



**TO EXPLORE THE PERCEPTIONS OF 14-17-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN
TOWARDS REHABILITATION PROGRAMS IN KIRIGITI
REHABILITATION SCHOOL.**

BY

NGUNYI ESTHER NGIMA.

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DECLARATION

I declare that this is my original work and has never been presented for examination in any other institution for the award of a degree or diploma.

Name: NGUNYI ESTHER NGIMA

Sign:

Reg/No. C50/39321/2021

Date: 07/11/2022

This research project has been submitted for examination to the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts of the University of Nairobi with my approval as the University Supervisor.

DR. HILDAH OBURU.

Sign:

Date: 8/11/2022

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my husband Lawrence Maina for his undying love and support. To my children Rose Adrienne, Rita Berdine and Lenny Mwangi you are the best thank you for your love, encouragement and support during my study, May Almighty God bless you Always and keep you safe.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACES – Adverse childhood experiences.

ANPPCAN – African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect.

COVID-19 – Corona Virus Diseases 2019.

CNCP – Children in need of care and protection.

DCS - Department of Children Services.

DFE – Department for Education. UNGA – United Nations General Assembly.

UNICEF – United Nation International Children’s Education Fund.

ABSTRACT

The number of crimes among children has increased at an alarming rate despite the efforts put by the Government to give interventions through the Department of children, churches and Non-Governmental organizations. The children Justice System in Kenya offer rehabilitation programs to child offenders and neglected children for a maximum of three years. Rehabilitation of these children is one of the main aim in ensuring that they become empowered with knowledge and skills which will help them become successful people in the future. The attitude of these children is also promoted and therefore they are able to solve their personal issues in their present and future life and they are also able to live a healthy lifestyle in the community after their release (Bradshaw and Rose borough, 2005).

The study sought to explore on the perception of child offenders on rehabilitative programs in Kirigiti Rehabilitation school, Kiambu county, Kenya. The research objectives were to establish the existing rehabilitation programs, perception towards the rehabilitation programs and the outcomes of perceptions in Kirigiti Rehabilitation school Kiambu County, Kenya. The research will use qualitative design and some bit of Quantitive design with the application of psychoanalysis theory, cognitive therapy, Richard Gregory theory and narrative therapy to help me as the researcher achieve the research objectives as well as i answering the research questions.

The target population for the study included all the children in the institution, welfare staffs, academic staff and vocational staff in the institution. The instruments used included interview guide questions, audio recordings and focus group discussions. Narrative inquiry was used in analyzing data and a framework was developed by identifying data that helped in answering the research questions. The findings revealed that children's voice is very important and their views and opinions should be taken with a positive attitude so that they can be assisted in making their future brighter.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Children are a symbol of continuity of a generation and future of a society and therefore they are very important in every society. However, they are considered wasteful if they fail to contribute to the general welfare of the society since they are the greatest national resource (shoemaker 1984) After the second world war in 1945 the history of destitute children became a major issue and that is when United Nation International Children's Education Fund (UNICEF) was established by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 1946 to look after the children who suffered during the second world war in Europe.

According to a Survey done in 2007-2011(Family and Home, US Census Bureau, American Community) the environment that the child grows in have a huge impact on their well-being. It also states that for a child to have a health growth a safe and healthy home is essential since the child can learn and explore unlike a problematic home which can affect the child 's growth intellectually, socially emotionally. This results to destructive and damaged children and therefore the entire society is weakened (Shoemaker, 1984). These children are referred to as child offenders while others are only in need of care and protection (CNCP). Child offenders are persons below eighteen years who are in conflict with the law, the most common offences committed by children are stealing, loitering in the streets, truancy, drug abuse and other anti-social behavior. The other children who are in need of care and protection are children whose parents or guardians find difficulty in parenting, those who have dropped out of school, who are truant or are at risk of falling into bad company and those who are found loitering and begging.

Kenya's children affairs are handled by the ministry of labour, state department and social protection. Kenya has about 2.4 million orphans and vulnerable children according to the Kenya Demographic Health Survey (Oshako et al., 2011). To add on that the African Network for the prevention and protection against child abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) (2000) indicated that children who are in need of care and protection (CNCP) account for more than 40% of Kenyan children total population.

In reference to performance Audit Report on Rehabilitation and Re-integration of children in conflict with the law and children in need of care and protection from the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (2017), the Department of children has been set by the ministry to promote the

advancement of children. According to the Audit Report Justice system in Kenya offer rehabilitation to children who have committed offences and the ones who have been neglected by their parents and need to be cared for and protected for a period of three years' maximum. Before they are taken to the rehabilitation the police apprehend them and they are held in children's remand homes while their cases are heard in courts and they are later committed to the rehabilitation schools where they undertake various rehabilitation programs which include, education, vocational training and counseling for a maximum of three years before being released back to their families.

Arnett (2000) staff who work in rehabilitation schools encounter a lot challenges in their daily interaction with children who have committed offences and therefore they need special skills to handle them.

According to the US Department of justice, 2007 the issue of children committing crime has become more complicated ant the programs aimed at helping them is an issue in almost all institutions and in the community.

According to Leonard's (2007), rehabilitation programs can be determined by where the rehabilitation school is located geographically, the age of the children and their gender too. These programs create opportunities for the children to increase their knowledge and skills and also promotes the attitude of the children towards the programs. More so the programs aim at helping the children in acquiring skills which help them solve their personal issues after their release from the institution though it is not yet clear whether the programs achieve the said objective (Leonard's 2007). The current situation that is inspiring my study is increased child crime rate in Kenya due to high cost of living and increased drug abuse amongst children. Study in California Correctional Officers demonstrates that rehabilitation programs should have access to drug and alcohol treatment(Lerman,2007.) It will therefore be necessary to explore on the various types of perceptions, the positive and negative outcomes of perception of child offenders towards rehabilitation programs, explore on the experiences of child offenders towards rehabilitation programs and the importance of perception in shaping the personality of child offenders to prevent them from falling back to crime once

they are repatriated back to the community so as to build a strong society. (Shoemaker 1984). The study will be carried on children aged 14-17 years in Kirigiti Rehabilitation school which

accommodate girls from all over the country and from different communities and also explore on the effectiveness of these programs while in the rehabilitation school and after going back to the community.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Perception is a process which enables an individual understand what is going on in his or her life and he or she is able to selectively choose the information in a specific way and then interpret it so as to make a decision of what is happening in his or her life. Sussman's (1972) raised a great concern about how the society should protect itself from dangerous deviants through rehabilitation process as it is one of the main ways of solving issues that individuals encounter in day to day life due to negative perceptions. Some of these issues have negatively affected the young ones making them fall into deviant behavior which is a threat to the entire society and to the general economic growth.

In Kenya child crime has increased at a very high rate and according to (Griffin, 2010) children who are in the justice system adds up to two-thirds and therefore there is great need to take care of the needs of the children who are in conflict with the law depending on the crime they committed so that their crime can match with the rehabilitative program allocated to them though previous studies have shown that the programs might be ill-equipped, there is need to try new ways of dealing with the current and emerging children issues so that the best and lasting solutions may be realized.

According to studies from Youth justice Campaign 2007, A coca, 1999, there is clear indication that most of the countries have done less or have done nothing to deal with these issues and that there is little effect from the programs but through technology and professional skills a lot will change where the implementation of the programs will be done professionally and greater effect will be experienced through change of negative perceptions, use of appropriate programs to the child offenders for positive outcome in behavior change.

Previous studies have also indicated that sometimes the caretakers of these young offenders do not really understand what is expected of them to be trained fully before they are entrusted to the children so as to be aware of their role towards the children so that the rehabilitation process results may be positive, this is supported by (Holt.2014p-56) where it is stated that when professionals

are clear about their duty towards child protection, and when they understand how they are supposed to perform their duties the rehabilitation process becomes effective.

There are few studies that have been done about rehabilitation program in children institution one of them was an analysis of what would bring behavior change among children who are at risk in Juvenile Rehabilitation centers in Nairobi by Rintaugu (2016), there is another study that was done by Onyango (2011) who did an investigation on how effective rehabilitation programs are on Juvenile delinquents in Kenya but none of these studies has been done during the current situation after Covid-19 pandemic on the rehabilitation programs and the perceptions of child offenders towards these programs. The study seeks to explore on the perceptions of child offenders towards rehabilitation programs and the effectiveness of these programs in helping the children who are in need of care and protection before they are repatriated back to the community.

In the present times treatment of children who have committed crime involves a number of interventions which focuses on the person's and surrounds which might have influenced his or her behavior(Ryal,2004). Individual differences and their level should be put into consideration when choosing the rehabilitation programs for them and should be taken at a psychological perspective so that it can bring about changes in the concerned person When rehabilitation programs are well undertaken and the offenders are happy with them the perception of the offender is positive and positive behavior change will also be experienced among the child offenders. (Mackenzie,2006, p.361) The researcher shall therefore seek to identify the rehabilitation programs present in Kirigiti Rehabilitation center, the perceptions young offenders have towards the programs, their experiences, views and opinions that have contributed to the perceptions as well as the outcomes of these perceptions towards rehabilitation programs

1.3 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The issue of rehabilitation of children who are in conflict with the law and who need to be cared for and protected is important but in this study, I seek to explore on the perceptions of child offenders towards these rehabilitation programs and their effects on behavior change so as to ensure that these children will not fall back to crime and become wasteful (shoemaker 1984) since it can be a threat to the economic development of the country. According to performance audit report (2017) from the Ministry of public service, Gender, Senior Citizens Affairs And Special programmes by then The Ministry of East African Community (EAC) labour and social protection

revealed weaknesses in the implementation of rehabilitation programmes which has resulted to ineffectiveness of the programs and therefore there is a great need to explore on the experiences, views and opinions of the child offenders which might be of greater help in the implementation and improvement of rehabilitation programs. With this I believe there will a positive behavior change and chances of child offenders falling back to crime are reduced and this will help in building a strong society (shoemaker 1984).

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study gave child offender a chance to express their feelings and their views which they might have denied. I was able to assess the experiences that child offenders go through during rehabilitation and to discover what motivates them to participate in rehabilitation programmes. The findings will create awareness to the stakeholders on the experiences and they will be able to improve on the identified areas and make changes for better outcomes. The study will help therapist on good choice of theories while counseling the child offenders for positive outcomes towards behavior change, The community will enjoy the fruits through the skills acquired during rehabilitation process once the offenders are repatriated back to society, The policymakers and NGOs will have ideas on the areas of improvement and on what other programs they can implement and be of great help to the child offenders and future scholars may decide to do a further research on boys' rehabilitation schools and remand homes.

1.5 OBJECTIVES

AIM OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study is to explore on the perceptions of children towards the rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti Rehabilitation Kiambu County, Kenya.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES.

1. To identify the existing rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti rehabilitation school Kiambu County, Kenya.
2. To explore perceptions of 14-17-year-old children towards rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti rehabilitation school.
3. To establish outcomes of perceptions of 14-17-year-old children towards rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti rehabilitation school Kiambu County, Kenya.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. What are the existing rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti rehabilitation school, Kiambu County, Kenya?
2. What are the perceptions of 14-17-year-old children towards rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti rehabilitation school
3. What are the outcomes of perceptions towards rehabilitation programs among 14-17-year-old in Kirigiti rehabilitation school Kiambu County, Kenya?

