Agree)	5 (Strongly Agree)
1. Addressing stereotypes is essential in preventing youth radicalization	4%	6%	12%	35%	43%
2. Reducing prejudice of religion can help in countering radicalization	3%	7%	15%	32%	43%
3. Sustained engagement with the community is key to long-term radicalization prevention	2%	5%	10%	38%	45%
4. Sustained constructive dialogues between youth and community leaders reduce radicalization	3%	5%	10%	37%	45%

4.4.2 Groups Involved in the Promotion of Counter-Narratives-deradicalization

Table 4.5 shows that religious leaders play the most prominent role in counter-narrative and de-radicalization efforts, contributing 30%, indicating their influential position in shaping beliefs and guiding communities. Security Agencies, including the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit, are also heavily involved at 20%, emphasizing a focus on law enforcement in these initiatives. Local Community Leaders account for 15%, showing their significance in grassroots efforts. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and NGOs contribute 12%, reflecting their active participation in

awareness and support programs. Youth Groups (10%) and Educational Institutions (8%) also play important roles, particularly in outreach and preventive education, though they represent smaller proportions. Together, these groups highlight a collaborative, multi-level approach to combating radicalization.

KIIs further reinforced these dynamics. A religious leader stated, *“When young people lose their way, they still listen to us—faith gives them something to hold onto when everything else feels lost.”* A community policing officer noted, *“We need religious leaders and community elders to back us—without their support, enforcement alone won’t work.”* Meanwhile, a youth group representative emphasized, *“Our strength is in prevention; we connect with peers on the ground before the recruiters do.”* These insights emphasize the complementary nature of stakeholder roles and the need for stronger partnerships, particularly between religious institutions, security agencies, and youth groups, to sustain effective counter-radicalization efforts.

Table 4.6: Groups Involved in the Promotion of Counter-Narratives-deradicalization

Group Involved in Counter-Narrative/De-radicalization	Percentage (%)
Religious Leaders	30%
Security Agencies (Anti-Terrorism Police Unit)	20%
Local Community Leaders	15%
Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)	12%
Youth Groups	10%
Educational Institutions	8%

4.4.3 Strategies used to address Prejudice of Religion

Table 4.7 outlines various strategies to promote religious tolerance, each rated for effectiveness and impact percentage. Interfaith Dialogues (5, 40%) and Religious Leaders’ Engagement (5, 50%) are highly effective approaches, involving faith leaders in fostering mutual understanding and inclusivity. School Programs (5, 45%) are also highly impactful, emphasizing the importance of teaching tolerance from an early age. Community Workshops (4, 35%) and Media Campaigns (4, 30%) work to dispel misconceptions and promote positive religious narratives. Cultural Exchange Programs (4, 30%) encourage empathy through shared experiences across religious

lines. Public Awareness Campaigns (3, 25%) and Conflict Resolution Training (3, 20%) show moderate effectiveness, aiding in awareness-raising and conflict management. Together, these strategies represent a holistic approach to addressing religious prejudice by integrating education, dialogue, and cultural exposure.

KIIs reinforced these findings. A school principal observed, *“When we teach children about different religions with respect, they grow up seeing diversity as normal, not threatening.”* A religious leader shared, *“Interfaith dialogue has helped us find common ground—we may have different doctrines, but we all want peace.”* A media practitioner emphasized, *“The media must do more than just report conflict; we need to spotlight stories of tolerance and cooperation across faiths.”* These perspectives underscore the importance of early education, interfaith collaboration, and strategic communication in cultivating religious tolerance and preventing division.

Table 4.7 Strategies used to address Prejudice of Religion

Strategy	Description	Effectiveness Rating (1-5)	Percentage (%)
Interfaith Dialogues	Initiatives that bring together leaders from different faiths to discuss and promote mutual understanding.	5	40%
Community Workshops	Workshops aimed at educating communities about different religions and addressing misconceptions.	4	35%
Media Campaigns	Utilizing media to promote positive narratives about various religions and combat stereotypes.	4	30%
School Programs	Educational programs in schools to teach tolerance and respect for diverse religious beliefs.	5	45%
Public Awareness Campaigns	Campaigns designed to raise awareness about religious diversity and the importance of coexistence.	3	25%

Religious Leaders' Engagement	Involving influential religious figures to speak out against prejudice and promote inclusivity.	5	50%
Cultural Exchange Programs	Programs that encourage cultural exchanges to foster understanding between different religious communities.	4	30%
Conflict Resolution Training	Training sessions that equip community leaders with skills to resolve conflicts arising from religious prejudice.	3	20%

4.4.4 Strategies Used for Sustained Engagement

Table 4.8 outlines several community engagement strategies, each with an effectiveness rating and impact percentage. Regular Community Meetings are the most impactful, with a high effectiveness rating of 5 and 60% engagement, emphasizing the value of ongoing dialogue. Partnerships with Local Organizations also rate highly (5, 55%), reflecting the importance of local collaboration. Youth Empowerment Programs (4, 50%) and Long-term Projects (4, 50%) both have strong engagement, focusing on sustained development and youth involvement. Feedback Mechanisms (4, 45%) and Community Festivals (4, 48%) foster inclusivity and bonding, while Skill Development Workshops (4, 40%) improve employability. Lastly, social media engagement (3, 35%) has moderate effectiveness and supports regular interaction. Together, these strategies emphasize a mix of direct, collaborative, and digital approaches for effective community engagement.

KIIs affirmed these findings. A local chief noted, “*Community meetings are our backbone—they’re where trust is built and problems are addressed before they grow.*” A youth development officer shared, “*Empowering youth through long-term projects gives them a sense of ownership and direction—it keeps them engaged and off risky paths.*” A representative from a partnering

NGO added, “*Working with local groups makes initiatives more relatable and sustainable—they know the people, and the people trust them.*” These sentiments highlight the necessity of grassroots involvement, sustained engagement, and trusted local partnerships in fostering meaningful and lasting community development

Table 4.8: Strategies for Sustained Engagement

Strategy	Description	Effectiveness Rating (1-5)	Percentage (%)
Regular Community Meetings	Ongoing forums for community members to discuss issues and solutions.	5	60%
Youth Empowerment Programs	Programs aimed at equipping youth with skills and leadership opportunities.	4	50%
Feedback Mechanisms	Systems for community members to provide feedback on initiatives.	4	45%
Partnerships with Local Organizations	Collaborations with NGOs and local groups to address community needs.	5	55%
Skill Development Workshops	Training sessions aimed at improving job skills and community involvement.	4	40%
Social Media Engagement	Utilizing social media platforms to connect with community members regularly.	3	35%
Community Festivals and Events	Organizing cultural events to foster community bonding and collaboration.	4	48%
Long-term Projects and Initiatives	Developing projects that require sustained participation over time.	4	50%

4.4.5 Strategies used to address Prejudice of Religion

Strategies for Sustained Constructive Dialogues

Table 4.9 presents a range of strategies for promoting community dialogue and conflict resolution, each rated for effectiveness and impact. Facilitated Dialogues and Involvement of Stakeholders

are identified as the most effective, both receiving the highest rating (5) and significant engagement levels (52% and 54%, respectively). This highlights the critical role of structured conversations and diverse stakeholder participation. Regularly Scheduled Dialogues (rated 4, 50%) and Conflict Resolution Workshops (4, 47%) emphasize the value of consistency and skill-building in managing disputes. Community Dialogue Platforms (4, 40%) and Use of Neutral Mediators (4, 45%) are also seen as impactful, providing accessible and unbiased spaces for engagement. Storytelling Initiatives (3, 38%) and Anonymous Feedback Channels (3, 30%) offer moderate effectiveness, helping to foster empathy and offer safe avenues for expression.

KIIs echoed these findings. A local peace committee member noted, *“Bringing everyone to the table—even those we don’t usually agree with—makes the dialogue real and lasting.”* A conflict resolution trainer shared, *“Workshops not only build skills, they also shift mindsets; people begin to see dialogue as a solution, not just an option.”* Additionally, a youth representative emphasized, *“When young people are invited into community conversations, they feel heard and are less likely to turn to violence as a form of expression.”* These insights reinforce the importance of inclusive, consistent, and multi-approach dialogue mechanisms in fostering sustainable peace and community cohesion.

