



Vol. 27 | Post COVID-19 Recovery and Sustainable development

Vol. 27 Article 6 | August 31, 2025

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Risk Management Practices and the Performance of Anti-Violent Extremism Projects in Somalia Region, Ethiopia

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Cite as: Endrias, Z., Karimi, S. S., & Mutisya, M. S. (2025). Risk Management Practices and the Performance of Anti-Violent Extremism Projects in Somalia Region, Ethiopia. International Journal of Social and Development Concerns, 27(6), 65–80.
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17011699>

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Editing Oversight
Impericals Consultants
International Limited

Abstract: The Horn of Africa has become a breeding ground for violent extremism. Anti-violent extremism efforts often fail due to inadequate stakeholder engagement. Despite much effort to eradicate Anti-violent extremism, the problem persists in Africa. This paper examines the influence of risk management practices and performance of Anti-Violent Extremism Projects in Somalia region, Ethiopia. The theory guiding the study was the theory of Moral Disengagement. The research is anchored on a descriptive research design. Two tools were used to collect data: questionnaires and an interview guide. The determination table of Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) helped in getting the sample size of 320 respondents from Fafan, Jarar, Afder, and Dhawa zones, including community members, representatives, religious groups, and state agencies involved in countering violent extremism. The study used proportionate random sampling for zone selection and purposive sampling for key informants. Results revealed that there were significant communication gaps hindering community participation in Anti-Violent Extremism projects. Risk management practices demonstrated a moderate positive correlation ($r^2 = 0.357$). Communication channels positively influenced performance by ($r^2 = 0.252$), which, however, remained inadequate. The recommendations are on enhancing communication strategies through staff training and involvement of local leaders, strengthening risk management by implementing comprehensive training programs, and community-involved assessments. Fostering active community engagement in the planning and implementation phases of projects to ensure they align with local needs and achieve sustainable impact. Future research should explore the qualitative dimensions of community participation to understand why quantitative measures of participation do not translate into improved project performance. Ethnographic studies could provide deeper insights into the cultural and social factors that influence the effectiveness of participatory approaches in different contexts.

Keywords: Risk Management Practices, Community Participation, Performance, Anti-Violent Extremism

1.1 Background to the Study

Tackling violent extremism has become a priority on the global agenda. At the Arab Islamic American Summit, fifty nations discussed ways to cooperate against the threat of worldwide terrorism and violent extremism (Fahlberg, Velasquez, Wise, & Simon, 2023). Activities aimed at countering violent

extremism (CVE) have increased significantly over the past decade (Altai Consulting, 2021). The FBI defines violent extremism as "encouraging, condoning, justifying, or supporting the commission of a violent act to achieve political, ideological, religious, social, or economic goals" (European Commission, 2023). They believe that perceptions of injustice and marginalization are key factors that fuel violent extremism. A cross-sectional study by Nguyen (2023) found that early experience of abuse and humiliation was an important driver of joining extremist groups that based their justifications on ethnic and religious thoughts. Many extremist groups have their roots in identity-based politics and mobilize support based on perceived grievances.

According to Pillar (2023), addressing risks related to human rights, program fidelity and effectiveness, as well as contextual and structural issues, is crucial for the success of anti-violent extremism projects. Schmid (2021) highlights that effective risk management, including the identification of risk factors, the development of assessment tools, and the implementation of intervention programs, can significantly enhance project efficacy. As posited by Clesle et al. (2024) in a study on risk management practices in the USA, tools such as threat assessment instruments, the Violent Extremism Risk Assessment (VERA-2R), and the Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol (TRAP-18) enabled security officers to standardize risk profiles and streamline decision-making processes.

In a recent study, Brown (2023) explored the intersections of gender, governance, and countering violent extremism in the UK, involving 50 participants. The research demonstrated that incorporating gender perspectives into risk management plans increased the effectiveness of anti-violent extremism initiatives by 60%. Similarly, Mesok (2022) examined the UK's Prevent counter-terrorism program, employing a case study design with 100 participants. The results revealed that the implementation of risk formulation and scenario planning proved effective, with 80% of participants reporting a reduction in radicalization. Additionally, Gunaratna (2021) investigated the role of civil society organizations in counterterrorism efforts in Southeast Asia, utilizing a mixed-methods approach with a sample size of 200 participants. The findings indicated that the involvement of civil society in counter-terrorism initiatives significantly improves project outcomes, with 75% of respondents noting enhanced community resilience.