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study will focus on the positive and negative attributes of past experiences of child offenders and their effects on the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti rehabilitation school Kiambu County, Kenya., The study will also investigate perceptions of child offender towards rehabilitation programs and how the outcomes of these perceptions. The target population will be all the learners in the institution aged 14-17 years and those who have been in the institution for two years and over. The rehabilitation programs that will be analyzed include educational programs which will be based on their academic performance report from academic staffs, Vocational programs and therapy programs. The study population will include the institution Manager, welfare officers, academic staff, spiritual leader and vocational trainers in Kirigiti rehabilitation school Kiambu County, Kenya. Specific areas of focus will be the existing rehabilitation programs, common offences committed by children and factors that contribute to these offences, therapy programs in rehabilitation schools, perceptions of the child offenders towards the rehabilitation programs and their benefits through sharing their experiences and views. A narrative inquiry will be conducted to effectively address the research problem.

1.8 LIMITATIONS

- I could not access some information regarding the child offender since these institutions are regarded as penal and correctional centers therefore not accessible to the general public.
- Use of English language was a challenge to the child offenders and therefore more time was required for translating the questions to Swahili language during the data collection.

- Due to Covid19 outbreak in the last two-years admission of children in the rehabilitation school have reduced and therefore the number of children has reduced therefore the sample size was reduced.

1.9 DELIMITATION

- Every institution experience different experiences when handling children issues and so they have different perceptions, this study delimited itself to Kirigiti Rehabilitation school Kiambu County, but for more conclusive result, other rehabilitation schools should have been included, so that the findings of the study may not be generalized to Kirigiti rehabilitation school.

- The researcher acquired a consent letter from the Director Children services to be able to access the institution for data collection.

- The researcher translated the questions to Swahili language to enable the children respond conveniently to the questions asked.

1.10 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

My assumption was that personnel with relevant skills and adequate training will be enough for positive behavior change in a child offender, I also assumed that if the existing rehabilitation programs are appropriately put in place child offenders' perceptions will be positive.

1.11 DEFINITION OF TERMS.

Child offender – is a person who is below eighteen years and who is in conflict with law.

Perceptions-this is the way people think about something and understand about it based on their thoughts, beliefs and behaviors.

Rehabilitation -An attempt through treatment to stop those who are in conflict with the law from continuing to offend (Webster 2004)

- It is a strategy of crime prevention where offenders change and lead crime free lives in the community (Webster, 2004:115).

- A process that is meant to equip children in conflict with the law and children in need of care and protection with information and skills aimed at behavior modification while realizing acceptable intellectual, social, moral and economic obligations (Performance Audit Report Ministry of labour and social protection 2017)

Counselling -Helping relationship where we have a trained professional who has the skills and is competent.

Behavior -It is the actions or reactions of human which can be observed through seeing or hearing and can be measured (Alberto & Troutman, 2003)

Narrative inquiry -Process of analyzing people's stories for the purpose of data presentation.

Rehabilitation school -It is a correctional institution which provides reception, maintenance, training and rehabilitation of children through a court order.

Care Reform – a change process within the system and mechanisms that provide care for children separated from their families or at risk of separation. (National Care Reform Strategy for Children in Kenya 2022-2032)

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.

2.1 INTRODUCTION.

The aim of this study is to explore the perceptions of child offenders towards the Rehabilitation programs. The literature will be reviewed on the existing rehabilitation programs for the child offenders, the factors that affect perceptions and effects of positive and negative outcomes of perceptions on the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs and experiences, views and opinions of child offenders towards rehabilitation programs.

2.2 EXISTING REHABILITATION PROGRAMS.

UNICEF (1986) came up with the following objectives of Rehabilitation schools:

- a) To instill discipline in children through guidance and counselling programs in the rehabilitation schools.
- b) Children to be provided with spiritual guidance by different denomination through chaplains.
- c) Ensure that there is continuous good health of the children through balanced diet and hygienic living conditions and also regular physical exercise.
- d) Children to be equipped with helpful skills that will make them economically independent after their release from the institutions.
- e) To offer academic training and to make sure that their committal does not interfere with their schooling.
- f) To help those children who pass the necessary exam to join secondary schools.

Mbugua (1987) states that it is unfortunate that the application of the set objectives in the rehabilitation schools is not up to standard and proposes that rehabilitation schools should if possible replace the home atmosphere that children missed due to their committal.

Bohn (1997) explains how the society duplicate what is practiced within the institutions of rehabilitating in America where the persons being rehabilitated are given food, clothes, shelter and health care needs. He also adds that there are those who participate in rehabilitation programs like social work, life skills, educational and vocational programs to improve on their lives. The same case applies to rehabilitation schools in Kenya which is according to the Children's Act(GOK200)

they provide children in the rehabilitation schools with academic training, vocational courses such as dressmaking and tailoring, mechanic, bakery, hairdressing and electronic, they also offer guidance and counselling as well as therapy sessions and life skills. (Andrew et al, 1990:369) describes these programs as correctional services that incorporate delivery of services to cases in which are considered riskier, risk factors which can be changed and include anti-social attitudes and feelings, peer influence, therapy treatment that match with the needs of the client and learning style such as cognitive and behavioral therapy.

When the person who under go through rehabilitative programs achieve a reduced recidivism rate than those who have not gone through the process this is a good indicator that the rehabilitations program I s successful which is usually the main aim of undertaking the process. According to (Jones and Wyant 2007: 765) programs that helped to build good relationship skills and behavior modification for young offenders who are in the institutions indicated to be effective within the institutions and also in the community Lipsey(1999) explains in her study how she realized that programs that took more than six months were given by anon-justice provider, they were correctly implemented and had been running for more than two years all resulted to reduced recidivism rate.

Lauer (1998) states that rehabilitation programs can only be effective if they focus on behavior change and beliefs that are conducive to personal responsibility and provide the offender with opportunities that will lead to successful occupations. Siegel and Senna (1997) states that academic training, vocational courses and professional counseling strategies can be of help if they are carried out well and if they meet the goals and objectives of the children's individual needs. Siegel Senna (1997) further emphasizes that every effort must be put to ensure that rehabilitation programs meet the goals of the individual needs for an effective rehabilitation process.

2.3 FACTORS THAT AFFECT PERCEPTION AND CONTRIBUTE TO CHILD OFFENDER ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR.

Perception is defined as a complex process through where people absorbs or assimilate stimuli in the environment in a selective manner and organizes the information that is perceived in specific style cognitively so as to be able to evaluate and make conclusions of what is happening in one's surroundings.

According to Joseph Reitz; Perception can be defined as the way people acquire information from the surroundings either through observation, listening, tasting or smelling whereby this study will base on information that is received through seeing, hearing and feeling towards rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti rehabilitation school Kiambu. According to B.V.H. Gilmer, perception is the processes of becoming aware of situations, studies further explain that a number of factors operate to shape and sometimes distort perceptions. These factors can be in the person perceiving, in the object or target being perceived and in this study the target being perceived are the rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti Rehabilitation School Kiambu and the perceiver is the child offender. Perception is heavily influenced by personal characteristics of individual perceiver who is in this case will be the child offender. The researchers' further states the personal characteristics that operate to shape and sometimes distort perceptions which include; attitudes, personality, motives, interests, past experiences and expectations.

According to research perception is important in helping individuals understand their behavior since people perceives the world differently and their approaches towards life problems is also different. Perception also help people predict their behavior in the changed circumstances by understanding their present perception of the environment. People are also able to determine their needs and the needs of others with the help of perception since needs are influenced by perception. In this study perception will help the children avoid making errors and they will also be able to build their character and define their roles which will be influenced by perception. They will also be able to understand, love and help each other more appropriately which will enhance relationship among individuals since perception ingests an observation and manufactures an altered reality enriched with previous experiences.

An article on family and home by US Census Bureau, American community survey 2007-2011 that was carried out on 2007-2011 explains how a health bran can only develop in a home that has conducive environment since that is foundation. As stated earlier, for the well-being of a child the surroundings play a big role and tis allows the child to grow, acquire knowledge and explore on new things unlike where the surroundings are unfavorable to the child and can cause poor brain development which affects the intellectual growth of the child, he or she becomes anti-social and aggressive. Other studies have shown that poor surroundings during early childhood lead to

impaired development of the child such as poor language skills, poor behavior and deficit in school readiness (American community Survey 2007-2011).

Research has shown that a negative home environment during the early years of life can lead to impaired development which may include, poor language skills, behavioral problems and deficit in school readiness. Studies of young children from an article from urban child institute have identified distinct patterns of brain activity associated with family income and social economic factors that relate to social and emotional development, cognitive ability, learning and memory.

Family type contribute largely to a child's well-being since research has shown that family structure determines strongly child outcomes specifically growing up with only one parent has been associated with a number of negative outcomes and it states that children from single-parents are exposed to greater risk of behavioral problems, illnesses, self-esteem issues, alcohol and substance abuse, risky sexual behavior and truancy.

Domestic violence is part of the landscape of child protection, government documentation on child protection title, working together to safeguarding children (HM Government, 2013) details safeguarding responsibilities of professionals and organizations and promotes a child-centered approach based on the needs and views of children (Holt, 2014). (Etherington and Baker, 2018) p.70). The co-occurrence of stressful problems in early life is often referred to as adverse childhood experiences (ACES) which is a construct emerging from a long line of studies into traumatic events occurring in childhood such as domestic violence, sexual, physical and emotional abuse, household dysfunction and neglect. All these can be contributing factors to anti-social behavior in children.

2.4 EFFECTS OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE OUTCOMES OF PERCEPTIONS OF CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW TOWARDS REHABILITATION PROGRAMS.

There are a number of factor that affect perceptions of people either knowingly or unknowingly and they include negative thoughts, time of perception, poor surroundings, lack of understanding and distorted mind due to confusion.

ILLUSION

This is defined as a false perception, in connection with this study, if the child who is in conflict with the law has mistaken rehabilitation programs with punishment or any other negative perception the effect will be negative too.

HALLUCINATION.

If child offenders perceive stimulus that are present negatively the effects of rehabilitation programs will be negative

HALO EFFECT

This is the tendency of rating people uniformly of being either high or low in other traits if he or she is extraordinarily high or low in one particular trait. If the children who are in conflict with the law are rated equally, studies have shown that some character traits may be ignored and rehabilitation process may not give positive outcomes.

STEREOTYPING.

This is judging someone on the basis of our perception of the group to which he or she belongs and may have negative effect on rehabilitation programs.

SELECTIVE PERCEPTION.

People choose and even interpret what they observe on the basis of their interests, where they come from, past experiences and their feelings and in connection to this study some rehabilitation programs might be ignored while others might be well attended which will lead to disparity.