Table 4.9: Strategies for Sustained Constructive Dialogues

Strategy	Description	Effectiveness Rating (1-5)	Percentage (%)
Facilitated Dialogues	Structured discussions led by trained facilitators to encourage open communication.	5	52%
Conflict Resolution Workshops	Training sessions focused on resolving disputes through dialogue.	4	47%
Community Dialogue Platforms	Online and offline platforms that allow community members to engage in dialogue.	4	40%
Involvement of Stakeholders	Engaging various stakeholders (government, NGOs, community leaders) in discussions.	5	54%
Regularly Scheduled Dialogues	Consistent meetings to discuss community issues and build relationships.	4	50%
Use of Neutral Mediators	Involving unbiased mediators to facilitate discussions between conflicting parties.	4	45%
Storytelling Initiatives	Sharing personal stories to foster empathy and understanding among community members.	3	38%
Anonymous Feedback Channels	Providing a way for participants to express concerns or ideas anonymously to reduce tension.	3	30%

4.4.6 Use of Campaigns to Counter-radicalization

Table 4.10 summarizes various campaigns designed to counter radicalization, highlighting their descriptions and effectiveness levels. Awareness Campaigns, Interfaith Initiatives, Youth Engagement Programs, Community Outreach Programs, and Social Media Awareness Initiatives

are rated highly effective, underscoring the importance of education, collaboration, and direct youth involvement in resilience-building efforts. Media Campaigns, Workshops and Training Sessions, Public Awareness Drives, and Testimonial Campaigns hold moderate effectiveness, emphasizing the value of media, education, and personal storytelling in spreading counter-narratives. Cultural Exchange Programs are rated with low effectiveness, indicating limited impact in directly countering radicalization, though they still hold potential for fostering understanding among diverse groups. This range of strategies reflects a multifaceted approach that leverages community involvement, media, and interfaith dialogue to combat radicalization.

KIIs provided deeper insights into these findings. One youth mobilizer shared, *“Youth engagement works best when it’s peer-led—we’ve seen young people change course after hearing from someone who’s been in their shoes.”* A religious peace advocate remarked, *“Interfaith dialogues help bridge divides; when people of different faiths unite against violence, it weakens the extremist narrative.”* A media strategist added, *“Social media is a double-edged sword, but when used right, it’s a powerful space to flood with hope instead of hate.”* These sentiments reinforce the data’s emphasis on targeted, community-rooted, and media-savvy approaches to building resilience and preventing radicalization.

Campaigns Used to Counter Radicalization

Table 4.10: Campaigns Used to Counter Radicalization

Campaign Type	Description	Effectiveness
Awareness Campaigns	Campaigns aimed at educating communities about the signs of radicalization and promoting resilience.	High
Interfaith Initiatives	Collaborative events and dialogues between different religious groups to promote understanding and tolerance.	High
Youth Engagement Programs	Initiatives that involve youth in positive activities, mentorship, and leadership training to prevent radicalization.	High
Media Campaigns	Using social media, television, and radio to disseminate counter-narratives and positive messages about diversity.	Moderate
Community Outreach Programs	Direct engagement with community members to build trust and provide resources for those at risk of radicalization.	High
Workshops and Training Sessions	Educational programs for community leaders and youth on how to recognize and counteract radical ideologies.	Moderate
Public Awareness Drives	Initiatives focused on raising awareness about the negative impacts of radicalization and the importance of community solidarity.	Moderate
Cultural Exchange Programs	Programs that allow interaction and cultural exchange between diverse groups to foster understanding.	Low
Testimonial Campaigns	Sharing personal stories of individuals who have been affected by radicalization or have left extremist groups.	Moderate
Social Media Awareness Initiatives	Campaigns aimed at countering extremist narratives on social media platforms.	High

4.5 Challenges in developing Counter-narratives

4.5.1 Participation in Development of Counter-Narratives

Table 4.11 outlines the roles and participation levels of various stakeholder groups in the development of counter-narratives against radicalization. Local Community Members play a crucial role, providing valuable insights and lived experiences, with a high participation level of 70%. Youth Organizations are also significantly involved, actively engaging young people to co-create relatable narratives, reflected in a 65% participation level. NGOs and CSOs facilitate community workshops and feedback sessions, showing a strong involvement at 60%. Government Agencies support necessary frameworks and policies, with a moderate participation level of 55%. Religious Leaders contribute perspectives on faith-based counter-narratives at a moderate level of 50%, while Media Representatives assist in effectively disseminating these narratives at 50%. Academics and Researchers have a lower participation level at 35%, primarily offering evidence-based insights.

These findings underscore the importance of community engagement and multi-stakeholder collaboration in developing effective counter-narratives. This is reinforced by insights from KIIs. A youth leader noted, *“When counter-narratives come directly from the youth, they resonate better—because they speak the same language and understand the pressure points.”* A religious leader emphasized, *“Faith can be a powerful tool for peace, but we need stronger partnerships to amplify positive messages across platforms.”* Additionally, a media professional remarked, *“We often come in late—there’s a need to engage media from the start so that narratives are strategic and far-reaching.”* These perspectives highlight the need for more inclusive and strategic engagement, especially with underutilized actors like media and researchers, to build credible, community-driven responses to radicalization.

Table 4.11: Participation in Development of Counter-Narratives

Stakeholder Group	Role in Development	Participation Level	Percentage (%)
Local Community Members	Providing insights and experiences related to radicalization.	High	70%
Religious Leaders	Offering perspectives on faith-based counter-narratives.	Moderate	50%
Youth Organizations	Engaging youth in the development of relatable narratives.	High	65%
Government Agencies	Supporting the framework and policies for narrative development.	Moderate	55%
NGOs and CSOs	Facilitating community workshops and collecting feedback.	High	60%
Academics and Researchers	Providing evidence-based research to inform narratives.	Low	35%
Media Representatives	Helping disseminate developed counter-narratives effectively.	Moderate	50%

4.6 Mitigation Procedures

4.6.1 Mitigation Measures and its effectiveness

Table 4.12 presents various mitigation measures to counter radicalization, along with their descriptions, effectiveness ratings, and engagement percentages. Youth Empowerment Initiatives stand out with a high effectiveness rating of 70%, highlighting their critical role in providing youth with skills and opportunities to prevent radicalization. Similarly, Crisis Intervention Strategies also receive a high rating of 68%, underscoring the importance of timely support for individuals at risk following incidents. Community Engagement Programs are effective at 65%, emphasizing the

value of involving community members in prevention efforts. Monitoring and Evaluation Systems are rated high at 60%, indicating the need for frameworks to assess the impact of these efforts. In contrast, Public Awareness Campaigns (moderate, 50%) and Collaboration with Security Agencies (moderate, 50%) indicate a need for improved communication and educational outreach regarding the dangers of radicalization. Finally, training for local leaders also shows moderate effectiveness at 55%, demonstrating the importance of equipping leaders with knowledge of prevention strategies.

These findings are supported by insights from KIIs. A youth mentor stated, *“When young people are given the tools to thrive—whether it’s vocational skills or leadership training—they are far less likely to be swayed by extremist ideologies.”* A local administrator noted, *“Community dialogues have made a big difference. People feel heard and involved, which helps reduce the space for radical ideas to take root.”* A crisis response officer also emphasized, *“Immediate intervention after an incident—before the fear and anger fester—is crucial. That’s when people are most vulnerable to radical messages.”* These sentiments reinforce the importance of timely, youth-focused, and community-driven strategies to mitigate the risk of radicalization effectively.

Table 4.12 Mitigation Measures and their Effectiveness

Mitigation Measure	Description	Effectiveness Rating	Percentage (%)
Community Engagement Programs	Initiatives that involve community members in prevention efforts.	High	65%
Public Awareness Campaigns	Campaigns aimed at educating the public about the dangers of radicalization.	Moderate	50%
Youth Empowerment Initiatives	Programs focused on providing youth with skills and opportunities to deter radicalization.	High	70%
Training for Local Leaders	Workshops to educate community leaders about radicalization and prevention strategies.	Moderate	55%
Monitoring and Evaluation Systems	Establishing frameworks to assess the effectiveness of mitigation efforts.	High	60%
Collaboration with Security Agencies	Partnerships between communities and security forces for better communication and trust.	Moderate	50%
Crisis Intervention Strategies	Measures to support individuals at risk of radicalization after an incident occurs.	High	68%

4.6.2 After Radicalization

Table 4.13 outlines various post-radicalization strategies designed to assist individuals who have undergone radicalization, detailing their descriptions, effectiveness ratings, and participation percentages. Reintegration Programs are highlighted as highly effective, with a rating of 75%, demonstrating the importance of facilitating the transition of former radicals back into society. Counselling and Psychological Support also rank high at 72%, emphasizing the need for mental health services for these individuals. Similarly, Skill Development and Employment Programs receive a firm rating of 70%, indicating the significance of equipping former radicals with marketable skills for sustainable livelihoods. Ongoing Monitoring and Support is rated high at 65%, reflecting the necessity of continuous engagement to prevent relapsing into radicalization.