In Africa, project managers have noted that evaluating risk management in counter-violent extremism initiatives positively influences their performance and overall success (Haruna, 2022; Obuobi, 2024; Omenma & Onyango, 2020). As stated by Alao & Ume (2020) examined the Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) project across five states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) in Nigeria. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach that included surveys and focus group discussions, the study engaged a sample of 500 participants. The findings indicated that community engagement and an understanding of local contexts were vital for effective risk mitigation, with 59% of respondents reporting enhanced perceptions of security (UNDP, 2020). The study emphasizes that cultural sensitivity and consideration of the community's historical background have the most significant impact on risk mitigation efforts.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This has been a constant threat faced by Somali Region of Ethiopia due to the violence and extremism, which has been mainly engineered by the Al-Shabaab insurgency. This has created major socio-economic and political instability (Wallace, 2021), and the loss of security and peace in the area (Altai Consulting, 2021). According to the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization (ICSR), radicalization is a means through which individuals come to hold a radical normative belief system and

embrace the willingness to employ, promote, or sanction violence. In 2019 alone, Al Shabaab was responsible for 475 reported attacks, resulting in 627 civilian deaths and 1,014 injuries (Ellis et al., 2023). Despite various project initiatives aimed at countering this violent extremism, their performance and effectiveness remain a concern (Otieno & Ywokole, 2023). The consequences of violent extremism are multifaceted, affecting not only the security but also the socio-economic development of the region. It has led to the collapse of state institutions, increased youth unemployment, and exacerbated poverty (Aryaeinejad & Sullivan, 2023). Furthermore, it has caused havoc not only in Somalia but also in the larger Horn of Africa region (Nguyen, 2023). Several projects, such as cross-border initiatives, are available to address these issues. However, they are often constrained by the absence of local actors and government priorities (Altai Consulting, 2021; IGAD, 2018). Existing studies primarily focus on the role of the international community and regional collaboration in addressing violent extremism (Harsin, 2023). While there is a recognized need to involve the community in addressing the underlying factors driving violent extremism and conflict in the region (Idris, 2019), research on the barriers to community participation in these interventions, the impact of community participation on reducing violent extremism and conflict, and the effectiveness of community-sensitive interventions is limited. For instance, the Cooperation and Coordination of the Cross-border Initiative in the Cross-Border Areas of the Horn of Africa Region (SECCCI) project officially started with an inception meeting in Nairobi, Kenya on 26 and 27 September 2018. However, it has since stalled due to a top-down approach and a lack of community consultation. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate and understand the factors that influence the performance and effectiveness of anti-violent extremism projects in the Somali regions of Ethiopia. Community participation is vital for the success of these projects; however, this could be missing, hence the need for the current study.

1.3 Study objective

To examine the influence of risk management and the performance of Anti-Violent Extremism Projects in Somalia Region, Ethiopia

1.4 Conceptual Framework

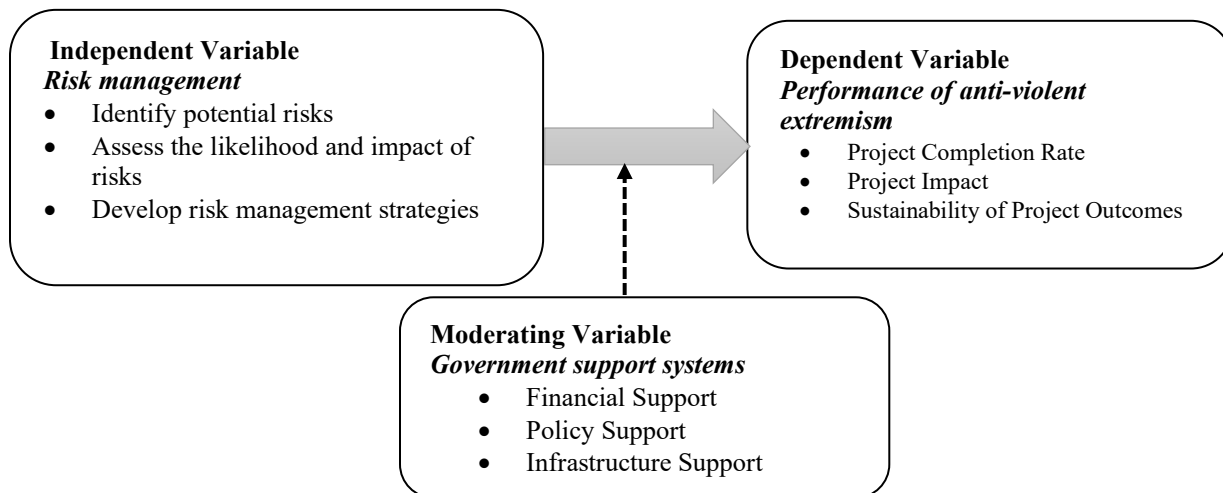


Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework

Source: Own Conceptualization, 2024

1.5 Literature Review

In this section, theoretical and empirical reviews on the influence of risk management and the performance of Anti-Violent Extremism Projects are presented.