According to the children's Act (revised 2010) Child offenders are persons below eighteen years who are in conflict with the law. In Kenya child crime has been on the rise, incarcerated youth return to the justice system at alarming rates, minority youth make-up approximately two-thirds of the youth in the juvenile justice system (Griffin, 2010). Children in conflict with the law must be dealt with through a specialized justice system where measures specific to the needs and evolving capacities of children apply within specified rehabilitative platforms inform of programs (US Department of justice 2007)

The most common offences committed by children are aggressive acts, theft, vandalism, arson, truancy, running away, defying authority, drug abuse and other anti-social behavior. Other children in the rehabilitation schools may have not committed any offence but they are there for need of care and protection where parents or guardians find difficulty in parenting, those who have dropped out of school, those who are truant or are at risk of falling into bad company and those who are found loitering and begging.

Section 119(1) of the Children's Act(GOK2002) explains who a child in need of care and protection is;

- a) A child who is loitering and begging for basic needs or receiving alms.
- b) A child who does not have parents or guardian or whose parents died.
- c) A child whose parents are held in prison and he or she has no one take care of him or her.
- d) A child whose parents have declared it difficult to take care of him or her.
- e) One who refuses to go school and has fallen into bad company.
- f) One who has been denied a chance to be in school to get educated.
- g) A child who is abusing drugs or trafficking drugs or other substances that can cause harm to self or to others.

This is a major concern since all these children are placed in one institution and they are all treated as child offender. According to a study carried out by Oregon Youth Authority in September 25 2007) it states that juvenile justice system children who have committed offences should be considered with sensitivity since the children are still developing and growing up unlike when one is dealing with adult offenders. It further states that children should be given treatment with care and attention and should be given appropriate punishment need according to the committed offence since at this age they are still fighting out who they are and what they want to be when they grow up.

2.5 THERAPY PROGRAMS IN REHABILITATION SCHOOLS

There are a number of counseling techniques and theories that can be applied in the rehabilitation schools by the counsellors. According to Bohn (1997) the techniques and modalities that are used

in correctional facilities across America ordinarily reflect orientation of the treatment on the training of the staff, counselors, social workers, psychologists and psychiatrists but the difference is usual drawn between individual counseling and group counselling.

Bohm explains further how the techniques may overlap where you find that some techniques can be applied in individual and group counseling since those who are involved in individual counseling may also be in group counseling and many techniques and principles used in individual counseling is more appropriate for some child offenders such as those with deep-rooted problems who require long term help and group counseling is more appropriate for those who are defensive, manipulative and prone to denying their problems. The study aims to find out how these problems are carried out and the perceptions of the child offenders towards these programs and whether they help the child offenders modify their behavior and improve inter-personal relationships upon release.

Bohm also observes that though these programs are good, they are plagued with a number of problems that hinder ability to affect rehabilitation process. He says that counseling and therapy programs operates against the harsh realities of prison environment where custody and security ordinarily take priority over rehabilitation. The study aims at exploring the experiences and views of persons who go through the system, establish how they are administered and the stakeholders involved in administering the programs and find out whether they help the offenders reform upon release to allow them fit back to the community.

2.6 EXPERIENCES AND VIEWS OF THE CHILD OFFENDERS.

Rehabilitative programs should aim at changing behavior and beliefs that attract criminal acts Laura (1998) These programs are supposed to help the individuals become responsible people in the society and should also create opportunities of being successful people in the future. The voices of those who have committed crime are often left out, studies have revealed that convicts are often not fond of rehabilitation or treatment efforts within the correctional environment especially in the context of programs that emphasize personal risk or psychological perspectives (Ward and Maruna, 2007:15). A number of people who are or were in prison have expressed positive attitudes towards treatment strategies that focused on self-change, empowerment and desistance (M. Kay Harris, 2005 as cited in Ward and Maruna 2007;15-16)

The study aims to give the child offenders a chance to give their views about what they feel towards the rehabilitation programs and what changes they would propose since they are the ones who are most affected so as to create the most appropriate treatment services which will be more consistent with the specific rehabilitation needs of child offenders since nothing can be successful without their input and co-operation.

2.7 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW.

A number of studies have been carried out concerning rehabilitation programs and where they are making any impact on the children who are in the correctional institutions in America, Europe Far East and Africa. The studies both in America and even in Africa have shown that there still much that need to be done since in America it is indicated that the programs at times does not work there are more cases of recidivism. Literature that have been reviewed in Africa indicates that some offenders are not able to fit back in the community after they are released from the institutions since the community is not well prepared to receive them back. Though some studies have indicated that in some instances the child offenders have cynical attitude towards the decision of being in the rehabilitation school and considered it as a punishment, further research will be carried out in order to establish how the perceive the rehabilitation programs and what impact it has on their lives and how on their opinion they would like to see things done since what happens in childhood and adolescence has greater impact of the well-being in adult life and their voices will have a greater impact on the effectiveness of the rehabilitation programs. Therefore, this research study will explore on the perceptions of child offenders towards rehabilitation programs and explain why children should be given an opportunity to express their feelings and give their views under any given situation.

2.8 THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

2.8.1 INTRODUCTION

In the field of psychology there are a number of theories that explain how early childhood experiences and family background can affect the child's behavior and how irrational way of thinking affect the behavior of an individual and it is from these theories that an understanding will be developed about children in conflict with the law on specific phenomena in their daily lives within the institution.

The study will apply psychoanalytic theory by Sigmund Freud to be able to understand childhood experiences, cognitive therapy by Jean Piaget which focuses on person's train of thought and identifies problematic pattern of negative thinking and cognitive restructuring to change the way individual interprets thoughts and situations. The study will also apply Richard Gregory constructivist theory of perception which explains that humans are meaning makers in their lives and essentially construct their own realities. The researcher will also apply Narrative therapy and techniques so as to help the clients identify their values and skills associated with them.

These theories will be analyzed, supported and criticized to show how they contribute to perceptions of child offenders towards rehabilitation programs and how they can help in behavior modification during rehabilitation process.

2.8.2 PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY (SIGMUND FREUD 1856-1939)

According to Freud individual bury certain thoughts, feelings and behaviors in the unconscious mind and this is where certain problems come from. Freud states that whatever happened during one's childhood is connected to one's present actions since present is shaped by the past where This helps the client tap into their unconscious mind to recover repressed emotions and deep seated sometimes forgotten experiences and by gaining a better understanding of their subconscious mind, clients acquire insight into what is happening inside them that form their thoughts and behaviors and this also enables the clients to work towards changing irrational way of thinking and behaviors that are destructive.

2.8.3 COGNITIVE THERAPY (1936-1950) BY JEAN PIAGET.

This theory focuses on a person's way of thinking and it points out problematic irrational thoughts and also identify ways of changing how individuals perceive things and situations. The theory apply way that are designed to change the irrational thought patterns portrayed by those who have committed crime. According to (Walter 1990) (Lipsey and Cullen, 2007:302) individuals with dysfunctional thinking patterns exhibit characteristics like poor relationships, feel entitled to most things, justify their actions even when they are not right and put blame on others as well as unrealistic expectations among others. Through this theory people are helped to become aware of the effects of negative thoughts and how they can affect their feeling and behaviors negatively. According to Wolfe, 2007: 66 cognitive therapy help individuals in identifying the negative thoughts that bring about negative emotions which increase inappropriate behavior.

2.8.4 RICHARD GREGORY CONSTRUCTIVIST THEORY OF PERCEPTION (1970).

According to this theory perception is assumed to be a very active way of producing stimuli from what we think and that it is influenced by various individual factors that can contribute to poor interpretation (Ely, Senck, Keane, 2008,74). The theory also states that individuals without being aware combine information to form perception. According to Richard Gregory what happened in ones' past life and the knowledge acquired in ones' past are important factors in making sense of the world around us. He adds that perception assist in making right guesses in what we see based on what is most likely to be. The theory will help the children who have committed crime gain more knowledge by thinking about new experiences and comparing them with the old experiences.

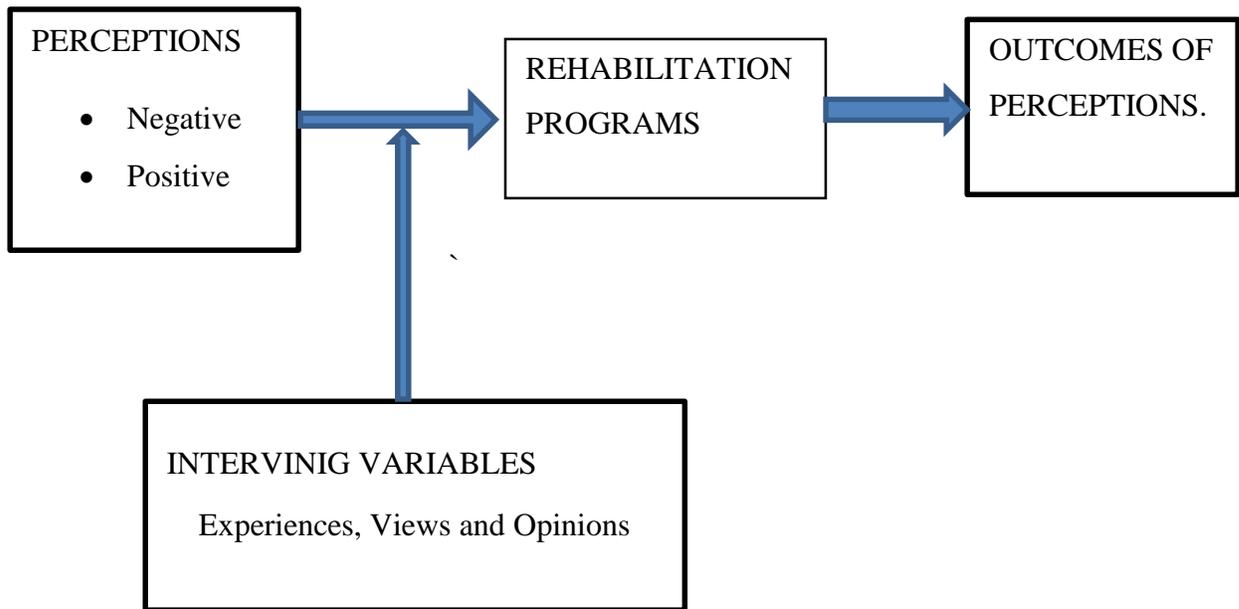
2.8.5 NARRATIVE THERAPY (1980s by Michael White & David Epsom)

This is a type of psychotherapy which seeks to assist clients identify their worth and the skills they have. The therapy gives the client knowledge of what they are able to do and their values and therefore they are able to face current and future life challenges. It also aims at separating individuals from challenges that they are facing allowing them share their issues so as to get assistance rather than keeping them to themselves and end up getting hurt internally. Use of this therapy will help the researcher assist the child offenders see themselves as people who did wrong rather than people who are "bad" always. The researcher will use narrative techniques such as flashback, backstory, repetitive designation, multiperspectivity and this will enable her treat the child offenders as individuals like any other normal being. The researcher will view the child offenders as complete individuals who think positively and who behave appropriately as they would wish. Since individuals are the only ones who understand their lives and they are the experts in their own lives they are able to change their behavior and handle their issues using the skills and knowledge that they have (Morgan 2000). Michael White and David Epsom quoted that the "problem is the problem, the person is not the problem", they also proposed that subscribing to harmful or dangerous self-identity could have serious negative effects on a person's day to day undertakings. The researcher will apply the technique of telling one's story to allow the client find their voice and tell their story in their own words, this will help in making meaning and finding purpose in one's own experience (Standish, 2013). The researcher will also use externalization technique to help the client view their problems as external but not unchangeable part of themselves. Deconstruction technique will be used to help the client to be more specific about their

problem rather than overgeneralizing situations. This technique is a great way of assisting the client learn about the problem, understand the roots of the stressful event or pattern in their life. The researcher will also use unique outcome techniques which will be done by focusing on other stories instead of holding to the origin of the problems.

Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework

Perceptions may either be positive or negative, positive perception will lead to appropriate rehabilitation programs and the child offender will be happy and the outcome of perception will be positive behavior change. Negative perception will lead to inappropriate rehabilitation programs which will leave the child offender unhappy thus negative behavior change.



CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

3.1 INTRODUCTION.

This chapter explains how the researcher will carry out the study and the methods that will be used. It is divided into the following sections: study site, design of the study, research variables, population of the study, size of the sample and the way it will be computed, tools for collecting data, collection, managing and analyzing of data and ethical considerations of the study

3.2 STUDY SITE.

The study will be conducted at Kirigiti Rehabilitation school Kiambu County, Kenya. I chose Kirigiti Rehabilitation school for this study because it is the only reception and rehabilitation center for girls in Kenya and therefore I will be able to gather firsthand information and from different parts of Kenya.

3.3 STUDY DESIGN.

This will be a qualitative study that will employ narrative research design. Though some of the data such as sample population, response rate and respondents' background information were analyzed quantitatively. Scheduled interviews were conducted in collecting information and this will allow the researcher to listen and understand the experiences, views and opinions of child offenders and staff members. This will also allow the researcher to understand the perceptions of child offenders towards the existing rehabilitation programs.

3.4 STUDY VARIABLES.

The study variables in this case include the perceptions since they are the psychological aspects of my target population rehabilitation programs, the experiences, views and opinions and the rehabilitation programs since they are the determining factor of the perceptions. If the rehabilitation programs are appropriately put in place and they are favorable the child offenders will have negative perceptions.

3.5 STUDY POPULATION

The study population comprised of all the children in Kirigiti girls' rehabilitation school aged 14-17 years, the institution manager, academic teachers, vocational trainers, counsellor and religious leader.

3.6 SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Sampling – It is the procedure of gathering people or things to study which is done by a researcher. (Kombo and Tromp,)

A sample – According to researcher Best and Kahn, 2007 a sample is a finite part of a statistical population where properties are studied to gain information. It is a small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis (Best and Kahn, 2007).

The researcher employed convenience sampling technique; this is because the participants were easily accessible. They included the child offenders in Kirigiti rehabilitation school, the manager, academic teachers, vocational, trainers, welfare staffs and spiritual leader in Kirigiti Rehabilitation school Kiambu County, Kenya.

The researcher also used purposive sampling to enable her get in-depth and detailed information from the participants about the phenomenon under investigation. This was done by selecting participants who only fit in the research study and they included; child offenders aged 14-17 years and who have been in the institution for two years and over, the manager and the staff members as the key informants since they are well equipped with relevant information based on the purpose of the study.

I also used stratified sampling technique to classify the respondents into various categories of participation in the study. The child offenders were grouped according to their reasons for committal to the rehabilitation school which were either children with conflict with the law and children in need of care and protection. The staff members were selected depending on their responsibilities in the institution and they included the manager who is the head of the institution, welfare staffs, academic teachers, vocational trainer and a spiritual leader. The total population expected was 50.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

The researcher used a number of methods as recommended in narrative research design (Lieblich, Mashiach, Tuval & Zilber, 1998) these methods included interviews, audio recording and focus group discussion this was in line with (Joss Elson, 1996; Polanyi, 1989) who state that some researchers employ sociolinguistic analytic tools to analyze collected data such as field notes or interviews.

Appropriate instruments were prepared so as to ensure good results from the findings and make proper recommendations for the study and therefore a pilot study was carried out before the main study so as to make modifications in items where need be.

The researcher prepared open-ended interview questions for the child offenders concerning their past life experiences, their expectations and experiences in the rehabilitation school based on the literature review. The questions were based on their views and opinions concerning existing rehabilitation programs. Another set of questions was prepared for the staff who work closely with the child offenders based on the children's behaviors, their views and opinions towards rehabilitation programs. The respondents were allowed to share their stories through focus group discussion as the researcher also observed their behaviors during the discussions, audio clips were recorded and saved for data presentation. The two tools were preferred because they gave the researcher in-depth information for implementation and gave further guidance for other researchers.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

The first step was carried out which involved organizing and interrogating data in ways that allowed me to see patterns, come up with explanations and interpretation of the data (Hatch (2000)

This involved transcribing tapes in order to produce accurate record of everything that was said during the interviews and focus group discussions, hand written notes and records were also combined and produced a preliminary record of each sessions taking note of big ideas, important themes which rose during the interviews. Themes were described individually and all the findings were linked with the objectives and research questions. The findings were categorized and arranged in order of importance. The data was later edited so as to remove any extraneous details and to ensure that interviews were reflected in a fair, balanced and accurate way. I ensured that

participants identities were concealed as she select and edit actual quotations from the interviews to illustrate emerging themes.

The information collected from the interviews and focus group discussions was analyzed qualitatively and partly quantitatively. I used narrative analysis method to analyze the data collected from the interview transcripts and focus group discussions. I also transcribed the audio clips and read through make notes from the discussions I reread the transcript multiple times in search for common themes and related characteristics (Merriam 2009), answers were analyzed, a framework was developed by coding and identifying data that could help answer the research questions by highlighting repeated words and phrases to show their importance. This method was appropriate because of flexibility in data interpretation. Through use of narrative therapy (1980s by Michael White & David Epson) I used techniques such as flashback and flash-forward, I was able to show how the events that happened in the past or those that will happen in the future will influence the characters in the present day of the story timeline. Other techniques that I used include backstory which helped the respondents to reflect on what happens before the main body of the story which is being told and it also gave context of what happens in the present time. So as to identify the most important information, I used repeated references technique. Use of multiperspectivity helped me to show different characters' viewpoints from the narratives and the technique of story within a story helped me to create 'mini stories' within the main narrative.

3.9 VALIDITY OF THE STUDY

Validity in qualitative research is defined as the appropriateness of the tools used in the study, the processes used in data collection and the accuracy and truthfulness of the research findings which can be used to inform meaningful decisions (Creswell, Jw (2013). Qualitative inquiry and research design). To achieve validity in my study I used the institution head and staff members as the key informants. Secondly I selected a good sample who participated in the study I gave them a brief description of what the study is about and what was expected from them and the child offenders who are under their care. I also ensured that ethical considerations such as fairness, confidentiality were putting place. I employed the strategy of triangulation where I used several methods of data collection which included focus group discussion, audio recordings using the same interview guide questions which helped me get the research results from different angles. I will collect data through

a combination of interviews, observations and artifact analysis and check on the response from the participants during the interview against what she will observe in a field visit and from artifacts and see whether it is relevant to the phenomenon under investigation. The researcher shall acknowledge the existence of different experiences, views and opinions as well as their perceptions towards rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti. The researcher shall convey participant viewpoints in a transparent and accurate manner. The researcher will emphasize on inquiry audit by seeking information from knowledgeable persons as a measure of enhancing dependability. The researcher will use triangulation which will involve use of multiple methods in data collection and data analysis which will include interviews, focus group discussion and narrative analysis so as to develop a comprehensive understanding of a phenomena or the study under investigation. Research questions will be addressed using multiple datasets, methods, theories and by allowing participants in the research to assist with relevant and useful information which will help in answering the research questions. This strategy will help in improving the validity and reliability of the study where data collection and data analysis will be done simultaneously so as to gather more reliable and valid data this will also help to strengthen the study.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher informed the management about the research in good time by presenting a consent letter from the Department of children services and an authorization letter from The University of Nairobi, department of psychology before conducting the interviews. The researcher also informed the manager about data collection procedure to enable the participants understand what is expected from them.

High level of confidentiality was maintained and information collected was used for study purposes.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter will include data analysis, data presentation and the interpretation of the findings on the perceptions of 14-17 year-old children towards rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti Rehabilitation School Kiambu, Kenya. The researcher will describe the data analysis which will describe the themes individually and how they overlap. The researcher will also link the findings with the objectives and research questions which include existing rehabilitation programs, perceptions towards the rehabilitation programs and the outcomes of perceptions. The researcher conducted the study through interviews and focus group discussions of seven (7) persons at each discussion and the data collected was presented in form of a narrative. These findings will help the researcher to achieve a clear understanding of the problem of the study in a more complex way rather than generalizing the outcomes of the research.

4.1.1 RESPONSE RATE

The targeted sample size was 50 respondents who were easily accessible since they were in the same institution which led the researcher to use convenience sampling technique. The researcher selected all the participants who fit in the research study using purposive sampling who gave in-depth and detailed information without being coaxed to do so. These respondents included children in conflict with the law and children under care and protection in Kirigiti Rehabilitation School. The study also includes key informants who were two welfare staffs, two academic staff, two vocational trainers, security officer, religious leader and a counsellor which gave a total of 50 respondents. 30 children participated in the study and nine (9) key informants which gave a total 39 respondents at the rate of 78% which gave me enough information for my research objectives and I was able to answer my research questions.

Table 4.1 Sample population and response rate

Category	Target	Response rate	Rate of response in %
Children in conflict with the law	20	14	70
Children under care and protection	20	16	80
Staff (Key informant)	10	9	90
Total	50	39	78

The above table indicate that 65% out of the targeted 20 children in conflict with the law due to reduced number of children being committed in the rehabilitation school for the last one year due to covid 19 Pandemic. However, the key informants were available for the study a part from one vocational trainer who was on leave and therefore the response rate was at 90% which helped the researcher gather helpful information which will help in answering the research questions.

4.2 Respondents background information

The section will present the information of the participants which will include their age and their gender.

Table 4.2.1a Respondents age.

Age	Staff	Children
10-14years	-	14
15-17years	-	16
20-24 years	-	-
25-29years	-	-
30-34years	1	-
35-39 years	4	-
40-44 years	2	-
45-49 years	1	-
Above 50 years	1	-

The above table present the different ages of the children and the staff where children in the rehabilitation school is between 12- 17 years. The staff members composed of middle aged and there are no elderly staff in the institution as the findings indicate that only one respondent who was above 50 years since a number of them retired during the Covid 19 pandemic.

4.2. Gender of Respondents

The data collection was done through interviews, the researcher recorded more female respondents since the institution was a girl's rehabilitation school and few male staffs were also part of the respondents.