Education and Awareness Programs are also effective at 67%, focusing on fostering community acceptance and understanding. In contrast, Family Support Initiatives (moderate, 55%) and Community Reconciliation Efforts (moderate, 50%) indicate a more limited impact, suggesting these areas may require further development to enhance their effectiveness.

These findings are echoed in sentiments gathered through KIIs. One community leader remarked, *“Reintegration is only successful when we pair it with ongoing support—these young men need purpose, not just freedom.”* A local NGO official observed, *“Psychosocial support has been a game-changer; we’ve seen real transformation when former radicals get the space to heal mentally.”* A vocational trainer shared, *“Most of them are eager to work; once they gain a skill, they want to start afresh—what they need is opportunity, not stigma.”* Lastly, a religious leader emphasized, *“Education and awareness programs must involve the entire community. Without public buy-in, reintegration remains incomplete.”* Overall, these sentiments reinforce the need for a holistic and community-anchored approach that prioritizes mental health, economic empowerment, and inclusive reintegration.

Table 4.13: After Radicalization Programs

Post-Radicalization Strategy	Description	Effectiveness Rating	Percentage (%)
Reintegration Programs	Initiatives aimed at helping former radicals reintegrate into society.	High	75%
Counseling and Psychological Support	Providing mental health support to individuals who have undergone radicalization.	High	72%
Skill Development and Employment Programs	Training for former radicals to acquire skills for employment.	High	70%
Family Support Initiatives	Programs to support families of those affected by radicalization.	Moderate	55%
Ongoing Monitoring and Support	Continuous follow-up with individuals to prevent relapse into radicalization.	High	65%
Community Reconciliation Efforts	Initiatives to heal divisions within communities affected by radicalization.	Moderate	50%
Education and Awareness Programs	Programs to educate communities about the importance of acceptance and understanding.	High	67%

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter comprehensively synthesizes the study's findings, conclusions, and recommendations, each rooted in the analysis and discussions detailed in preceding chapters. The study yielded several insights that have significant implications for policy formulation and advancing knowledge in the field. Based on these findings, recommendations for future research, as well as for practical applications and policy adjustments, have been proposed.

5.2 Summary of Main Findings

5.2.1 Counterstrategies Used to Prevent Youth Radicalization

The findings from this study reveal that Mandera East Sub-County has implemented several vital counterstrategies to combat youth radicalization, including community policing, youth empowerment programs, religious interventions, and awareness campaigns. These approaches are not unique to Mandera; they align with strategies adopted in various global contexts facing the threat of violent extremism and radicalization. This section provides a detailed discussion of these strategies, relating them to global practices and findings from other studies worldwide.

Community policing has been identified as a vital counter-radicalization strategy in Mandera East. By fostering collaboration between law enforcement agencies and local community leaders, community policing builds trust and enhances the capacity to detect early signs of radicalization. This approach enables proactive engagement, where police work with the community to identify individuals vulnerable to extremist influence before they commit violent acts. The effectiveness

of community policing as a counter-radicalization tool has been documented in various parts of the world. In the United Kingdom, the Prevent Strategy, part of the government's broader counterterrorism framework, emphasizes community-based approaches. Police engage with communities to identify and support individuals susceptible to radicalization. Studies have shown that when local law enforcement builds trust within communities, it can help reduce alienation and promote information sharing, which is critical in preventing radicalization (Coppock & McGovern, 2014).

The Dutch Counterterrorism Strategy in the Netherlands incorporates community policing by training law enforcement to work closely with local communities and religious leaders. This approach has proven helpful in reducing the isolation felt by some minority communities, thereby decreasing the appeal of extremist ideologies (AIVD, 2017). Like in Mandera East, this strategy emphasizes community involvement, which is essential to building resilience against radicalization. However, as seen globally, community policing's success depends heavily on the relationship between law enforcement and the community. In contexts where trust between the two is weak, such as in France, community policing has faced challenges. Studies show that distrust of the police, especially in marginalized communities, hampers the effectiveness of this strategy in preventing radicalization (Ragazzi, 2016). These global examples reinforce the need for Mandera East's police to continually nurture positive relationships with local communities for community policing to be effective.

Youth empowerment programs in Mandera East focus on providing vocational training, education, and employment opportunities to reduce the appeal of extremist groups. By addressing the socio-economic drivers of radicalization, these programs seek to offer young people alternatives to joining violent extremist groups, which often exploit economic vulnerabilities. Youth

empowerment has been central to counter-radicalization efforts worldwide. In Nigeria, the government and NGOs run programs aimed at economically empowering youths, particularly in regions affected by Boko Haram's insurgency. Vocational training, microfinance opportunities, and entrepreneurship programs have been key to preventing young people from joining extremist groups. Studies by Onuoha (2013) show that addressing youth unemployment has helped reduce the appeal of Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria, such as how youth empowerment programs in Mandera East are combating radicalization by offering alternatives.

In Somalia, programs funded by international organizations such as the UNDP focus on reintegrating former Al-Shabaab members through economic empowerment and education. Studies have shown that when young people see viable economic opportunities, they are less likely to return to extremist groups (Ibrahim, 2018). This mirrors the approach in Mandera East, where youth empowerment is seen as a long-term solution to the problem of radicalization. However, challenges remain, particularly regarding the sustainability of these programs. In many contexts, including Mandera East, youth empowerment programs are often donor-dependent and suffer from inadequate funding. This issue has also been observed in Pakistan, where the lack of consistent funding for youth initiatives in radicalized regions has limited the long-term success of these programs (Khan & Malik, 2020).

Religious leaders in Mandera East play a crucial role in counter-radicalization by promoting moderate interpretations of Islam and offering counter-narratives to extremist ideologies. Religious interventions involve collaboration between faith-based organizations and the government to deliver messages refuting extremist groups' ideological foundations. The role of religious leaders in counter-radicalization efforts is critical in many countries. In Morocco, for example, the government has implemented a comprehensive religious reform strategy that trains

imams to preach moderate Islam and denounce extremist ideologies. The Moroccan model has been praised for its effectiveness, with trained religious leaders reaching communities at risk of radicalization (Levy, 2017). This mirrors the efforts in Mandera East, where religious leaders provide theological counter-narratives to extremist rhetoric.

In Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim-majority country, religious leaders are also at the forefront of counter-radicalization efforts. The Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, two of the country's largest Islamic organizations, actively promote moderate Islam and work with the government to counter the influence of radical groups. Like in Mandera East, religious interventions in Indonesia have focused on grassroots efforts, with imams and religious scholars refuting extremist ideologies in local communities (Fealy & Borgu, 2019). However, one challenge noted in both Mandera East and other regions is the reluctance of some religious leaders to engage openly in counter-radicalization due to fear of backlash from extremist elements. This fear has been documented in Afghanistan, where moderate religious leaders have been targeted by extremist groups, making it difficult for them to refute radical ideologies publicly (Jones, 2016).

Awareness campaigns in Mandera East are designed to educate the youth and the broader community about the dangers of radicalization. These campaigns use local media, schools, and social media to disseminate anti-extremist messages and promote community resilience. Awareness campaigns are a common tool in the global fight against radicalization. In the United States, the Department of Homeland Security runs the "Countering Violent Extremism" (CVE) program, which includes public awareness campaigns to prevent radicalization, particularly in vulnerable communities. These campaigns often focus on empowering local communities to identify signs of radicalization and intervene early (Vidino & Hughes, 2015). Similarly, Mandera

East's awareness campaigns involve the community in identifying and preventing radicalization before it escalates.

Kenya has done several awareness campaigns in cities like Mombasa and Nairobi, where radicalization has been a major issue. In partnership with the government, community-based organizations have utilized social media to reach young people with messages that challenge extremist narratives and promote alternatives. This mirrors efforts in Mandera East, where similar campaigns are used to engage youth through digital platforms (Mwangi & Ochieng, 2019). One challenge with awareness campaigns, globally and locally, is ensuring they are culturally sensitive and effectively target vulnerable populations. In the Philippines, for example, awareness campaigns aimed at preventing the radicalization of Muslim youth in Mindanao have sometimes been met with resistance when they are perceived as being too aligned with state narratives and not reflective of local concerns (Buchanan, 2018). Ensuring campaigns are tailored to the local context is critical for Mandera East's success.

5.2.2 Contribution of Counterstrategies to De-radicalization

The counterstrategies implemented in Mandera East have contributed meaningfully to the de-radicalization process. These strategies include rehabilitation and reintegration programs, community involvement, and enhanced security measures, all of which have contributed to curbing radicalization to varying degrees. However, challenges such as insufficient follow-up mechanisms, occasional alienation by security forces, and fragmented community engagement limit their long-term effectiveness. By comparing these efforts with global practices, this section highlights both the successes and limitations of de-radicalization strategies in Mandera East.