1.5 Theoretical Review

1.5.1 Theory of Moral Disengagement

The moral disengagement theory, formulated by Albert Bandura, is the most widely recognized adaptation of the moral neutralization theory, which was introduced in 1986. Bandura introduced this concept to elucidate the engagement in and support for atrocities and violence on behalf of groups. The theory examines how individuals can rationalize or justify their unethical actions by detaching themselves from their moral principles. According to Bandura, participating in harmful behavior necessitates a disengagement from self-imposed moral sanctions against wrongdoing toward others. This disengagement process involves redefining harmful actions as honorable through mechanisms such as moral justification, exonerative social comparison, and the use of sanitizing language (Bandura, 2002). Scholars such as Hansen, Stian, & Okwany (2019), along with Idris (2019), highlight the connection between moral disengagement or neutralization and aggressive behavior, as well as the relationship between moral disengagement and support for political extremism (Wallace, 2021). Legal cynicism refers to attitudes that reject the binding nature of laws and endorse behavior that operates outside of legal and social norms (Ellis et al., 2023). Researchers studying legal cynicism argue that these attitudes emerge as adaptations to ongoing experiences of injustice, disadvantage & alienation (Butler, 2023). In the context of religious organizations managing anti-violent extremism efforts in the Somali Region of Ethiopia, the Theory of Moral Disengagement helps explain how religious actors may justify their involvement in violent extremism (Sneider, 2023). They often invoke justifications such as a religious duty or divine mandate, convincing themselves that their actions are morally justified because they are sanctioned by a higher power (Bandura, 2016). Additionally, religious organizations may engage in cognitive restructuring to rationalize their actions, reframing their involvement in violence as a necessary defense of their faith against perceived threats (Altai Consulting, 2021).

To address these challenges, anti-violent extremism risk management needs to collaborate with religious organizations to confront justifications for violence and promote ethical behavior (Frounfelker et al., 2023). This can involve advocating for non-violent interpretations of religious texts, training religious leaders in conflict resolution, and fostering dialogue with other communities. It's also vital to tackle the social and economic issues that make these organizations susceptible to extremist messaging (Abbott & Brandis, 2014). The Theory of Moral Disengagement is selected for its ability to explain the mindset of violent extremists acting against social order due to perceived injustices. However, Bandura's theory has limitations, as individuals might disengage from societal rules for other reasons, such as substance abuse. Legal cynicism theory addresses attitudes that reject the binding nature of laws and justify rule-breaking behaviors (Nivette et al., 2015), arising from persistent experiences of injustice and alienation.

Legal cynicism influences how individuals interpret the law (Kirk & Papachristos, 2011) and serves as a rationale for rule-breaking. Independent variables like empowerment programs and community involvement align with this theory, while others relate to the Strain theory. A study by Nunoo (2024) on a violent extremism risk assessment system in Nigeria showed that identifying at-risk youth and community interventions led to a 30% reduction in recruitment by extremist groups. This highlights the

importance of proactive risk assessment and community involvement. Additionally, Obillo (2020) found that effective risk management strategies positively impact project performance in Kenyan development organizations, with projects employing robust strategies achieving a 20% higher success rate.

1.5.2 Empirical Review

Risk management Practices and performance of Anti-Violent Extremism Projects

In Ghana, Bagson (2024) evaluated youth vulnerability to terrorism recruitment. The findings indicated that clear mission and goals, realistic cost and time estimates, and effective communication are critical for overcoming barriers to risk management. Projects that adhered to these strategies showed a 25% improvement in performance metrics. Similarly, Obuobi (2024) found that comprehensive risk management strategies, including capacity building and inter-agency collaboration, resulted in a 40% decrease in violent incidents over three years. However, they noted that the lack of continuous coordination and monitoring affects effective risk management.

In Somalia, Abdirahman (2023) investigated the youth livelihoods program in Mogadishu, employing a mixed-methods approach with a sample size of 150 participants. The research highlighted the importance of contextual risk assessment, identifying cultural, social, political, and economic factors as critical to project success. Findings indicated that 65% of participants felt that understanding the local context significantly reduced project failure and community resistance. This approach aligns with conflict sensitivity and human rights principles, ensuring that interventions do not exacerbate violence or oppression (Kass & Rocco, 2024). Along the same line, Musse (2023) examined counter-terrorism measures in Mogadishu, using a qualitative design with interviews from 30 key informants. The research emphasized a conflict-sensitive approach, revealing that respondents believed that minimizing harm and promoting peace were essential for effective risk management in countering AVE. In addition, the study found that program activities must be carefully designed to avoid contributing to conflict dynamics or escalating tensions. This approach ensures that AVE projects align with local needs and respect human rights (Gunaratna, 2021; Nkata, 2023; Omolara, 2024).

