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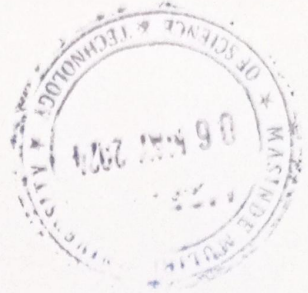
**FIRE DISASTER PREPAREDNESS STRATEGIES INFLUENCING
RESPONSE OPERATIONS OF PRISONS IN CENTRAL KENYA**

MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
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**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Conferment of the Degree of Master of Science in Disaster Management and
Humanitarian Assistance of Masinde Muliro University of Science and
Technology**



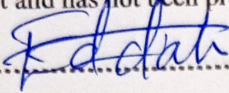
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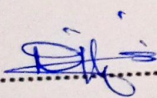
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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that they have read and hereby recommend for acceptance of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology a Thesis entitled “Fire Disaster Preparedness Influencing Disaster Response Operations of Prisons in Central Kenya”

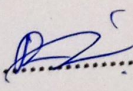
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved husband James Kioko, who always gave me hope when I thought all was lost, my friends for their continued love and moral support. To my beloved parent for encouraging me this far.

God bless you all.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The achievement of this Thesis has been as a result of many people as acknowledged herein, I would like to thank them for their sincere and devoted efforts, advice, moral and financial assistance which saw the successful completion of the research project. Special gratitude goes to my Supervisors Prof Edward Masinde Neyole and Dr. Ruth Simiyu who tirelessly ensured that this thesis was done as per the requirements, sacrificed their time in guiding me while developing this thesis.

I thank the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, State Department for Correctional Service, Kenya Prisons Service for allowing me to use the facility in collecting data, use the office equipment and allowing in documenting the internal information of the facility. My research assistant Mr Otieno, for delivering in the correctional setting as well as assisting me with data analysis.

Special thanks go to my husband James Kioko for his patience, advice and prayers, encouragement even when there seemed to be no light at the end of the tunnel due to life challenges, my classmates for the assistance they rendered.

Above all I give thanks to God for granting me good health throughout my study, helping me to achieve and finish this great work.

ABSTRACT

Across the world, prisons have suffered severe damage as a result of natural and man-made disasters including fires and deaths of inmates inside the prisons. The worst and most threatening disasters in prisons are the fire that may eventually lead to either deaths or prisoners escaping. Following the prevailing circumstances in the Kenyan prisons over a period of between 2010-2015, the current study sought to examine Fire Disaster Preparedness Strategies Influencing Disaster Response Operations of Prisons in Central Kenya. The specific objectives were to: examine the nature and extent of fire disaster risks in prisons in Central Kenya; Evaluate the preparedness strategies employed by officers to enhance fire response operations of prisons in Central Kenya and establish the challenges of fire preparedness on response operations of prisons in Central Kenya. The study was informed by two theories namely chaos and contingency theories. The study employed a descriptive research design. Stratified random sampling was used in the selection of prisons officers since the population was largely heterogeneous. The strata identified were upper, middle and lower administrative units within the entire prison administration. Simple random sampling was then used to select prisons officers from each stratum. The study targeted a population of 234 respondents who were senior prisons and junior officers in administrative sections in the purposely selected prisons. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and interview guides. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential analyses while qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis and thematic analysis. The research findings were presented in tables, charts, graphs and an interpretation derived for ease of understanding of the research findings. The study established that Kenyan Prisons face significant fire disaster risks as noted by 90% of the respondents. Infrastructure to prevent fire incidents was only at 32%; only 21% felt that there were escape routes in prisons, which made it difficult for prisoners to escape during fire disasters. The findings further revealed that high walls were a deterrence for prisoners to escape as supported by 56% of the respondents. Although prison stations had in place fire response tools, prisons staff were not being properly trained on disaster response and recovery; only 38% of surveyed prisons conducted fire drills. About 60% of the participants felt that there were no evacuations drills undertaken in the prisons surveyed, whose existence could have mitigated fire risk by 77%. Only 34% of the prison officers were trained on fire safety management; however, the schedules for fire drills in place were poor. Most (96%) prison officers felt that there were challenges with prison fire policy in place addressing fire safety management in Kenya prisons. Thus, only 29% of the prison officer conducted fire safety compliance inspections. The study concluded that the prisons lacked fire safety management protocols; the infrastructure from the surveyed prisons were not fire safety compliant. There were no fire evacuation drills undertaken in 60% of the prisons. It is recommended that the Kenya Prison Service should endeavour to enhance prison fire safety by investing in installing and designing effective infrastructure, invest in fire safety drill training and should endeavour to facilitate routine fire safety compliance inspections to keep the prison safe and responsive to a fire emergency.

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