One of the key components of de-radicalization in Mandera East is the rehabilitation and reintegration of former radicals. These programs typically include vocational training,

psychological counselling, and religious mentoring, offering former extremists the tools they need to reintegrate into society. Successful reintegration not only deters recidivism but also provides individuals with a sense of purpose and belonging, reducing the allure of extremist ideologies. However, the lack of follow-up mechanisms for these individuals after they leave the program remains a critical challenge, as it increases the risk of relapses (Mohamed, 2020).

Rehabilitation and reintegration are widely recognized as essential elements of de-radicalization efforts globally. In Saudi Arabia, the government has implemented the Prince Mohammed bin Nayef Center for Counseling and Care, which combines psychological counselling with religious education to rehabilitate former extremists. The program has achieved a low recidivism rate of 10%, although, like in Manderla East, there are concerns about the lack of long-term monitoring after individuals leave the program (Boucek, 2008). Similarly, Sri Lanka's de-radicalization program for former members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) provides vocational training and psychological support. However, studies reveal that while short-term reintegration has been successful, the absence of long-term socio-economic support has led to difficulties for some former combatants in finding stable employment, a challenge also noted in Manderla East (Schomerus & Goodhand, 2016). The lack of follow-up mechanisms in Manderla East, as observed globally, weakens the overall effectiveness of rehabilitation. A key lesson from international experiences is that post-rehabilitation support, such as ongoing counselling, community reintegration programs, and economic opportunities, is vital for sustaining the de-radicalization process. Without these, former radicals remain vulnerable to re-radicalization, particularly in socio-economic environments where extremist groups continue to thrive.

The involvement of the community, particularly religious and cultural leaders, has been a significant factor in the success of de-radicalization in Manderla East. By fostering trust between

former radicals and the larger community, these initiatives have enabled meaningful dialogue and reduced the stigma rehabilitated individuals face. Community involvement has also helped create a sense of ownership in combating extremism, with local leaders actively countering extremist ideologies (Hassan, 2021). Community involvement is a cornerstone of successful de-radicalization strategies worldwide. In Indonesia, where extremist groups like Jemaah Islamiyah have historically recruited vulnerable youth, the government has partnered with Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, the country's largest Islamic organizations, to lead de-radicalization efforts. These religious leaders work within local communities to offer alternative, moderate interpretations of Islam and foster dialogue. Studies show that this community-centered approach has successfully built resilience against radicalization (Fealy & Borgu, 2019). In Nigeria, local community leaders in Borno State have been instrumental in reintegrating former Boko Haram fighters back into society. Their involvement has been key in reducing suspicion and encouraging the acceptance of rehabilitated individuals. However, as in Mandera East, the community's long-term support is often hindered by socio-economic challenges and mistrust of state security forces (Onuoha, 2013).

Both in Mandera East and globally, community involvement fosters social cohesion and trust, making it easier for former radicals to reintegrate. However, the success of community-led initiatives is closely linked to the region's economic and security stability. In cases where economic hardship and insecurity persist, such as in northern Nigeria or Mandera County and Mandera East, maintaining community engagement over the long term remains a challenge.

Security measures, including enhanced surveillance, intelligence gathering, and increased police presence, have been crucial in reducing radical activities in Mandera East. By improving the state's ability to track extremist groups and prevent terrorist attacks, these measures have been effective

in curbing the immediate threat posed by radicalized individuals. However, the excessive use of force by security agencies has, at times, alienated the local population, creating a rift between communities and the state, which undermines de-radicalization efforts (Ngugi, 2019). In many parts of the world, enhanced security measures have been both a preventive tool and a challenge to de-radicalization efforts. In France, for instance, security measures after the 2015 Paris attacks included increased surveillance and police raids in Muslim-majority neighbourhoods. While these actions have been credited with disrupting terrorist networks, they have also fostered mistrust between Muslim communities and the state, thereby hampering de-radicalization efforts (Ragazzi, 2016). The Prevent Strategy has been criticized in the United Kingdom for over-securitizing counter-extremism efforts. Critics argue that focusing too heavily on surveillance and intelligence gathering without addressing the root causes of radicalization, such as socio-economic marginalization, has alienated communities and undermined the program's effectiveness (Thomas, 2017). This mirrors the situation in Mandera East, where the heavy-handed approach by security forces has occasionally backfired, leading to reduced cooperation from communities that feel targeted rather than protected.

A key lesson from global experiences is that while security measures are necessary for de-radicalization, they must be implemented to build trust between the state and local communities. Security forces must strike a balance between maintaining peace and respecting the rights of local populations. Without community trust, even the best intelligence operations will be limited in their ability to prevent radicalization and reintegrate former extremists. The counterstrategies employed in Mandera East, which are rehabilitation and reintegration, community involvement, and security measures, have contributed to de-radicalization with varying degrees of success. Rehabilitation programs have facilitated successful reintegration for many former radicals, but the lack of follow-

up mechanisms weakens their long-term impact. Community involvement, particularly through religious and cultural leaders, has fostered trust and dialogue, but economic instability limits sustained community support. Enhanced security measures have reduced radical activities, but the overuse of force by security agencies risks distancing the very communities whose cooperation is crucial for effective de-radicalization.

Based on global experiences, multi-faceted approaches combining security measures with socio-economic support, community engagement, and continuous monitoring of former radicals offer the best chance for sustainable de-radicalization. In Mandera East, the future success of de-radicalization efforts will depend on strengthening community trust, improving coordination between stakeholders, and ensuring that security interventions do not undermine rehabilitation's broader social and psychological aspects.

5.2.3 Challenges Faced in Developing Strategies for Youth De-radicalization

The study identified several significant challenges in developing and implementing youth de-radicalization strategies in Mandera East, like those faced in various parts of the world. The key challenges include stigma and rejection, lack of resources, weak stakeholder coordination, and cross-border radicalization.

Stigma and social rejection present a significant challenge for the successful reintegration of former radicals in Mandera East. Community members often ostracize not only the individuals who were radicalized but also their families, hindering the effectiveness of de-radicalization programs (Abdi & Ali, 2021). This stigma makes it difficult for rehabilitated individuals to fully reintegrate, often leading to feelings of hostility and the potential for re-radicalization. Similar challenges have been observed in Sri Lanka, where former members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) faced social rejection upon reintegration. Research indicates that community

acceptance is crucial for successful reintegration, and programs that fail to address social stigma tend to have limited success (Schomerus & Goodhand, 2016). In Nigeria, former Boko Haram members have faced similar stigmatization, further complicating their reintegration into society (Onuoha, 2013).

De-radicalization programs in Mandera East are often underfunded, limiting their ability to provide comprehensive services such as counselling, education, and employment opportunities (Mohamed, 2020). The lack of resources makes it challenging to sustain long-term interventions, which are crucial for ensuring that individuals do not relapse into extremist behaviours. The challenge of insufficient funding is not unique to Mandera East. In Pakistan, for instance, de-radicalization programs targeting former Taliban members have struggled due to underfunding, with inadequate facilities and limited access to long-term psychological counselling (Khan & Malik, 2020). Similarly, in Somalia, the lack of resources has hampered efforts to rehabilitate former Al-Shabaab fighters, leading to the collapse of several initiatives (Ibrahim, 2018).

Weak coordination between various stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, religious leaders, and international organizations, leads to inefficiencies in Mandera East's de-radicalization efforts. This fragmentation often results in overlapping initiatives and a lack of a cohesive strategy (Mwangi & Ochieng, 2019). Similar coordination issues have been observed in France, where the lack of integration between national and local counterterrorism efforts has led to inefficiencies in de-radicalization programs (Ragazzi, 2016). In the United Kingdom, the Prevent Strategy has also faced criticism for its fragmented approach, with limited collaboration

between local communities and national authorities, reducing the program's overall effectiveness (Thomas, 2017).

Mandera's proximity to Somalia exacerbates the challenge of cross-border radicalization. Extremist groups like Al-Shabaab continue to recruit and radicalize Kenyan youth through online platforms and physical networks that transcend national borders (Hassan, 2021). This makes it challenging to contain radicalization efforts within Mandera East, as the influence of external actors is ever-present. Cross-border radicalization is a widespread challenge in many conflict-affected regions. In West Africa, groups like Boko Haram operate across national boundaries, recruiting youth in Nigeria, Chad, and Cameroon through similar transnational networks (Onuoha, 2013). Similarly, in Afghanistan, the Taliban and other extremist groups continue to exploit porous borders with Pakistan to recruit and train young radicals, complicating de-radicalization efforts (Jones, 2016).