Table 4.2.1b GENDER OF RESPONDENTS

	Frequency	percent	cumulative percent
Female	33	85%	85%
Male	6	15%	15%
Total	39	100%	100%

4.2 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

4.3. THEMES DISCUSSED DURING INTERVIEWS & FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

4.3.1 Existing Rehabilitation Programs.

The existing rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti rehabilitation school according to the participants include;

- Vocational training such as dressmaking, mat making, hairdressing, mechanic, wiring and bakery.
- Academic training where they offer education for classes six to class eight and register the pupils for Kenya Certificate of primary Education.
- Guidance and counselling.
- Life skills such as farming and poultry rearing.
- Spiritual training.
- Games and sports.
- Music and drama.

The concerned staff indicated some reluctance on the learners who are no longer interested in studies as one of them stated;

“Some of these girls are never interested in learning, they already gave up in life”

This seemed not to worry the staff so much because as she explained how the girls were not able to continue with their education in the “normal” schools and therefore this is not the place which will make them learn. This was one indication of the reasons why other programs are introduced in the rehabilitation school as one of the respondent stated;

“I enjoy being in the workshop than being in class”

Another respondent said:

“It is fun making mats than being in class all day long”

The statements helped me understand that there are those girls who prefer vocational courses over education, however most of the respondents indicated interest in both educational and vocational programs and therefore there are specific days for vocational course and academic days so as to balance both programs.

These programs are carried out from nine o’clock in the morning to twelve noon which most of the children a lot of dissatisfaction and one of them said;

“I don’t like the way our lessons start at nine and end at noon we would like to be treated like other children out there”

These findings may help them eliminate negative perceptions towards the programs, embrace them and results of modified behavior will be experienced.

The researcher also learnt from the findings that there are other programs that are carried out of the institution which include mechanic, electricity installation which seemed to excite them so much as one of the respondent stated:

“I really miss Mondays and Fridays when we go for training with other learners”

Though they also indicated that they would appreciate if the programs are introduced in the institution rather than being transported to Kabete Rehabilitation School for training.

HOME AWAY FROM HOME.

The theme explains what the key informants had to say about the child offenders, the rehabilitation programs and their benefits to the children and also the duration allocated to the children when they are committed in the rehabilitation school.

These programs seem to be of great help to the children as one of the respondent stated...

“Some girls here excel in education and become very important people in the community”.

The respondent also added that the girls use the skills acquired to start small businesses and earn their living through that.

Another respondent also added that ...

” most of the girls modify their behavior which is the main reason why they came to the rehabilitation programs.”

The children felt that these programs will give them job opportunities when they leave the institution and they believe that their future can be brighter if they make use of the skills that they acquire from the institution.

Previous research which was carried out on rehabilitates who graduated from the rehabilitation school indicated that those who advanced or those who acquired skills from the rehabilitation school programs are doing very well in life and therefore the children felt that there are many benefits from these program. There are also those respondents who felt that if they were at home they not have gotten a chance to learn the skills and to continue with education because of the unconducive environment back at home and therefore they felt that the programs are of great benefit to them just as Siegel and Sienna (1997 rehabilitation programs should meet the adolescent’s individual needs. One of respondent said.....

“if I were at home, I would be married to someone and not in school as I am today, am just happy with the institution and the programs offered”.

Some key informants highlighted that the rehabilitation programs create self-awareness to the girls, enable them face day to day life activities, the girls are empowered, filled with hope and obtain growth and development of the mind through therapy programs offered in the rehabilitation school.

One of the respondent also said.....Therapeutic programs offered help children to change, this is done either through group or individual therapy, where the therapist plays as a role model and allow children to challenge themselves, figure out issues they have gone through and help them overcome them through counselling.”

The findings also indicated that some children have gone through trauma and rehabilitation programs help them recover gradually. It is also indicated in the findings that some of these children have no spiritual knowledge and through spiritual teachings they have gained knowledge which help them in behavior modification as one of the key informant stated.....

“The programs assist in behavior modification of the child offender and help in eliminating the vicious cycle of recidivism and skills on how to make it in the society”.

This indicated that the children are also prepared through the programs to go back to the community and fit in well since they will have changed their bad behavior which brought them to the rehabilitation school. The findings also indicated that through these programs the children become self-reliant.

Another key informant had this to say.....

“Idle mind is the devil’s workshop and therefore these programs help the children to be busy not to think evil things that may lead them to problematic behavior.” She continued to say that counseling enables the children to open up on their issues thus enhancing healing from their past experiences pains that they went through since this may affect their perceptions towards rehabilitation programs negatively”

As Theorist Richard Gregory (1970) stated that past knowledge and experiences are very important factors when making sense of the world around us and therefore if the children are not assisted to deal with their past, negative outcome of their perceptions towards rehabilitation

programs will be experienced. Other benefits that were mentioned by the respondent include 4-k-club which gives the children an opportunity to practice life skills, bakery which will enable the children earn a living.

The respondents also indicated that through these programs leadership skills are enhanced on the children so as to become good leaders of tomorrow and not to see themselves as failures due to past mistakes.

Most of the children indicated that they do not have friends and this was all to do with trust issues but through these programs they interact socially and they are able to build trust towards each other and make friends which is also a benefit to them to grow health socially.

There is this key informant who stated that

“These children have got great talents and through the rehabilitation programs they are able to bring out the hidden talents and demonstrate them to their peers and staff as well, which help in building self-esteem in the children”. He continued to say that.... “Through games and sports the children are able to keep fit and healthy both physically and mentally”.

One of the respondents said.....

“Now that we have a trainer who can train plumbing course, I think it should be introduced to the children”

Though some of the respondents seemed not to know about the existence of the vocational trainer in plumbing, the course may be of great help to the children.

Another respondent said.....

“Ooh sometimes these children seem not to understand anything in class, I think there should be a change on programs that are offered to the children depending on what they can understand since there are those who can read and write while others cannot but are good in mat making and beadwork and therefore they should be put in classes where they fit well.”

Findings also indicated that some girls dislike counseling sessions especially when done by one person for a long period as one respondent stated and therefore they would recommend exchange programs to help the child offenders get appropriate assistance and change the negative attitude

towards counseling, they also indicated the need to have counsellors with appropriate skills to deliver well to the child offenders and bring about positive changes in their lives.

Effects of past life experiences was reflected as one of the respondents indicated by saying

“Past experience of the children have negative impact on their perceptions towards rehabilitation programs since some of them are labelled as prisoners and therefore they are not ready to accept change but to finish their ‘jail term’ and go back home”.

Another respondent said.....

” There are those children who enjoy vocational courses and they do them with a lot of passion which leave them with no idle moments to misbehave and this brings a positive behavior change among the children who are committed in the rehabilitation school.”

Findings also shows that there are those children who believe that their parents abandoned them and they are being punished for their past mistakes as one of the respondents explained and this has a negative effect on behavior change due to the negative perception that they have towards being in the rehabilitation school and therefore everything that is done in the institution is perceived as a punishment. From the findings there are those children who perceive the rehabilitation programs with negativity due to lack of self-awareness which blinds them but with time, therapy sessions help them to heal and perceive the programs with positivity which helps them change their negative behaviors to better ones as described by one of the respondents.

Another respondent said.....

“There are those who do not accept the situation of being in the institution and they end up escaping from the institution since there is no proper fence, she added that some children join the institution with negative attitude towards some programs especially formal education, some are deep rooted in drugs, others have short concentration span while others have never been in school”

All these factors indicated that the child offender perceives the rehabilitation programs with negativity and therefore negative outcomes towards the effectiveness of the program is also expected.

One of the respondents further described how some of these children were used to life without parental control and this brings a challenge in adapting to the rehabilitation programs.

The findings indicated that child offenders are committed to the rehabilitation school for a period of one to three years. Different views and opinions were given by the key informant where one of them stated that.....

“The period is too long and it does not help as some of the girls acquire more bad behavior from their peers and some go home worse than they came”

Another respondent stated that the period is not enough since behavior change is a continuous process, he added that the period is adequate for those who wish to change.

This was an indication that there is less effort put to help the children to change their behavior by their caregivers but they are left to make their decision on whether to change or not. This also portrayed a don't care attitude from these particular staffs which may have negative impact on the perceptions of these children towards rehabilitation programs and therefore negative outcome on behavior change is expected. One of the key informant described his opinion by saying that....

“The child can be able to join high school after KCPE” while another respondent felt that the period is enough so that the children can re-unite with their families.

There are also those who felt that the period should be based on the programs being offered while there is one who said.....

“The period allocated to the child offender is too much since some waste their years in a rehabilitation school but they don't change”

There was a clear indication that most of the key informant were for the opinion of the period being long while others have a negative attitude towards change of behavior of the children which would affect their perceptions negatively and thus negative outcome in behavior change.

Different views came from the key informants about how children perceive the rehabilitation programs where most of them stated that of the children perceive the programs positively but some of them have negative attitude towards the programs as one of them stated...

“Some of the skills offered to these children can be helpful but some take the programs as a punishment especially when they are engaged in farming.”

Another one added that.....

“These children perceive the programs differently and therefore some benefit from them and become better people in the future while others tend to camouflage their behaviors and leave the rehabilitation school the same way they came”

The key informants kept on mentioning about how some of the children embrace the programs while others don't and this was a clear indication that not all who perceive positively and not all who negatively and this is just normal with human beings where not everybody will like it but at least there is hope of some of the children changing their bad behaviors to better ones through the help of the rehabilitation programs offered in the institution.

Most of the respondent felt that these programs are very helpful to the children as one stated....

“Formal education empower the children to continue with education and join secondary school while vocational training equips the children with skills which they practice after being reintegrated back to the community and earn a living from those skills”

The respondent also added that guidance and counseling improve their moral values and eliminate the poor values they have acquired from home or within the institution.

The respondent continued to describe how some of the children who have undergone through the programs build their self-esteem and they are able to move on with life after their period of being in the rehabilitation is over. This was a clear indication of how the theories employed in the study can be helpful during the counselling sessions so that the children can identify their values and skills that will help them confront current and future problems through narrative therapy.

There is also this respondent who did not hesitate to say.....

“Some of these children take the rehabilitation programs as a way of passing time, others take them as a punishment and few take them with seriousness and gain helpful skills”

I believe nothing can be hundred percent good and therefore the responses that I got from the respondents were normal and they indicated a lot of genuineness in their responses which helped me get appropriate answers to my study. Through these programs the key informants reported that there are those children who are drug addicts and they stopped after going through the programs and they are able to share with their fellow pupils how drugs can be harmful to their health. They also mentioned how some children have been able to identify their talents and all that they need is motivation and proper guidance from their caregivers.

Apart from those who perceive the programs positively there are those who take as if they are jailed as one of the key informant explained which is an indication of desire for freedom from the children which may affect their perceptions towards the rehabilitation programs negatively and therefore negative behavior change will be experienced among the children in the rehabilitation school while there are those who are always complaining and insinuating others to escape from the institution which they end up doing and go back to the society with same behaviors which had brought them to the rehabilitation school which is a threat to the society.

Another respondent added that.....

“Children have positive perceptions on vocational training but less co-operative in counseling especially when they have many sessions.”