According to Omenma & Onyango (2020) analyzed risk management strategies employed by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The study employed a case study design with a sample of 50 participants. The study focused on the “not harm” principle, showing that respondents felt that external actors could unintentionally worsen violence or oppression if they fail to adhere to the “do not harm” principle. The study recommended designing interventions that mitigate risks by aligning with local needs and respecting human rights. This principle is crucial for ensuring that AVE projects do not inadvertently contribute to further violence. Another study by Sulaiman (2022) highlighted the importance of risk formulation and scenario planning, with 75% of respondents agreeing that identifying risk factors and developing scenario plans were vital for effective risk management. In addition, the study found that anticipating potential challenges and devising mitigation measures significantly improved project performance. These findings underscore the importance of comprehensive risk management strategies in AVE project implementation.

However, there are empirical gaps; for example, there is a lack of longitudinal studies that track the long-term effectiveness of these risk management interventions, making it difficult to assess their sustained impact (Gunaratna, 2021; Musse, 2023; Njoku, 2020; Sulaiman, 2022). In addition, knowledge gaps include an insufficient understanding of local community dynamics and the socioeconomic factors that

drive extremism, which are crucial for designing effective interventions (Botha & Graham, 2021; Haruna, 2022; Waswa & Muna, 2023; Zuhri et al., 2023). This is common among NGOs. Additionally, there is a lack of more comprehensive risk management frameworks that incorporate local perspectives and are adaptable to the rapidly changing security landscape (Iyer, 2024; Otieno & Ywokole, 2023). Moreover, limited access to conflict zones and the complex interplay between local and international actors further complicate research efforts to mitigate the risk (Aryaeinejad & Sullivan, 2023). Addressing these gaps is essential for developing more effective and context-specific counter-extremism strategies.

1.6 Research methodology

Research design: The study employed a descriptive research design. This design is appropriate for studying the prevalence, characteristics, and relationships between variables in a population.

Target Population: The target population was derived from the four zones on a selected group of people. The unit of analysis is the programs that are involved in various zones of the Somali region in Ethiopia, among people aged 18 years and above. Other respondents comprised elected officials from regional, zonal, and local government levels, religious leaders, a few opinion leaders, as well as community leaders and women leaders. Purposive sampling was applied to identify the respondents from all the above-mentioned categories who were expected to provide information on their varied experiences on the extent of their participation in anti-violent extremism and general perceptions of the phenomenon within the zones. The rationale for an inclusive and wide involvement of different respondents in the zones is because of the basic assumption that the region and the zones were part of the 2016 United Nations project targeting 1,270,358 a reduction of anti-violent extremism; however, the study targeted 1900 participants. A sample population of 320 is derived from a calculated target population of 1900, which represents the selected total resident population in the four zones that could be interviewed on anti-violent extremism. This figure was deduced from a determination Table of 1970 by Krechjje and Morgan as a proportion of the selected four zones of Fafan, Jarar, Afder, and Dawa.

Sampling: Simple random sampling was used to select the participants who were given a questionnaire while the rest of the participants were interviewed. The researcher obtained a research license from the Ethiopian Research Agency and an introduction letter from the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA), allowing the researcher to conduct the study. This informed the administration of the Somali region, and within the zones, the residents of an ongoing study. This ensured that they administratively facilitated the planned fieldwork in the four zones. The regional Administration is very relevant for assisting with easy contacts for security purposes and identifying some of the key official and NGO respondents. All the officials at the regional, zonal, and local levels were assured that this research study is purely academic for use at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa. They were guaranteed that the proposed data collection exercise would be in no way linked to strategic or military intelligence. Self-administered questionnaires were used to acquire quantitative data from the participants. The individuals who participated in the survey were permitted to openly express their thoughts, beliefs, and comments, as well as make recommendations. For the purpose of determining the replies of the respondents to the items, a questionnaire of the Likert type was used.

Data collection procedure: The data collection for this research adhered to a systematic methodology to guarantee a thorough review and interpretation of the gathered data. This section describes the steps used to look at both the quantitative and qualitative data that were gathered via interviews and questionnaires.

Data Analysis Techniques: The data analysis technique for this research adhered to a systematic methodology to guarantee a thorough review and interpretation of the gathered data. This section

describes the steps used to look at both the quantitative and qualitative data that was gathered via interviews and questionnaires. Prior to analysis, several preparatory steps were undertaken to ensure data quality and reliability. Collected questionnaires were carefully examined to assess them in terms of incompleteness, accuracy, and consistency. The responses that were not complete or inconsistent have been determined and excluded from the final analysis data set. Survey instruments were then coded methodically so that they could be analyzed statistically, with each type of response given relevant numbers in accordance with the types of measurement scales used. Subsequent to the coding step, all the information was put into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 23.0 software application. The process of entering data included procedures to check for mistakes, which helped make the data set more accurate. The data that came out of this became 245 legitimate replies, which is a response rate of 76.6 percent of the questionnaires that were sent out. The research used descriptive and inferential statistical approaches in the quantitative data analysis to achieve the study goals and evaluate the hypotheses. Descriptive statistics were used to encapsulate and exhibit the demographic attributes of respondents and the distribution of research variables. Qualitative data obtained from open-ended questionnaire items and interview responses were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The process involved: Systematic reading and coding of responses, Identification of recurring themes and patterns, organization of themes into meaningful categories, and Integration with quantitative findings to provide comprehensive insights.