5.3 Discussion of Findings

The socio-demographic characteristics of respondents in Mandera East Sub-County provide a critical lens to understand the nuances of youth radicalization and de-radicalization in the region. This analysis encompasses gender, age, marital status, level of education, employment status, duration of stay, and religion, highlighting their implications for the study's findings.

The study revealed a significant male majority, with 62% male respondents and 38% female. This gender imbalance can be attributed to entrenched patriarchal norms prevalent in Kenyan society, which often see men more actively participating in social, economic, and political spheres. The predominance of male respondents may indicate that men are more exposed to and affected by issues of radicalization, given that they may engage more frequently in community activities that

could lead to radical ideologies. The findings suggest a need to explore targeted de-radicalization programs that address the specific experiences and vulnerabilities of young men while also increasing the engagement of women, who are traditionally underrepresented in such discussions.

The age distribution indicates a significant concentration of respondents between 29 and 50 years, accounting for 67.8% of the sample. This demographic represents a pivotal stage in life characterized by career establishment and family formation. The presence of a sizeable segment of individuals aged 29-39 years (35.4%) suggests that this age group might be particularly susceptible to radicalization due to socioeconomic pressures, identity formation challenges, and aspirations for social mobility. Conversely, the lower representation of younger individuals (18-28 years) may imply that radicalization efforts might be more effective when targeting those in their early career stages, focusing on mentorship, education, and employment opportunities.

Most respondents (63.8%) were married, indicating that family and social responsibilities play a crucial role in the respondents' lives. Married individuals may have a more significant stake in community stability, potentially reducing their susceptibility to radicalization. However, the presence of separated (7.5%), divorced (3%), and widowed (9.3%) respondents suggest that relationship instability can be a contributing factor to vulnerability, necessitating specific interventions that address the social and emotional needs of these groups. Respondents suggest that relationship instability may contribute to vulnerability by increasing emotional distress and social isolation, which can, in turn, heighten susceptibility to radical influences. This underscores the need for targeted interventions that address both the social and emotional needs of at-risk individuals. This was determined through responses from participants who identified relationship instability—such as family breakdown, lack of parental guidance, or social isolation—as a factor increasing vulnerability to radicalization. Their insights suggest that unstable relationships create

emotional and social gaps that extremist groups can exploit. As a result, interventions focusing on strengthening family bonds, mentorship, and psychosocial support are necessary to reduce susceptibility to radical influences.

The educational attainment among respondents revealed that only 9.8% had attained university-level education, while a significant proportion (22%) had no formal education. The relatively low educational levels can hinder critical thinking and resilience against radical ideologies. The relatively low educational levels may limit individuals' ability to engage in critical thinking, making them more susceptible to misinformation and ideological manipulation. A lack of formal education can also reduce exposure to diverse perspectives and analytical skills, which are crucial for questioning extremist narratives. Consequently, this may weaken resilience against radical ideologies, particularly in contexts with scarce alternative sources of knowledge and critical debate. However, other factors such as socio-economic conditions, community influence, and religious teaching also shape vulnerability to radicalization. This finding emphasizes the importance of education in countering radicalization. Strategies focusing on improving educational access and quality could be instrumental in preventing youth radicalization, particularly among those with low educational attainment.

The employment status data indicates that 69.2% of respondents are unemployed, which is a point to community instability. However, the 30.7% employment rate is concerning, as economic instability can drive youth towards radicalization as they seek alternative sources of identity and belonging. Employment initiatives that create job opportunities and empower youth through vocational training could significantly mitigate the risk of radicalization in the community.

With 58% of respondents living in Mandera East for over 10 years, this indicates a strong sense of community and belonging among long-term residents. However, the relatively small percentage of those who have lived in the area for less than five years (11%) may point to recent migration trends that could introduce new dynamics and potentially unfamiliar radical ideologies. Long-term residents may serve as valuable resources in countering radical narratives, while newcomers could benefit from integration programs that foster community cohesion and understanding.

Most respondents (81%) identified as Muslim, with a notable Christian minority (12%). The religious landscape in Mandera East underscores the significance of faith in shaping social identities. The prominence of Islam may influence perceptions of radicalization, particularly concerning the misrepresentation of Islamic teachings in radical contexts. The study did not explicitly set out to explore the misrepresentation of Islamic teachings in radical contexts. However, this issue emerged as a significant theme during discussions with key informants. Several respondents highlighted how certain extremist groups distort religious doctrines to justify their actions, often misleading vulnerable individuals. This unintended but critical finding underscores the need for further research into the role of religious misinterpretation in radicalization processes. Engaging religious leaders and communities in de-radicalization efforts can leverage faith-based teachings to promote peace and understanding, thus reducing susceptibility to extremist ideologies.

The socio-demographic characteristics of respondents in Mandera East Sub-County present challenges and opportunities for addressing youth radicalization and de-radicalization. Understanding these characteristics allows for tailored interventions that consider the unique contexts and needs of the community. Future counter-radicalization strategies should focus on inclusive community engagement, education, and economic empowerment while recognizing the

diverse experiences shaped by gender, age, marital status, education, employment, duration of stay, and religious affiliation. By adopting a holistic approach incorporating these socio-demographic insights, policymakers and practitioners can more effectively combat radicalization and foster resilience within the community.

5.3.1 Counter Narrative Strategies Used to Prevent Youth Radicalization

The findings on counter-narrative strategies to prevent youth radicalization in Mandera East Sub-County provide significant insights into community perceptions, the underlying reasons for radicalization, and the effectiveness of various strategies.

The data indicates that 72% of respondents believe youth radicalization is a real issue in Mandera East Sub-County, while 28% do not perceive it as a problem. This stark contrast in perceptions underscores the necessity for tailored interventions that address the community's awareness of radicalization. The high perception rate suggests an urgent need for effective counter-narrative strategies to combat this issue, particularly fostering community resilience against radical ideologies (Botha, 2014).

The analysis of the reasons for youth radicalization highlights several key factors (see Table 4.1),

Unemployment and Poverty (35%): The leading cause of radicalization among youth in Mandera is unemployment and poverty, indicating that economic instability and lack of opportunities can make young individuals more vulnerable to radical ideologies as they seek purpose, belonging, or financial gain. Unemployment and poverty are significant contributors to youth radicalization in Mandera County. A study by Kenyatta University identified poverty and unemployment as major factors leading to youth radicalization in the region. Additionally, radical Islamic preachers exploit

issues such as unemployment and poverty to indoctrinate community members into extremism. The UNDP also notes that lack of economic opportunities has left many youths vulnerable to manipulation associated with criminality and violence, including violent extremism.

Furthermore, a 2013 report highlights that unemployment and poverty are contributing to the Islamic radicalization of Kenya's youth. Collectively, these sources underscore the critical role that unemployment and poverty play in fostering youth radicalization in Mandera County—religious Extremism and Misinterpretation (25%). A quarter of respondents attributed radicalization to religious extremism and misinterpretation of religious texts, signalling the need for educational programs that clarify and promote accurate understandings of religious teachings. Engaging religious leaders in these efforts is crucial.

Marginalization and Political Exclusion (20%): The perception of marginalization and political exclusion also plays a significant role in youth radicalization. Addressing these social injustices through community engagement and representation in decision-making processes can help mitigate feelings of disenfranchisement that fuel radical ideologies. Peer Pressure and Influence from Radicalized Groups (12%), the peer pressure from radicalized individuals underscores the importance of social networks in influencing youth behavior. Developing mentorship programs and youth engagement initiatives can help counteract negative influences from radicalized peers.

Weak Community and Family Structures (8%), the impact of weak community and family structures highlights the importance of fostering strong, supportive environments that provide guidance and a sense of belonging for young people. Community cohesion initiatives can strengthen these social structures and reduce vulnerability to radicalization. The findings related

to various statements about youth radicalization, as presented in Table 4.2, offer insights into community attitudes toward potential counter-narrative strategies:

Seventy-five per cent of respondents agreed (35% agree, 40% strongly agree) that building community trust yields positive results in countering radicalization. This indicates a strong desire for collaborative efforts that foster resilience. A significant 80% of respondents (38% agree, 42% strongly agree) acknowledged that religious leaders play a critical role in countering radicalization. Engaging these leaders as trusted community figures can enhance the effectiveness of counter-narratives.

Seventy-five per cent of respondents (30% agree, 45% strongly agree) recognize that imparting knowledge about radicalization is a valuable strategy, emphasizing the need for educational initiatives focused on awareness and understanding of the factors contributing to radicalization.