From the responses it is clear that the children need to be aware about the programs when they join the rehabilitation and be educated on the importance of the programs since there are those who lack the knowledge of how important the programs can be in their future life. There was an indication of lack of satisfaction on how and who does counselling to children calling for proper supervision. A number of the key informants felt that the rehabilitation programs do not fully prepare the children for reintegration with the family because....as one of the respondent shared....

“The underlying issues back at home are never dealt with as the child is being rehabilitated”

Another respondent added.....

“As the children are being rehabilitated the parents and the community are never involved hence the efforts go to waste.”

There is also this key informant who felt that since the children get back to the same environment where their perpetrators are and no follow-up programs chances of re-offending are very high.

However most of the key informants felt that the rehabilitation programs prepare the child fully for reintegration with the family and the community if the right skills are appropriately administered to the child by well skilled staff.

The goal of rehabilitation is to ensure that by the end of the rehabilitation process the child is fully rehabilitated and have changed their behavior and that they are able to re-unite with their families again, (Laura 1998) stated that rehabilitation programs should promote personal responsibility and provide real opportunities to the offenders so as to succeed in legitimate occupations and this was reflected as one of the respondent said.....

“The rehabilitation programs give the child skills and attitude to confront the challenges of the world outside the rehabilitation school”

The results also indicated that the rehabilitation programs prepare the child for reintegration to some extent as one of the respondent said.....

“To some extent if the child is fully supervised by a responsible person after release the chances of recidivism are very minimal”

The findings also indicated that through therapy programs the children are prepared to accept themselves and their families, forgive one another through spiritual teachings and are able to face life challenges. It was from the findings that I found out that the children are gifted with tool kits as they are released to go and continue practicing the skills and earn a living as one of the respondent stated.....

“Some children get tool kits which help them to settle back at home, feel loved and supported while others get sponsor for secondary education”

when these children are supported their perceptions are positive towards the rehabilitation programs and there is positive outcome in behavior change setting no threats to the community due to child crime cases in the future which advances to adult crime.

HOME EXPERIENCES vs INSTITUTION EXPERIENCES.

After the interviews were carried out and audio recording done as the children shared their views and opinions towards rehabilitation programs most of them expressed positive attitude and positive feelings towards the programs as they shared their past and present experiences and how beneficial the programs are to them as a seventeen years old girl described how she came to the rehabilitation school where some children treated her with cruelty and remembering how the parents disowned her at home because of her bad behavior she felt so bad.

Most of the respondents shared their home experiences freely and explained how they are different from the experiences in the rehabilitation as one stated.....

“I have seen many changes, I have met counsellors, at home I was stubborn but in Kirigiti I have changed and I like the experiences”

There is this one who just commented...

“East or West home is Best”

This is an indication that there are those who are not comfortable being in the rehabilitation school.

Another respondent described about her experiences and said.....

“The friends at home get pregnant, my life was at risk when I was at home, there is peace here and at least I can learn without my parents struggling to pay school fees”

This was a response that I got from several respondents and among them positive behavior change is expected because of their positive attitude towards the programs.

Another respondent stated

“When I was at home I was so rude to my parents, I used to feel like am the head and I was very stubborn but I have really changed since I came to Kirigiti Rehabilitation school than the way I was at home”

This clearly show that most of these children feel that the programs are helpful to them and therefore their perceptions towards the programs are positive which may yield positive behavior change amongst them. There are also those children who expressed the need to be given a chance to see their parent which may also help them change their negative attitude and accept positive behavior change instilled through rehabilitation programs as one of them stated.....

“Experiences za hapa ni bad coz me siwaoni paro wangu hata family na nime wahata mbaya san, siwezi linganisha huku na home so kwangu ni poa kwa mkurugenzi angetupea leave kiasi ata Kama ni siku tatu tucheki familia nyumbani, pia huku nikupoa juu na learn na ninaendelea kuchapa mbuku, nimekaa far kwa mbogi mbaya so niko fiti, I hope nita go high school nipruvie mukuro wangu nimechange”

Interpretation...the experiences here are not good because am not allowed to see my parents and my family and I have missed them so much, I would request the manager to grant a leave even if it will be for three days we check on our families back at home. This place is good because I can learn and am away from the bad company of friends, so am okay. It is my hope that I will go to high school I prove to my mother that I have changed.

Just to mention from the above excerpt I realized that some respondents were still “high” on drugs that they had abused before they were committed to the rehabilitation school but still there is hope in them since they can still mention a number of benefits from the rehabilitation programs and this will help them change their bad behaviors to better ones.

Findings also indicate that experiences at home can contribute to positive perceptions towards the rehabilitation programs as one girl narrated how she wouldn’t like to go back home but to remain in the rehabilitation school and she explains.....

“My mother disowned me, she sent me away from home, I went to stay with my grandmother but my mother started talking ill things to my grandmother and accused us of being wizards, she went to the police station and reported where I was later taken to a remand home, I spent one and half years in remand and later I was brought to Kirigiti Rehabilitation school. All

what I can say is that I should not be taken back home, I want to stay here because I never used to go to school at home, I never used to get food and I was sleeping in the bushes due to mistreatment I used to get from my mother”

With such children they really embrace the programs with a lot of passion, they benefit from them and become important people in the future.

One girl described how the staff welcomed her, showed love to her and she eliminated the suicidal thoughts she had developed. She had this to say as I recorded.....

“Mimi nilikuwa mbaya sana, nilikuwa mwizi sugu, I was a thief from home and even after being taken to remand home I could not change, but through counseling in the rehabilitation school I have really changed I stopped stealing and even if I see someone money I can never steal. I am happy I also got a chance to go back to school, I would prefer to stay here until I finish my education”

from the respondent she stated how her father disowned her in the court and she look forward to that day that her father will forgive her and accept her back home. This indicated the need to create time and encourage parents and relatives to have time to reconcile before the child is repatriated back home. She stated that she is not happy about tribalism within the institution and she went ahead giving example with staffs who favour children from their community which may affect her perceptions towards the programs negatively.

Another child described how she is happy being in the rehabilitation school since at home she could not get food, and she had escaped from home and she was sleeping in the bushes since the mother was mistreating her and now at the rehabilitation school she has some where to sleep and she has a chance of learning though she appeared nervous since she is still new in the institution and therefore she did not have much to say on the programs she kept saying...

“Napenda kila kitu hapa”.

Which means that she loves everything about the institution which was an indication that her perception towards the programs in the rehabilitation school is positive and therefore positive behavior change will be experienced.

One of the respondent stated.....

” I would love our school to be like those other schools but I know it cannot happen because we are told by the teachers that this not a school but a prison ”

This may have a negative effect towards the perception of these children towards the rehabilitation programs since they have that mentality of a prison and not a school and therefore they may take everything as a punishment of previous mistakes that they did.

Past experiences seem to play a great role in the behavior change among these children as one stated....

“What I went through being the firstborn of our home, my dad mistreating my mother, so many problems at home of sleeping hungry, I had lost hope in life but one counsellor really helped me change and encouraged me never to lose hope”.

Some of these children seem to have come from unsafe or poor surroundings which led to their bad behavior as one stated.....

“I love the peace in this place because there was no peace at home and fight could occur any time”.

Another respondent had a complain about time allocated for the programs and she said....

“I would like to have more time for studies and not being locked up at 6. 00p.m to be able to revise for the exam since this place is peaceful”.

Most of the children indicated the lack of basic needs which mostly was food back at home but now they enjoy having a chance to have food on daily basis. This was a clear indication that with proper feeding the programs can be carried out well with positive attitude which will yield positive behavior change and reduce cases of escapees which will affect the community negatively due to cases of child crime which also affect the country’s economy negatively as well.

From the findings the respondents are not happy with the little time that is allocated for the programs as one stated

“Sipendi vile classes huisha saa Saba”

Meaning that the respondent doesn't like the way the academic classes end at 1pm

academic programs are usually run from nine in the morning to one o'clock and these children would like to have afternoon classes. This is an indication that there are those who only lacked the chance at home and therefore if they are given enough time they can excel in their education which will also bring about positive behavior change among those children who are committed in the rehabilitation school.

Another respondent stated that the environment of the rehabilitation school is safe because her friends at home got pregnant but for her she is continuing with education and her life is not at risk.

As the previous respondents also stated the issue of safety at home is mentioned severally and they find peace and safety in the rehabilitation school where they are able to learn as they are well protected which is an indication that the environment at home is not conducive for the children and that could have been the main cause why they are committed in the rehabilitation school for care and protection and not criminal offences as it is the case with some of the respondent who stated that.....

“ I used to steal even from my neighbours, I could go buy goodies to my schoolmate and the last one I stole from my mother, run away from Siaya to Mombasa where I was rescued by a Simba couch employee, I was taken to the police station where I lied that am an orphan, they asked for a phone number from even a friend and upon giving them the friend revealed to them that I have parents, they contacted my mother who disowned me and asked for her Chama money which I stole from her but later I was taken to remand home where I continued with my stealing habit but when I was committed to Kirigiti Rehabilitation School I can say that I have really changed due to the love that is shown to me by the staff and counselling which helped to have hope in life which I had lost.”

From the above respondent it is clear that the programs are beneficial to the children and especially when they perceive them with a positive mind and this brings positive behavior change among these children

Several respondents seem not to like the time allocated for them to be in dormitory where they are locked in at 6 p.m. which makes them feel like they are being punished and denied time to read or do preps at night as they would prefer since some of them are preparing for Kenya certificate of primary Education.

Depending on how they were brought up back at home, there are those who complained of being overworked with cleaning and clearing the compound as one of the respondent said....

“I don't like fetching firewood and cleaning every day, I like the way home you do what you feel like”

While there are those who enjoy doing their morning duties of cleaning and other activities as directed by the staff on duty and some see this as an opportunity to learn life skills which will help them in the future as one of the respondent stated.....

“I don't like seeing my friends doing nothing, I don't like it when my friends disobey the teachers”

This implies that there are those who have been changed by the programs and there are those who are yet to change or they might not change depending on how and who is offering the programs since some of the respondents were bitter about some sentiments from their caretakers who tell them.....

“You don't belong to this place but you are supposed to be at Lang'ata women's prison”

This may have a negative impact on the perception of these children towards the rehabilitation programs which will also result to negative behavior outcome among them, while others end up escaping from the institution and nobody can tell what they become since there are no follow-ups that are made as one of the key informant stated how they just fill in escapee's form once the child

escape. This may have negative effects even to the society outside since child crime will be on the rise and the same child will outgrow and become adult criminals which is a threat to the society at large.

One of the respondent stated how happy she is with vocational course and she was very specific as she described.....

“I am happy about the program I am doing here, like I thank you UNDOC for the program they made for us like mechanic, wiring, dressmaking and hairdressing, they make me feel happy”

This brought to my attention that the girls are usually transported to Kabete Rehabilitation school where mechanic and wiring courses are available, usually on Mondays and Fridays and they indicated an interest if the courses were made available for them in Kirigiti Rehabilitation school rather than going all the way to Kabete though they had no complain but just a recommendation which would be good for them.

One of the girls stated that.....