Ethical considerations: The researcher observed various ethical considerations before, during, and after the study. These included obtaining permission from the Ethiopian Research Agency, after the approval by the Directorate of postgraduate students at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa. Local administration permits to introduction of the researcher and the enumerators to the residents, government officials, religious leaders, and NGO officials. The researcher and research assistants did not force any participant to take part in this research. The researcher-maintained anonymity with the responses from the respondents and maintained confidentiality with the respondents' information.

1.7 Study Findings

Response rate

The response rate for the distributed questionnaires was 250 out of 320. 75 were not returned as the respondents did not reply to follow-up inquiries or communicate at all, while 5 were returned incomplete and could not be included in the analysis. Consequently, a total of 245 questionnaires were verified and deemed suitable for analysis. This response rate is considered high and surpasses the generally accepted threshold of 70% recommended (Huang, 2023). Moreover, a response rate above 90% not only strengthens the validity and generalizability of the findings but also reflects the engagement and relevance of the study to the target population. Thus, this study, having exceeded the recommended response rate, can be considered reliable for analysis.

Demographic Information

The demographic information entails respondents' personal information.

Table 1: Community representation of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Citizen	138	56.3
Community Leader	47	19.2
Religious Leader	26	10.6
Government Official	25	10.2
Journalist	9	3.7
Total	245	100.0

Source: *Field Data, 2024*

The study found that those who responded to the study were represented by 138 (56.3%) who identified themselves as citizens, indicating a significant representation of the general population. Community leaders accounted for 47 (19.2%) of the respondents, reflecting their active role in the reduction of violent extremism. Religious leaders, constituting 26 (10.6%), played a vital part in shaping cultural and spiritual aspects. Furthermore, government officials comprised 25 (10.2%), highlighting their involvement in governance and administration, and journalists, with 9 (3.7%) respondents, representing the media and communication sector, as they help in information and news gathering, which informs the public. The study implies that the community was well represented.

Table 2: Gender of the respondents

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Male	170	69.4
Female	75	30.6
Total	245	100.0

Source: *Field Data, 2024*

The study showed that out of the total of 245 valid responses collected. Among the respondents, 170 (69.4%) identified themselves as male, while 75 (30.6%) identified as female. These gender distributions provide valuable insights into the composition of the surveyed population, highlighting the need for gender-specific considerations in any subsequent analysis or decision-making processes.

Age representation

It was found vital to respond to the age group, and the findings are represented on Table 3

Table 3: Age of the respondents

Categories	Frequency	Percent
18-28 years	40	16.3
29-39 years	100	40.8
40-50 years	85	34.7
Above 51 years	20	8.2
Total	245	100.0

Source: *Field Data, 2024*

The results of the age group are in Table 4.3 represents the age of the respondents. The study targeted individuals who are 18 years and above, this is because 18 years and above are considered adults and can give consent without involving another person. The study found that most of the respondents fell into the 29-39 years age bracket, accounting for 40.8% (100) of the total. Following closely were individuals aged 40-50 (34.7) years, constituting 34.7% (85). Those in the 18-28 years category made up 16.3% (40), while respondents aged above 51 years represented 8.2% (20). Overall, this distribution reflects a diverse range of ages within the surveyed population.

Table 4: Education level of the respondents

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Primary	40	16.3
Secondary	95	38.8
College/University	110	44.9
Total	245	100.0

Source: *Field Data, 2024*

The educational level of the respondents revealed a diverse distribution. Among the respondents, 44.9% (44.9 had completed college or university, indicating a significant proportion with higher education qualifications. Secondary education was the next most common level, with 38.8% (95) of participants having completed it. Additionally, 16.3% (40) had a primary education background. Overall, this distribution reflects a mix of educational backgrounds within the surveyed group. The education level is important in understanding issues related to project initiatives on anti-violent extremism. This implies that every participant had learned and was able to answer the research questions without any help from anyone, to avoid bias.

Marital status: It was found important to check the status of the married people involved in the study and the responses are as follows in Table 5.