The data shows that 66% (32% agree, 34% strongly agree) believe media can help sensitize and increase awareness about radicalization. This suggests that leveraging media platforms for educational campaigns can be an effective counter-narrative strategy.

Engaging youth in productive activities with a significant 84% of respondents (30% agree, 54% strongly agree) highlighted that engaging youth in productive activities, such as employment and education, can reduce attraction to radicalization. This finding supports the notion that addressing economic and educational disparities is crucial in countering radicalization.

The findings on counter-narrative strategies in Mandera East Sub-County indicate that the community is deeply aware of the risks posed by youth radicalization and is receptive to various prevention strategies. Significant concerns surrounding unemployment, religious extremism,

marginalization, and social pressures highlight the importance of comprehensive approaches that address these root causes.

Counter-narrative strategies must build community trust, empower religious leaders, increase awareness through education, effectively utilize media, and engage youth in meaningful, productive activities. By addressing the identified reasons for radicalization and implementing targeted strategies, the community can enhance resilience against radical ideologies and promote a safer environment for its youth. In Mandera East Sub-County, counter-narrative strategies have become essential in efforts to prevent youth radicalization, particularly in response to extremist ideologies propagated by groups like Al-Shabaab. The strategies identified are designed to present alternative, non-violent viewpoints to counter the distorted narratives used by terrorist organizations to recruit vulnerable youth.

The findings show that religious and community leaders play an integral role in countering extremist narratives by promoting authentic Islamic teachings that emphasize peace and tolerance. Through regular sermons, workshops, and public discussions, religious scholars debunk extremist interpretations of Islam that justify violence. This approach is particularly practical in Mandera, where religion is deeply ingrained in daily life. Findings correlate with Botha (2014), who argues that such engagements significantly reduce the influence of extremist rhetoric by providing youth with credible religious interpretations that undermine terrorist propaganda.

Additionally, providing education and skills development opportunities for at-risk youth has become vital to counter-radicalization efforts in the Mandera East. The socio-economic marginalization of many young people in the region makes them susceptible to recruitment by extremist groups that promise financial incentives or a sense of belonging. Programs focused on

education and vocational training reduce this vulnerability by offering practical alternatives. Mwangi (2012) notes that these interventions diminish the pull factors that extremist groups exploit.

Moreover, local radio stations and social media have proven critical tools for disseminating positive counter-narratives. Media campaigns featuring testimonials from former extremists who have renounced violence, community leaders, and religious figures advocating for peace help disseminate counter-narratives to a broad audience, including tech-savvy youth targeted by extremist groups through social media. Lind, Mutahi, and Oosterom (2017) highlight the role of digital platforms in amplifying counter-radicalization messages and providing youth with alternatives to extremist content.

5.3.2 Counter Narratives Contribution to Reduction of Youth Radicalization

The data illustrates community perceptions about the effectiveness of different campaigns to reduce youth radicalization; a significant 78% of respondents agreed (35% agree, 43% strongly agree) that addressing stereotypes is essential in preventing youth radicalization. This highlights the necessity for campaigns promoting understanding and challenging preconceived notions about different groups (Botha, 2014). Similarly, 75% of respondents (32% agree, 43% strongly agree) believe that reducing religious prejudice can help in countering radicalization. This finding underscores the importance of fostering interfaith dialogues and community education to dismantle harmful biases (Mwangi, 2012).

An overwhelming 83% of respondents (38% agree, 45% strongly agree) recognize sustained engagement with the community as a key factor in long-term radicalization prevention. This

suggests continuous efforts to involve community members in discussions and initiatives can bolster resistance to extremist narratives (Lind, Mutahi, & Oosterom, 2017). The results also show that 82% (37% agree, 45% strongly agree) see sustained constructive dialogues between youth and community leaders as essential for reducing radicalization. Engaging youth in open discussions with trusted figures can promote understanding and empathy, mitigating feelings of alienation (Botha, 2014).

The various groups involved in promoting counter-narratives and de-radicalization efforts. Religious leaders are viewed as critical in providing authentic interpretations of faith that counter extremist views, comprising 30% of those involved in these efforts. Security agencies, including the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit, represent 20% and address threats while supporting community initiatives. Local community leaders, making up 15%, help mobilize community resources and engage residents in counter-radicalization efforts. Civil society organizations (CSOs) and NGOs contribute 12%, offering resources and training for effective engagement and outreach, while youth groups (10%) and educational institutions (8%) ensure that the voices of young people are included in these initiatives, which is essential for combating radicalization (Mwangi, 2012).

Table 4.5 outlines strategies aimed at addressing religious prejudice. Interfaith dialogues, rated 5 for effectiveness by 40% of respondents, foster mutual understanding among different faiths. Community workshops, which received a rating of 4 (35%), are designed to educate communities about various religions and address misconceptions. Media campaigns aimed at combating stereotypes were rated 4 (30%), indicating a solid belief in the power of the media to shape perceptions. Educational initiatives in schools received the highest effectiveness rating of 5 (45%), reflecting their critical role in instilling respect for diverse beliefs among youth. Educational initiatives in schools are highly effective in countering radicalization by promoting respect for

diverse beliefs. Peace education programs teach conflict resolution and coexistence, while civic and religious tolerance lessons foster understanding among students. Mentorship and counselling services support vulnerable youth; extracurricular activities like debates and sports encourage positive social interactions. Additionally, teacher training equips educators to identify early signs of radicalization and engage students in discussions about extremism. These initiatives play a crucial role in shaping resilient, informed youth who are less susceptible to extremist ideologies. The engagement of religious leaders scored highly as well (5, 50%), demonstrating their vital role in advocating against prejudice and promoting inclusivity.

Strategies for maintaining engagement with the community. Regular community meetings received the highest effectiveness rating of 5 (60%), allowing community members to discuss pressing issues collaboratively. Youth empowerment programs aimed at equipping young individuals with skills and leadership opportunities received a rating of 4 (50%). Feedback mechanisms, valued by community members, were rated 4 (45%) as they provide a means for residents to express their views. Partnerships with local organizations rated 5 (55%), are crucial for addressing community needs, while skill development workshops received a rating of 4 (40%) for their role in improving job skills and community involvement. Although rated lower (3, 35%), using social media to connect with community members remains a viable strategy.

Strategies for fostering ongoing constructive dialogues. Facilitated dialogues, which are structured discussions led by trained facilitators, received a high effectiveness rating of 5 (52%), promoting open communication. Conflict resolution workshops, rated 4 (47%), equip community members with skills to resolve disputes through dialogue. Community dialogue platforms, which allow for meaningful engagement on shared concerns, were rated 4 (40%). Engaging diverse stakeholders in discussions was rated highly (5, 54%), ensuring broad representation in community

conversations. Regularly scheduled dialogues rated 4 (50%) help maintain relationships and community cohesion, while neutral mediators' involvement in facilitating discussions scored 4 (45%).

Table 4.8 details various campaigns aimed at countering radicalization. Awareness campaigns, which educate communities about the signs of radicalization and promote resilience, are highly effective. Interfaith initiatives that foster understanding and tolerance among faith groups also show high effectiveness. Youth engagement programs, designed to involve young people in positive activities and mentorship, are crucial in preventing radicalization. Media campaigns, effectiveness is rated moderate, indicating the need for further development. Community outreach programs are rated highly effective and directly engage with community members to build trust and provide resources. Workshops and training sessions, although rated moderate, remain vital for counteracting radical ideologies. Public awareness drives focused on raising awareness about radicalization's negative impacts are also deemed moderately effective.

5.3.3 Challenges Faced when developing counter-narrative Strategies

Table 4.11 summarizes the effectiveness of various mitigation measures to prevent youth radicalization. Community engagement programs, which actively involve members in prevention efforts, received a high effectiveness rating of 65%. These initiatives foster local ownership of counter-radicalization strategies and enhance community cohesion (Botha, 2014). Youth empowerment initiatives rated even higher at 70%, reflecting the crucial role of providing young people with skills and opportunities to deter radicalization (Mwangi, 2012).

Public awareness campaigns, while rated moderate at 50%, remain important for educating the public about the dangers of radicalization. These campaigns aim to inform communities about the

signs of radicalization, potentially preventing recruitment (Lind, Mutahi, & Oosterom, 2017). Training for local leaders received a moderate rating of 55%, indicating that while workshops educating community leaders about radicalization are beneficial, implementation has room for improvement. Monitoring and evaluation systems were rated high at 60%, emphasizing the need for frameworks to assess the effectiveness of mitigation efforts and ensure they adapt over time (Mwangi, 2012). Finally, collaboration with security agencies is rated moderate at 50%, signifying the importance of building trust and communication between communities and security forces, which can enhance community resilience against extremist ideologies.