“Experiences at home are different from the experiences of Kirigiti Rehabilitation school, counselling has helped me, though we don’t have our parents here, I may say that if I was at home I would have gotten married, pregnant or killed because of my stealing habit and so I can say that Kirigiti has helped me so much.”

DESIRE FOR FREEDOM.

The issue of safety comes in again and it is a clear indication that as per the children’s Act (2010) these children are committed in the rehabilitation school for care and protection these programs seen to fit in well on these children since they seem to have gone through traumatic events which need to be handled well by skilled staff to be delivered appropriately to the child for positive impact and positive outcome in behavior. From the findings, the first day in the rehabilitation can have a positive or negative implication the child as one of them narrated about her first day in the institution and said.....

“The day was not good at all because my fellow pupils were canned by the teachers because they sang a bad song and so I was so shocked to see that...mmh sasa nilifikiria huku watu huchapwa hivyo and I had plans of running away the first week though the story was different, this place is good since I got a chance going back to school which I had sworn to my mother that I will never go back to school. There is enough shelter and food.”

This also brings in the availability of basic needs which most of the children seem to have lacked at home and they are all happy about it. On the experiences at home and the experiences at home and the experiences at Kirigiti as one of the respondent mentioned about mobile phone which she was used to and now she has no access to phone every time and she stated.....

“Experiences are good because I was used to having mobile phone and wasting a lot of time calling my friends but now I don't do that since I do not have the mobile phone”

This could have contributed to her problematic behavior at home which led to bad company through mobile phone communications, dropped out of school but she indicates that now she has changed and enjoy the rehabilitation programs very much since the skills that she will acquire will help her prosper in future.

NOT A HOME AWAY FROM HOME.

This theme explains what the children feel about being in the rehabilitation school and what they gain from the rehabilitation programs offered to them. Human beings need basic needs to survive which include food, shelter and clothing. Most of the respondents kept on repeating about how they are happy because they can have food everyday as one them narrated

“I used to sleep in the bushes without food since my mother sent me away from home but now I have somewhere to sleep and food to eat”

Her story was related to other several respondents who stated the same and therefore they like the place. It was a clear indication that if these children are well fed and taken good care of, they will embrace other rehabilitation programs which will bring about a positive behavior change among the children which is an advantage to the entire society.

One of the respondent said.....

“I like education and the vocational courses offered to us because they will help us one day”

This was a good indication that the perception of most of the children towards rehabilitation programs is positive and therefore the outcome is expected to be positive too. From the respondents they have no complain towards their caregivers as one stated.....

“I like the way teachers and my fellow pupils treat people, there is enough food, free education, water and when you are sick you see the school nurse,”

she added.....

“I like the course I am taking; I love Kirigiti so much because I know it will change my life”

Most of the respondents talked of vocational courses being the best and therefore there is need to improve on how they are offered since they seem to be beneficial to them.

Another respondent described how she grew up without having friends at home because the mother denied her that chance and she explains how she like being in Kirigiti because.....

“I like the way am treated here, I feel so good, I like spending time with other children because we share stories which help me to know how to live with others”

This was a clear indication that they also help each other socially as they grow and through the programs especially group therapy sessions as they share their feelings and experiences and if it is carried out by well skilled counsellors.

PRESENT IS SHAPED BY THE PAST (Sigmund Freud 1856-1939)

The findings indicated that from the past experiences of the child some of them are traumatized, others live with untold fears and therefore their perceptions towards the rehabilitation programs is negatively affected though the respondent said that with time proper counselling is done, they are able to recover and perceive the programs with positivity which brings about positive behavior change on the child offenders.

Findings from one of the respondent indicated that if the rehabilitation programs are effectively administered, the children's perceptions towards them would be positive and they will help them in their well-being, their families and the community at large.

Another respondent said.....

“Past experiences affect child offender because some them come to the rehabilitation school when they have already lost hope in life and have a negative mindset towards the programs”.

The respondent recommended frequent assessment of the existing rehabilitation programs so as to ensure that they are relevant with the modern days.

There are few respondents who due to their upbringing don't like any duty, for example one of them said.....

“I don't like fetching firewood, mopping every day and sweeping the compound because at home I was free”

There are those who hate being in the institution because they miss their family members as one of them explained and she looked traumatized , through use of psychoanalytic theory by Sigmund Freud I was able to understand as the researcher that current actions can be connected to early childhood experiences as most these children are from broken families and therefore they were

experiencing fights every now and then while they were at home and so they imagine death might occur any time at home as one narrated painfully.....

“I don’t like the way they don’t give people a chance to see their family members at home even if they die”

When children have such feelings they will have poor perceptions towards the rehabilitation programs and this may result to negative behavior change among such children.

Another respondent described how some staff discourage them and she stated.....

“I don’t like to be told by the teachers that, I don’t fit here but am supposed to be at Lang’ata women’s prison”

this may bring about negative perceptions among the children towards rehabilitation programs since they feel like they are in wrong place.

Most of the respondents kept on repeating this.....

“I don’t like being accused of something I did not do”

While another one added.....

“I don’t like being punished without any case”

This was a clear indication that some of the children have a negative perception toward rehabilitation programs because they feel like they were wrongly accused or they are being punished for something they did not do and therefore negative outcome on behavior change might be experienced among such children.

OUTCOMES OF PERCEPTIONS

One of the respondent explained how positive outcomes influence the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs by saying.....

“The child become self-reliant after the period of being in the rehabilitation school is over, she is capable of advancing in education and they are able to improve their self –esteem through counselling and life management skills, the programs also keep the child engaged throughout the day hence reduce boredom and negative thoughts”

Findings also indicate that those with positive perceptions towards rehabilitation programs heal from the past experiences and they embrace the programs which help them modify their behavior for better

Another respondent said.....

“With a positive perception some children change for good in terms of behavior and some realize the mistakes they did and try to overcome those issues such as drug abuse and bad influences from friends”

It was clear from the findings that positive outcomes of child offenders’ perceptions influence the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs positively as most of the key informants described.....

“Some come to the institution with their culture and beliefs which hinder them from perceiving the rehabilitation programs with a positive attitude and therefore influence the effectiveness of these programs negatively resulting to inappropriate behavior”

There was also a clear indication from the findings that negative attitude discourages the children in the rehabilitation school from participating in the programs and influence others and this affect the effectiveness of the rehabilitation programs negatively.

There is also this respondent who explained how cases of recidivism occur after release making the efforts put on rehabilitating the child through the programs ineffective and said....

“You find that a child was committed to the rehabilitation school while she was 15 years and was allocated a duration of 3 years, by the time she will be released she will not be able to continue with secondary school because her age mates will have completed secondary education and all what they do is to go back to the streets and become adult criminals which pose a great danger to her family and the community at large.”

This was clearly indicated in the conceptual framework where negative perceptions due to inappropriate rehabilitation programs result to negative behavior change among children in the rehabilitation school.

REFLEXIVITY

I have worked in the Department of children for a number of years but I have never taken my time to listen to the views and opinions of the children in the Rehabilitation schools and their feelings towards rehabilitation programs offered in the institutions. The research study gave me a great chance to interview the children and listen to their voices which in one way or another will help the children and the staff working under them change their negative attitudes towards the programs, improve on the way they offer the programs to the children so that they can be put in place appropriately, help the child offenders have positive behavior change and live a happy life while in the institution and in the community after release.

Children are important being and considering that the child offenders in Kirigiti Rehabilitation school are teenagers they need to be understood, listened to and their views and opinions put into consideration bearing in mind that there are challenges that affect adolescents major ones being identity crisis and role confusion just to mention a few though this is not what has been going on in Kirigiti rehabilitation school and it is my wish that the staff and not only from Kirigiti rehabilitation be informed of how they should deal with teenagers so as not to harm them as they are growing. Based on the findings counselling is one of the major program that would work best on these children since some of them are still traumatized because of what they went through, some of them are still bitter with their relatives and they have the perception that their families are high-risk places where they are most likely to experience violence, neglect, poverty and substance abuse and therefore counselling will help them heal and change their negative thoughts.

Currently there is an ongoing program of implementing care reform and I felt the need of allowing the children to participate in giving their views and opinions towards the changes that are about to take place since they will be affected directly and this will help in the effective planning and implementation of the program. I would also recommend for staff trainings and community sensitization so that they can change their perception that children in the justice system are all 'criminals' and live in the institutions because they need to be punished.

I also realized that in the institution there are children with special needs such low IQ level and others are living with HIV/AIDS and therefore special attention need to be given to such children and they should be listened to so as to put into consideration their views and opinions. From my findings I realized that there are no follow-up programs once the children are released and therefore the Government and other stakeholders need to facilitate follow-up programs since these children need monitoring and support even after they have been repatriated back to the community and their families so that they are able to cope with the challenges and various situations in the outside world and be able to practice the skilled acquired during the rehabilitation process. I felt the need for parental sensitization in the churches, schools and in community gatherings so as to promote positive forms of parenting and to eliminate beliefs that institutions are the best option for children living in families of irresponsible and harmful parenting practices since these children expressed the need of being with their relatives were it not for the circumstances that led to their arrest.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1 INTRODUCTION.

The main aim of this study is to explore on the perceptions of 14-17 years old child offenders towards Rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti Rehabilitation School, Kiambu County, Kenya. The chapter will have the summary of the research findings, conclusions and recommendation which will be based on the study objectives.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS.

Rehabilitation programs should promote personal responsibility and provide real opportunities to the offenders so as to succeed in legitimate occupations (Laura 1998). It was proven that from the conceptual framework negative perceptions due to painful past experiences affect rehabilitation programs negatively which leads to inappropriate rehabilitation programs leaving the child unhappy thus negative behavior change. This was clearly indicated from the research findings that I got from the responses both from the key informants and the child offenders during the interview.

I was able to understand as the researcher that current actions can be connected to early childhood experiences. Through the application of psychoanalytic theory by Sigmund Freud, an understanding was developed about children's childhood experiences and how they affect their perceptions. Cognitive therapy by Jean Piaget helped me to understand why some of the children had very negative responses towards the rehabilitation programs which was due to problematic pattern of negative thinking which indicated the need for counselling to these children so that they can be helped to restructure their way of thinking, how they interpret thoughts and situations so that the rehabilitation programs may have a positive impact on behavior change on them.

Use of Richard Gregory Constructivist theory of perception (1970) helped me as the researcher in understanding better how the children's perception originates from them and not from their care takers where they may decide to make positive meaning about the programs offered and benefit from them in future.

Through narrative therapy techniques I was able to help the participants identify their values, improve their self-esteem and identify useful skills that will help them in the future and they are also able to effectively confront current and future problems.