Table 5: Marital status of the respondents

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Single	91	37.1
Married	154	62.9
Total	245	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2024

The marital status distribution among the respondents revealed that most of the respondents were married individuals who constituted the majority, accounting for 62.9% (154) of the respondents. In contrast, single individuals make up 37.1% (91) of the sample. Butler (2023) explains that married individuals favour initiatives promising to keep the family stable and safe. On the other hand, single individuals are freer or mobile and hence offer other ways of contributing, for instance, leading in youth-led projects or deploying at short notice. Understanding goes a long way in designing project strategies that take full advantage of married respondents' standing within their respective communities while maximizing benefits from the agility and innovative potential that singles can provide.

Religion of the Respondents

The findings of the religion category were deemed vital since the area of the study found it necessary to be accomplished due to its specialty of the focus group

Table 6: Religion of the respondents

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Christian	20	8.2
Muslim	225	91.8
Total	245	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2024

The study found that there were two main religious groups, Christianity and Islam that responded to the study. Of the respondents, Muslims constitute 91.8% (225) of the respondents, reflecting a significant presence within the sample. In contrast, Christians make up a smaller proportion, accounting for 8.2% (20) of the total. Overall, the findings underscore the dominance of Islam in the surveyed group, suggesting that Islam inhabits the region.

Zone representations

The respondents were required to indicate the Zone of residence they came from, and this is how the responses were presented in Table 7

Table 7: Zone of residence of the respondents

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Fafan Zone	65	26.5
Jarar Zone	65	26.5
Dawa Zone	70	28.6
Afder Zone	45	18.4
Total	245	100.0

Source: *Field Data, 2024*

The findings reveal that out of the total sample size of 245 respondents, residents are distributed across different zones as follows: Fafan Zone accounts for 26.5%, (65) Jarar Zone also constitutes 26.5%, (65) Dawa Zone represents 28.6%, (70) and Afder Zone comprises 18.4% (18.4). These percentages reflect the geographical distribution within the surveyed population, with the Dawa Zone having the highest proportion of respondents, indicating all the regions were represented.

Risk Management and Performance of Anti-Violent Extremism Projects in Somalia Regions, Ethiopia.

The Table 8 presents the perception of respondents on Risk Management Perception and performance of Anti-Violent Extremism Projects in Somalia Regions, Ethiopia. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with various statements related to risk management using a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=neutral, 4= agree and 5=strongly agree).

Table 81 Risk Management Perception and Performance of Anti-Violent Extremism Projects

Statements (<i>Risk Management Perception</i>)	SD % (F)	D % (F)	N % (F)	A % (F)	SA % (F)	Mean	Std. dvt
There is much risk while undertaking the projects in the Somali Region of Ethiopia	7.8% (19)	8.2% (20)	10.2% (25)	73.5% (180)	0.4% (1)	3.51	0.944
Identification of risk management is taken as a major concern in projects undertaken in the Somali Region of Ethiopia	9.4% (23)	12.2% (30)	22.4% (55)	55.5% (136)	0.4% (1)	3.25	1.005
The involvement of religious organizations in risk assessment enhances the effectiveness of anti-violent extremism projects in the Somali Region of Ethiopia	5.3% (13)	20.8% (51)	26.1% (64)	44.9% (110)	2.9% (7)	3.19	0.975
Project implementers can identify and address potential risks in anti-violent extremism projects in the Somali Region of Ethiopia	4.5% (11)	40.8% (100)	24.5% (60)	28.6% (70)	1.6% (4)	2.82	0.954
Risk management strategies developed are more effective in mitigating the impact of potential risks in anti-violent extremism projects in the Somali Region of Ethiopia	4.1% (10)	34.7% (85)	18.0% (44)	41.2% (101)	2.0% (5)	3.02	1.004
Development of risk management enhances the success of anti-violent extremism projects in the Somali Region of Ethiopia	2.4% (6)	16.3% (40)	22.4% (55)	55.1% (135)	3.7% (9)	3.41	0.890
Overall composite mean and SD						3.20	0.962

Source: *Field Data, 2024*

Regarding the statement, "There is much risk while undertaking the projects in the Somali Region of Ethiopia," 73.5% (180) of respondents agreed, while 10.2% (25) remained neutral. Only 7.8% (19) strongly disagreed, and 8.2% (20) disagreed. The mean score of 3.51, with a SD of 0.944, indicates a

general agreement that significant risks are involved in undertaking AVE projects in the region. This suggests a prevalent perception of risk among project stakeholders, which could impact the overall performance of these projects.

For the statement, "Identification of risk management is taken as a major concern in projects undertaken in Somali Region of Ethiopia," 55.5% (136) agreed, and 22.4% (55) remained neutral. Meanwhile, 9.4% (23) strongly disagreed, and 12.2% (30) disagreed. The mean score of 3.25 and a SD of 1.005 reflect a moderate agreement that risk identification is a major concern, with some variability in responses. This indicates that while many recognize the importance of risk identification, there is still a significant portion that may not view it as critically.