Table 4.12 outlines post-radicalization strategies aimed at aiding individuals who have been radicalized. Reintegration programs, which help former radicals reintegrate into society, received a high effectiveness rating of 75%. These initiatives are vital for facilitating social acceptance and reducing the likelihood of re-engagement with extremist groups (Botha, 2014). Counselling and psychological support also rated highly at 72%, highlighting the importance of mental health services in addressing the emotional and psychological challenges faced by individuals who have undergone radicalization (Mwangi, 2012).

Skill development and employment programs, rated at 70%, play a critical role in providing former radicals with practical skills that enhance their employability and reduce the allure of extremist groups. Family support initiatives, while rated moderate at 55%, are essential for helping families cope with the impact of radicalization on their members. Ongoing monitoring and support received a high effectiveness rating of 65%, indicating the importance of continuous engagement to prevent relapse into radicalization. Community reconciliation efforts, rated moderate at 50%, focus on healing divisions within communities affected by radicalization. Lastly, education and awareness

programs, rated high at 67%, emphasize the necessity of fostering acceptance and understanding in communities to counter the narratives that fuel radicalization (Lind et al., 2017).

5.4 Conclusion of the Study

The findings of this study highlight that while notable progress has been made in the fight against youth radicalization in Mandera East Sub-County, the region continues to face complex challenges. Community policing, youth empowerment programs, and religious interventions have emerged as central pillars of counter-radicalization strategies. These initiatives have proven to be instrumental in fostering trust between law enforcement and local communities, offering alternatives to vulnerable youth, and countering extremist ideologies through religious teachings (Ngare, 2020). However, the success of these strategies is deeply contingent upon sustained community involvement and the ability to build trust between communities and the authorities. Without these elements, the reach and impact of counter-radicalization efforts may be significantly weakened (Hassan, 2021).

De-radicalization programs have yielded positive outcomes in terms of the rehabilitation and reintegration of radicalized individuals back into their communities. These programs, which often focus on vocational training, psychological counselling, and religious mentoring, have helped many former extremists find alternative paths, reducing their likelihood of recidivism (Mohamed, 2020). Nonetheless, the sustainability of these de-radicalization efforts remains questionable due to several critical issues.

One of the most pressing challenges is the insufficient allocation of resources to support long-term rehabilitation programs. De-radicalization initiatives often lack the necessary funding to provide comprehensive support, such as continuous counselling, job placement, and follow-up

mechanisms. As a result, many former radicals are left vulnerable to relapse, especially in socio-economic environments where opportunities are scarce (Mwangi & Ochieng, 2019).

Additionally, the lack of coordination among stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, community leaders, and international partners, further hampers the effectiveness of both counter-radicalization and de-radicalization strategies. The fragmentation of efforts leads to duplication of programs, misallocation of resources, and missed opportunities for collaboration (Abdi & Ali, 2021). Developing a more cohesive framework for stakeholders to share resources, strategies, and best practices will be essential for future success.

Moreover, the issue of cross-border radicalization continues to undermine counterterrorism efforts in Mandera East. The proximity to Somalia has allowed extremist groups like Al-Shabaab to maintain strong influence in the region, leveraging cross-border networks to recruit and radicalize Kenyan youth (Hassan, 2021). The persistence of this threat underscores the need for stronger regional cooperation between Kenya and its neighbours to disrupt the flow of extremist ideologies and prevent cross-border recruitment (Ngugi, 2019).

In conclusion, while the study demonstrates that counter-radicalization and de-radicalization efforts in Mandera East have succeeded, resource constraints, stakeholder coordination, and cross-border radicalization must be addressed to achieve sustained progress. Future strategies should focus on enhancing community engagement, inter-agency collaboration, and securing sufficient resources to support long-term rehabilitation efforts. By addressing these gaps, there is potential to build a more resilient and practical framework for combating youth radicalization in Mandera East and beyond.

5.5 Recommendations of the Study

Based on the findings from the study, which aimed to assess the counterstrategies used to prevent youth radicalization, evaluate their contribution to the deradicalization process, and identify the challenges faced during the development of these strategies in Mandera East Sub County, several recommendations can be made. The study revealed that while efforts have been made to prevent radicalization and support deradicalization, significant gaps remain in community involvement, resource allocation, and coordination among key stakeholders. The following recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of counter-radicalization and deradicalization efforts in Mandera East Sub County, ensuring a more sustainable and impactful approach to addressing youth radicalization. These recommendations focus on strengthening existing strategies, addressing identified challenges, and fostering stakeholder collaboration to create a more cohesive and responsive framework for preventing and countering violent extremism. The study recommends explicitly:

- i. The government and NGOs should intensify efforts to involve local communities in counter-radicalization and de-radicalization processes. Religious leaders and local elders play a critical role in offering alternative narratives to extremist ideologies. Their involvement should be further institutionalized through structured programs that promote dialogue and engagement.
- ii. Strong coordination among government agencies, international partners, NGOs, and religious institutions is needed. Establishing a central coordinating body for de-radicalization efforts would ensure that resources are better utilized and efforts are aligned to avoid duplication.
- iii. De-radicalization programs need more funding, especially for rehabilitation centres, psychological counselling, and vocational training. Investment in these areas would give former radicals the tools to successfully reintegrate into society.

- iv. Community-based campaigns aimed at reducing stigma and fostering acceptance of de-radicalized youth are essential. Training community leaders on conflict resolution and social inclusion will ensure successful reintegration.
- v. Given the cross-border nature of radicalization, Kenya needs to strengthen its collaboration with neighbouring countries like Somalia. Cross-border intelligence sharing and joint operations to disrupt radicalization networks would effectively reduce the flow of radical ideologies into Mandera East.

5.6 Suggested Areas for Further Studies

The findings of this study were not conclusive. Hence, there is a need for further studies in the following areas:

- i. Further studies should investigate the long-term impact of de-radicalization programs on rehabilitated individuals, including their reintegration into society, economic stability, and recidivism rates. This will help determine whether current programs offer sustainable solutions or need refinement.
- ii. With increasing reliance on technology, future research should explore how social media platforms and online spaces contribute to radicalization in Mandera East and beyond. Understanding how extremist groups use these tools to target and recruit youth will provide insights into developing effective cyber counter-radicalization strategies.
- iii. Given Mandera East's proximity to Somalia and other border regions, there is a need to study cross-border radicalization dynamics and how this influences local youth. Future studies should focus on transnational networks, recruitment tactics, and the role of cross-border communication in fostering extremism.

- iv. There is a need for further exploration of the role of gender in radicalization and deradicalization processes. Specific studies could examine how women and girls are targeted for radicalization and their unique experiences in both radicalization and deradicalization programs.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

ABDI SHEIKH HARUN
C/o Africa Nazarene University
Nairobi

County Commissioner
Mandera

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am a student at Africa Nazarene University pursuing a Master of Science in Governance, peace and Security, School of Humanities and Social science. I am currently carrying out research on *“Factors influencing youth radicalization and de-radicalization process in Mandera East Sub-County, Mandera County, Kenya”*. A section of participants selected to provide data for this research are from the sub county under your authority. Your permission to allow data collection exercise from the selected participants is therefore requested. The information that will be obtained from the respondents shall be used purely for academic purposes only. The identities of the participants will remain confidential, and they will be requested **NOT** to write their names on the instrument. Your permission would be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Abdi Sheikh Harun
Department of Governance, Peace and Security
Africa Nazarene University
Nairobi

APPENDIX II: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Study Title: *Factors influencing youth radicalization and de-radicalization process in Mandera East Sub-County, Mandera County, Kenya.*

Introduction

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Abdi Sheikh Harun an Msc. Student at the Department of Governance, Peace and Security, Africa Nazarene University. The purpose of this study is to investigate *factors influencing youth radicalization and de-radicalization process in Mandera East Sub-County, Mandera County, Kenya*. Before you decide whether to participate, please read the following information carefully.

Study Procedures

- You will be asked to participate in interviews, respond to structured questioners and observations related to the radicalization and deradicalization of youth in Mandera County.
- The study will involve discussing your experiences, opinions, and observations regarding radicalization and deradicalization of youth in Mandera County.
- Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time without penalty.

Confidentiality

- Your identity will remain confidential. All data will be anonymized, and any identifying information will be removed.
- Only the research team will have access to the data.

Voluntary Participation

- Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can choose not to participate or withdraw at any time without consequences.
- If you decide to participate, you can still decline to answer specific questions during the study.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, please contact Abdi Sheikh Harun on 0721 863395

Consent

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have read and understood the information provided. You voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Name.....