On whether "The involvement of religious organizations in risk assessment enhances the effectiveness of anti-violent extremism projects in the Somali Region of Ethiopia," 44.9% (110) agreed, and 26.1% (64) were neutral. A total of 5.3% (13) strongly disagreed, and 20.8% (55) disagreed. The mean score of 3.19, with a SD of 0.975, suggests moderate agreement with the positive impact of involving religious organizations in risk assessment. The variability in responses indicates differing views on the effectiveness of this involvement.

Concerning the statement, "Projects implementers can identify and address potential risks in anti-violent extremism projects in the Somali Region of Ethiopia," 40.8% (100) disagreed, and 24.5% (60) were neutral. Only 4.5% (11) strongly disagreed, and 28.6% (70) agreed. The mean score of 2.82 and a SD of 0.954 indicate a general disagreement that project implementers are effective in identifying and addressing risks, reflecting a significant area for improvement in risk management capabilities.

For the statement, "Risk management strategies developed are more effective in mitigating the impact of potential risks in anti-violent extremism projects in the Somali Region of Ethiopia," 41.2% (101) agreed, and 18.0% (44) remained neutral. A total of 4.1% (10) strongly disagreed, and 34.7% (85) disagreed. The mean score of 3.02, with a SD of 1.004, suggests a moderate perception of the effectiveness of risk management strategies, with notable variability in responses, indicating mixed views on the effectiveness of current strategies.

Lastly, on whether "Development of risk management enhances the success of anti-violent extremism projects in the Somali Region of Ethiopia," 55.1% (135) agreed, and 22.4% (22) remained neutral. Only 2.4% (6) strongly disagreed, and 16.3% (40) disagreed. The mean score of 3.41, with a SD of 0.890, indicates general agreement that developing risk management enhances project success. The lower SD reflects a more consistent perception among respondents.

The overall mean score of 3.20 suggests a moderate perception of the importance and effectiveness of risk management in AVE projects. The SD of 0.962 indicates considerable variability in responses, reflecting differing experiences and views on risk management practices. The data shows that there is identified need to implement effective risk management and, in this case, special attention should be paid to the admissible severe risks connected with AVE projects and to the importance of engaging religious organizations related to risk evaluation. Yet, it is also believed that project implementers might lack full efficiency in detecting and managing possible risks, which indicates one of the key areas to

improve. Improved risk management plan and identification/mitigation procedures would be able to improve the effectiveness and success of AVE projects in the Somali Area of Ethiopia.

These results are consistent with the research conducted by Abdirahman (2023) as the study stated that contextualized risk management is an effective practice to diminish aggression among vulnerable youth in Somalia. Nevertheless, they disagree with the results of Waswa and Muna (2023), who concluded that risk management policies were less successful in the Kenyan county of Mandera. The distinct contribution to the study is the importance of the religious organizations in the effective project enhancement, which has not received much importance in the prior studies. The present research results confirm the idea that local religious organizations incorporation into the risk management processes can enhance the performance of anti-violent extremism projects considerably. Thus, the presented findings indicate that success of such projects highly depends on adopting a localized method of risk management, taking into account the local conditions and taking stakeholders of the community into account.

Risk management was introduced as a crucial element of efficient AVE project, especially taking into consideration the complex and unstable environment of Somalia regions. Certain risks that should be anticipated in advance by the participants were highlighted, including extremist's reprisal, clan conflicts and mishandling of resources. It was observed by many that community-based approaches to risk mitigation should incorporate local level of knowledge because the people of that community themselves tend to know much about the risks they are exposed to. Nevertheless, this did not mean that respondents did not report an overall challenge entailing a shortage of funding, training, and tools to deal with risks. Such a gap tends to cause a sluggish reaction to new threats, undermining project outcomes. As one participant explained,

"We don't have enough resources to manage all the risks we face. That's why some projects don't succeed." (Respondent D, 2024)

Relationship between risk management and performance of anti-violent extremism projects (AVEP)

The researcher aimed to ascertain the correlation between risk management and the performance of anti-violent extremism initiatives (AVEP) using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient. This helps figure out how strong and what direction the link is between using risk management in projects and doing well on anti-violent extremism efforts. Table 9 shows the findings of the correlation.

Table 9: Risk Management

		Risk management	
Risk management	Pearson Correlation	1	.357**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	245	245
Performance of anti-violent extremism	Pearson Correlation	.357**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	245	245

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Data, 2024

The result Table 9 of the Pearson correlation between risk management and the performance of anti-violent extremism programs reveals a moderate positive relationship, with a correlation coefficient of 0.357 and a significance level of 0.000, indicating statistical significance at the 0.01 level. This

correlation suggests that as risk management practices improve, the performance of anti-violent extremism initiatives also tends to enhance. To test the hypothesis that there is no significant influence of risk management on the performance of Anti-Violent Extremism Projects in Somalia, Ethiopia, and the researcher conducted a regression analysis.