Date.....

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE

You should give instructions on what the respondents are suppose to do

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. What is your gender?

Male ☐

Female ☐

2. What is your age?

18-35 years ☐
and above 55 ☐

36-55 years ☐

3. Marital Status

1. Single/ Never Married ☐

2. Married ☐

3. Separated ☐

4. Divorced ☐

5. Widowed ☐

4. What is your occupation? _____

5. What is your highest level of education?

1. non-formal ☐

2. Primary school ☐

3. Secondary school ☐

4. Tertiary ☐

5. University ☐

6. Religion: -

1. Traditional ☐

2. Christian ☐

3. Islam ☐

4. Others (Specify) _____

7. Number of years lived in Mandera East Sub-County

Less than 1 ☐1 – 5 ☐6 – 15 ☐More than 15 ☐

8. Type of respondent

Religious leader ☐Youth leader ☐Security official ☐CSO ☐Community leader ☐**Section B: Counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization in Mandera East Sub County in Kenya**

9. Do you think radicalization of the youth is going on in the Sub-County of Mandera East Sub County?

Yes ☐ No ☐

10. If the answer to nine above is yes, why do you think this is happening?

.....

To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the strategies to prevent youth radicalization? (Kindly tick one option in each question; 5 - Strongly Agree, 4 – Agree, 3 – Neutral, 2 - Disagree and 1 – Strongly Disagree)

	1	2	3	4	5
1. 1. Building trust among communities yields positive in countering radicalization					

2. Religious leaders play a key role in countering radicalization					
3. Imparting knowledge and comprehension of radicalization is a strategy used to reduce radicalization					
4. Use of media to sensitize and increase awareness on radicalization helps reduce radicalization among the youth					
5. Engaging the youth in productive activities e.g., employment, education etc. leads to reduced attraction to radicalization					

Section C: Extent to which counter narratives have contributed to the reduction of youth radicalization in Mandera East Sub County in Kenya

19. In your opinion, which of the following campaigns is designated to reduce radicalization among the youth in the county? Support your answer in two sentences.

Addressing stereotypes ()

Prejudice of religions ()

Sustained engagement ()

Sustained constructive dialogues ()

19. B. State at least three groups involved in promoting counter-narrative towards deradicalization.

20.A. How have the campaigns been used to address prejudice of religions?

20. B. How have the strategies been used to address prejudice of religions?

.....

21. How have the strategies been adopted to ensure sustained engagement in Mandera East Sub County?

22. How have the strategies been adopted to ensure Sustained constructive/antagonistic dialogues in Mandera East Sub County?

23. To what extent have the campaigns used to counter radicalization succeeded in the area? Tick

one below: Great extent () Moderate extent () Low extent () Very low extent

Section D: Challenges faced when developing counternarrative strategies while dealing with youth radicalization in Mandera East Sub County in Kenya

24. Did you participate in designing or delivering counter-narrative campaigns in the sub-county?

Yes [] No []

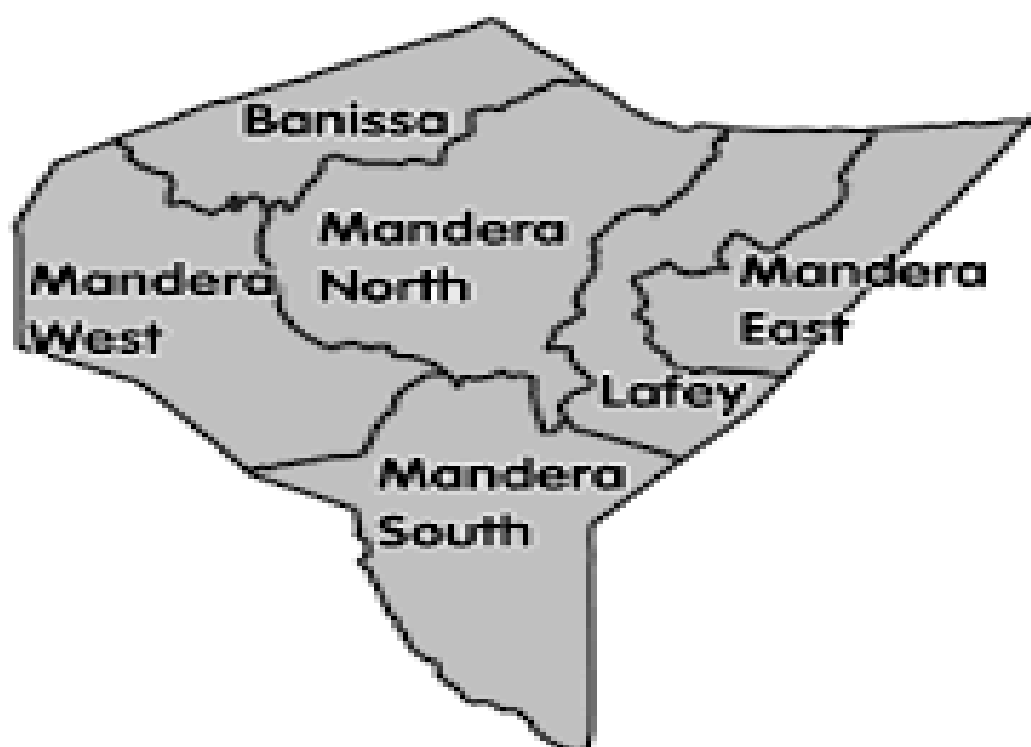
Section D: Mitigation procedures for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders involved in counter-radicalization efforts in Mandera East Sub-County.

25. State some three of the mitigation methods you would propose to reduce radicalization.
26. State some three mitigation methods you would propose to deradicalization of youths in Mandera.
27. In a sentence, tell us if the campaigns designated to reduce radicalization have succeeded.
28. What happens to youth who leave radicalization?

APPENDIX IV: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What is the current state of youth radicalization in the sub-county?
2. What are the measures/ strategies currently employed to deal with the challenge of youth radicalization in the area?
3. In your opinion, have these strategies effectively countered youth radicalization in the sub-county? Explain your answer.
4. Give your detailed evaluation of the success of the mentioned strategies in preventing youth radicalization in this sub-county.
5. What other strategies, not currently applied, would you recommend?
6. Which stakeholders face the challenges in designing and delivering effective counter-narrative campaigns in the sub-county?
7. In your opinion, how will these obstacles be tackled to make the campaigns effective?

APPENDIX VII: MAP OF STUDY AREA: what is the title of this map?



APPENDIX VIII: ANU LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

P.O.Box: 53067 – 00200
Nairobi, Kenya.
Tel: 020 252 7170/1 – 5
Email: vc@anu.ac.ke
www.anu.ac.ke

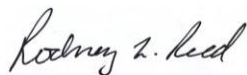
29th April 2024

RE: TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Abdi Sheikh Harun (16J03DMGP034) is a bonafide student at Africa Nazarene University. He has finished his course work and has defended his thesis proposal entitled: -

“Factors Influencing Youth Radicalization and De-Radicalization Process in Mandera East Sub-County, Mandera County, Kenya”.

Any assistance accorded to him to facilitate data collection and finish his thesis is highly welcomed.



Prof. Rodney Reed

Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic & Student Affairs

APPENDIX IX: NACOSTI AND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS RESEARCH APPROVAL

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT



MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION.
STATE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL SECURITY AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Telegraphic Address: "Sub County"
Email: manderaeastdce@hotmail.com
When replying please quote

The Deputy County Commissioner,
Mandera East Sub County,
P. O. BOX 77 - 70300,
MANDERA.
19th June, 2024.

Ref No: DCC/MDR/CBE.10/VOL. II

RE: TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Abdi Sheikh Harun (16JO3DMGP034) is a bonafide student at Africa Nazarene University.

He has defended his thesis proposal entitled:

"Factor influencing Youth Radicalization and De- Radicalization process in Mandera East Sub County, Mandera County, Kenya",

Any assistance accorded to him to facilitate data collection and his thesis is highly welcomed.

Deputy County Commissioner
P. O. Box 77 - 70300,
Mandera East.

PATRICK MESO
DEPUTY COUNTY COMMISSIONER
MANDERA EAST SUB-COUNTY

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	
Ref No: 157610	Date of Issue: 18/July/2024
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Mr., Abdi Sheikh Harun of Africa Nazarene University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Mandera on the topic: FACTORS INFLUENCING YOUTH RADICALIZATION AND DE-RADICALIZATION PROCESS IN MANDERA EAST SUB-COUNTY, MANDERA COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 18/July/2025.	
License No: NACOSTI/P/24/38169	
157610	
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