H₀: There is no significant influence of risk management on the performance of Anti-Violent Extremism Projects in Somalia Regions, Ethiopia

The hypothesis was tested using the model below.

$$y = \alpha + \beta_2 X_2 + e$$

Where:

y= performance of Ant-Violent Extremism Projects in Somalia Regions.

α = constant,

β_2 = beta coefficient,

X_2 = Risk Management and

e= error term

Table 10: Model Summary for Risk Management

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.357 ^a	.127	.124	.64772

a. Predictors: (Constant), Risk Management

The model summary findings in Table 8 demonstrate how much the predictor variable explains the model's overall variability. The R Square value is 0.357, which means that risk management was responsible for 12.7% of the performance of Ant-Violent Extremism Projects in Somalia Regions. remaining variables that were not included in this model made up the remaining 87.3%. The research concluded that risk management has a modest positive significant impact on the success of Ant-Violent Extremism Projects in Somalia Regions.

Table 11: Coefficients of Risk Management

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1 (Constant)	1.193	.239			4.998	.000
Risk Management	.438	.073	.357		5.958	.000

a. Dependent Variable: performance of anti-violent extremism

The analysis of the coefficients of risk management as presented in Table 8 shows the unstandardized coefficient (B) for the constant is 1.193, and a t-value of 4.998, which is statistically significant at the $p < 0.001$ level. The unstandardized coefficient indicates a 0.438 increase in performance for each unit increase in risk management, with a significant t-value of 5.958 ($p < 0.001$). Effective risk management strategies improve performance by 35.7%. The model fit, represented as:

$$\text{Performance} = 1.193 + 0.438(\text{Risk Management}) + e, t = 5.958, p < 0.001$$

Thus, the null hypothesis of the study was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis accepted. Therefore, there is a significant influence of risk management on the performance of Ant-Violent Extremism Projects in Somalia Regions, Ethiopia. This finding aligns with Waswa and Muna (2023), who reported similar positive impacts of risk management on counter-extremism initiatives in Mandera County, Kenya. Conversely, Brown (2023) found no significant correlation in the UK context, suggesting regional differences in the effectiveness of risk management strategies. Zuhri et al. (2023) highlighted the challenges in implementing risk management in gender-focused counter-extremism projects, contrasting with the positive outcomes in this study. Fahlberg et al. (2023) supported the positive correlation, emphasizing the role of structured risk management in enhancing project outcomes in Latin

America. These findings underscore the variability in risk management effectiveness across different regions and project types, suggesting that tailored approaches are necessary for optimal results. Researchers should consider contextual factors when designing risk management frameworks for anti-violent extremism projects

1.8 Conclusion

The analysis on the effectiveness of the Anti-Violent Extremism (AVE) projects in the Regions of Somalia, Ethiopia, offers useful insights of some important elements that determine whether projects are effective or not. The study shows that there is an existing communication disconnect between the project goals and the communities and that proper communication is important in making the community participate. Although some cooperation is present, the necessity of the needs evaluation and the local community acquisition is felt to be lacking, calling to an increase in interactions (Abdirahman, 2023). The other important feature realized in the study is risk management. The respondents admit that AVE projects are associated with considerable risk, which may lead to constructing the framework of effective risk identification and management strategies. The analysis indicates that there is a positive relationship between superior risk management activities and enhanced project performance and therefore strategies should be employed on risk mitigation (Morema, 2020). Furthermore, there should be greater cooperation in needs assessment and appreciation of the local communities input to enhance project effectiveness. Also, the usage of contextualized project curricula and social rehabilitation strategies is important. It is important that strong risk management practices are put in place to reduce the threats and lead to the success of the project. Among these is the reinforcement of the risk identification, the utilization of religious bodies in risk assessment, and an efficient risk management strategy. Communication channels also play very important roles in achieving coordination, transparency and alignment in the projects.

1.9 Recommendation

Based on the findings, the study recommends that Project managers should enhance communication channels by reevaluating and revising communication techniques to make sure they are relevant to the situation and meet local demands. Also, teaching the people working on the project how to communicate well and using local leaders may help get the word out and stop information from becoming mixed up. The report also suggests that risk management methods can be improved by giving project implementers thorough training in risk management and getting the community involved in the risk assessment process. This is not only about coming up with strong risk management plans that may help avoid problems and improve project performance. To get more support from local governments, they need to be more involved in AVE initiatives. This may be done by pushing for legislation that promotes equity, the rule of law, and community engagement. Making local government support mechanisms stronger may help initiatives last and be successful.

Promoting community involvement is getting people in the community involved in the planning and execution of AVE initiatives. This makes sure that the initiatives are better suited to the demands of the area and have a better likelihood of success and long-term viability.

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