Based on the findings the researcher concluded that:

The existing rehabilitation programs which include vocational training, academic training, guidance and counseling, spiritual nourishment, mat making, sports and games, life skills among others are beneficial to the children who have been committed to the rehabilitation school. This was indicated by both the children and the key informants during the interviews and focus group discussions. Children should be given a chance to express themselves and also time to see their relatives and especially when they are about to be repatriated back to their families to enable them reconcile and strengthen the bond between the children and their family members and this will enhance positive perceptions towards rehabilitation programs. From the general observation the environmental conditions seemed to be favourable for positive behavior change though there is a major concern about shortage of staff and therefore the children felt the need for more staff to attend to their needs and this may help them to change their mindset of feeling left out when they compare themselves with other 'normal' schools. Also time allocated for their programs especially academic and vocational is a major concern and therefore there is need for review where some of the respondents proposed to do studies from morning up to evening like other schools and not from 9 am to 12.30 pm as it is now and this may have a positive impact to the perceptions of the child offenders towards the rehabilitation programs which will lead to positive outcome in behavior change among the child offenders.

Children plays a big role in their perception towards rehabilitation programs whereby you find that in case the child suffered negatively during childhood they tend to perceive any act, may it be good or bad as a punishment and this affects the effectiveness of the rehabilitation programs negatively. On the other hand, if the past experiences were good the child can easily modify bad behavior which may be as a result of peer influence and poor surroundings and perceive the rehabilitation programs positively which will contribute to effectiveness of these programs and be beneficial to the children in future. From the findings the children really appreciate being in the rehabilitation since they get a chance of leaning, get basic needs such food as most of the respondents stated in the findings.

The findings from most if not all of the participants indicted that the rehabilitation programs benefit the children in many ways just to mention a few;

- Improve self-awareness through guidance and counseling.
- Change their attitude towards formal education which had been affected negatively as one respondent stated how she told her mother that education is a ‘no’ and some advance to secondary school.
- Technical skills equip the children with knowledge which enable them to become independent after they are repatriated back to the community.
- Spirituality improve their morals and attitude towards God as one of the respondent stated....

“I had never touched a Bible with my hands before, but now I can even read it”

There is a big indication that both the staff and child offenders perceive the programs with positivity and therefore the programs are carried out well and there is positive outcome from the children which is positive behavior change.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

Laura (1998) stated that effective rehabilitative programs are those that focus on changing behavior and beliefs conducive to crime as earlier stated, Siegel and Sienna (1997) added that these programs should meet the adolescent’s individual needs. There is a clear indication from the research findings that the existing rehabilitation programs offered in Kirigiti Rehabilitation school meet the above requirement and this would boost the perception of the child offender’s positively towards positive behavior change. Well skilled and staff with a good desire to deliver to the children can also help in improving the effectiveness of the programs which will yield good behavior within the institution and even outside the institution which will help in the growth of the economy free from child crime.

Past experiences also play a great role in molding the character of the child offender and helping them change their negative thoughts towards the programs so that they may have a positive impact in their lives.

Motivation is also a key thing that can help the children embrace the programs and for the one who feel like it is a punishment will see the need to perform the programs with a positive attitude so that they can acquire skills that will be helpful to them in future, Use of proper skills in counselling should be encouraged and proper supervision should also be carried out to ensure that the skills used should aim at separating the individuals from the problem, allow them to externalize their issues and not internalize them so as not to harm self and bring about negative attitude which might affect the children's perceptions towards rehabilitation programs.

Girls are more likely to internalize symptoms in the form of withdrawal, anxiety and depression and therefore competence staff is also a key requirement when dealing with them (Baldry 2007).

Research has revealed that children need to be listened to with seriousness and they also feel that they should be involved in coming up with solutions to the problem and this will help them cope with the current situation they are in and if they are not listened to they feel rejected, unwanted and term themselves as disadvantaged as stated by (Mullender et al. J 2002) from the findings it was clear that the children like the rehabilitation programs in place though they sighted a number of views and opinions to make the programs more helpful to them.

In conclusion for the programs to yield positive outcomes of appropriate behavior among the children they should be performed with effectiveness by the right skilled personnel.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations were based on the findings and the conclusion of this study.

a) Children who are committed in the rehabilitation schools should be given proper orientation on admission so that they can be aware of what goes on in the rehabilitation school, the kind of staff who will be taking care of them and the programs that are available as well as the rules and regulations they are expected to follow.

b). Adolescents should be educated on life skills so as to help them understand the importance of education and the benefits of appropriate behavior.

- c) Conducive environment through proper fencing and renovation of old structures within the institution will improve on the perceptions of the children towards the rehabilitation programs offered.
- d) Government to employ more academic and vocational staff to be able to help the children who seem to be so much interested in learning.
- e). Communication should be enhanced between the staff and parents through open day programs so as to encourage the adolescents bond newly with their relatives, reconcile with the relatives whom they feel that they wronged and prepare them psychologically for their repatriation long before they join their families after their time of being in the rehabilitation elapses.
- f). The manager and all the staff who take care of these children should work towards creating a good, caring and supportive atmosphere for the children.
- g). The institution management and the support staff should play a role of encouraging the child offenders to attend counselling sessions since they seem to have a negative feeling towards counselling so as to be able to modify their behaviors, change negative perceptions towards rehabilitation programs, and embrace them so that they can make use of the skills acquired in future.
- h). There is also a great need for staff motivation so that they can help the children without limitation or any complain for better outcomes.
- i). The children should be given a chance to either be in vocational programs or educational programs and should not be coaxed to do what they are not comfortable with since this is one major cause of escaping from the institution as the findings indicated.

5.5 SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

I made the following recommendations for further studies based on the findings of the study

1. Perceptions of boy child towards rehabilitation programs since the study was only conducted on girls.
2. Influence of past experiences on child crime.

3. Staff competence level in the rehabilitation schools in Kenya.
4. Cases of re-offending among child offenders in rehabilitation schools in Kenya.
5. Effects of mother- girl child relationship on behavior.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 WORK PLAN.

WORK PLAN

TASK	START DATE	END DATE	DAY TO COMPLETE
Preparation of Consent Paper	Mar-1	Mar-15	15
Writing of Draft Proposal	Mar-21	May-2	43
Literature Remarks	Mar-3	May-30	26
Methodology	May-31	June-14	15
Presentation and Collection of Research	June-15	June-07	22
Proposal Document			
Data Collection	Aug-02	Aug-16	14
Data Analysis	Aug-22	Sep-17	27
Submission of the Report	Sep-15	Sep-15	1
Presentation of Report Findings	Sep-22	Sep-22	1

APPENDIX 2: BUDGET

ITEM	QTY	COST PER ITEM	TOTAL CASH COST	NOTES
Preparation of Consent Paper	1	1,500.00	1,500.00	Not to the children's department to acquire the letter
Site Visit	15	1,000.00	15,000.00	Transport by public means
Lunch	15	500.00	7,500.00	Buy foods from the hotel available in the area
Note Books	50 pcs	100.00	5,000.00	Notebooks for writing the narratives
Interview Guide Questionnaires	50 pcs	50.00	2,500.00	For answering the questions
Pens	50 pcs	30.00	1,500.00	This will be used in writing
Smart Phone	1 pc	25,000.00	25,000.00	To be used in recordings
Laptop	1 pc	45,000.00	45,000.00	For typing and saving my project
Transcription Service Provider	50	150.00	7,500.00	Quotes from transcription service
Miscellaneous Expenses			31,500.00	Other additional costs
Total			150,000.00	

APPENDIX 3: INTRODUCTION LETTER.

Esther Ngima Ngunyi,

P.O BOX 1013

Murang'a, Kenya

2nd august 2022

To the Respondents.

My name is Ngunyi Esther Ngima. I am a master of counselling Psychology Student in the Department of Psychology at the University of Nairobi. The purpose of this interview guide is to collect information on the perception of child offenders towards rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti Rehabilitation School, Kiambu County, Kenya. You have been selected as respondents in this study and therefore I request you to give me some of your time to ask questions on this area. Kindly note that your honesty in your response is very important in understanding the perceptions of the child offenders within the institution. The information that I will collect from you will be treated with confidentiality and I will keep your identify anonymous therefore your name will not be revealed during and after the interview.

Thank you.

Ngunyi Esther Ngima

STUDY INSTRUMENTS

APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE STAFF MEMBERS

1. What are the existing rehabilitation programs?
2. Do you think these programs benefit the children?
3. In what ways do these programs benefit the children?
4. What is your experience on children towards rehabilitation programs?
5. Tell me about the period child offenders are committed to the rehabilitation school.
6. What is your opinion on the period allocated to the child offender to rehabilitate?
7. How do you think the past experiences affect the perception of child offenders towards rehabilitation programs?
8. What are your views on the perceptions of children towards rehabilitation programs?
9. In your opinion do you think the rehabilitation programs prepare the child fully for reintegration with the family and the community?
10. In your opinion, do you think positive or negative outcomes of child offenders' perceptions influence the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs?

Thank you for your co-operation

APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW QUESTION GUIDE FOR THE CHILDREN

1. What is your name?
2. how old are you?
3. When did you come to Kirigiti Rehabilitation school?
4. Tell me about the day came.
5. What do you like in Kirigiti rehabilitation school?
6. What don't you like in Kirigiti Rehabilitation School?
7. Do you have any friends?
8. Tell me about your daily programs?
9. What do you like about the programs?
10. How are the experiences at home different from the experiences at Kirigiti Rehabilitation School?

Thank you for your co-operation

APPENDIX 6: LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION FROM THE DEPARTMENT



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Telegrams: Varsity Nairobi
Telephone: 318262 ext.28439/28194
Telex: 22095

P.O. BOX 30197
NAIROBI
KENYA
EAST AFRICA

July 13th, 2022

The Chief Executive Officer
National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation
P. O. Box 30623-00100
Nairobi

Dear Sir/Madam:

RE: INTRODUCTION- NGUNYI ESTHER NGIMA (C50/39321/2021)

The above mentioned is a student in the Department of Psychology pursuing a Master in Counseling Psychology. She has completed the coursework and defended her research proposal.

This letter therefore is to introduce her to you to enable her to collect data on "TO EXPLORE ON PERCEPTIONS OF 14-17 YEAR OLD CHILDREN TOWARDS REHABILITATION PROGRAMS IN KIRIGITI REHABILITATION SCHOOLS KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA."

Your support is highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charles Kimamo'.

Dr. Charles Kimamo
Chairman,
Department of Psychology



APPENDIX 7: CONSENT LETTER FOR INTERVIEWING THE MINORS.

I Ngunyi Esther Ngima, a student at the University of Nairobi pursuing a Master in Counselling Psychology would like to carry out a study on the perceptions of child offenders toward rehabilitation programs in Kirigiti Rehabilitation School, I am requesting for permission to interview you and do some recordings.

I am aware of the following contractual terms.

1. That the information shared will be treated with honesty and confidentiality.
2. That the data collected will be for the purpose of the study.
3. That the interview will involve electronic recording.

Signature of the participant:(guardian)

Signature of the researcher:

THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013

The Grant of Research Licenses is Guided by the Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014

CONDITIONS

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period
2. The License any rights thereunder are non-transferable
3. The Licensee shall inform the relevant County Director of Education, County Commissioner and County Governor before commencement of the research
4. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies
5. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials
6. NACOSTI may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project
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National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabata,
P. O. Box 30623, 00100 Nairobi, KENYA
Land line: 020 4007000, 020 2241349, 020 3310571, 020 8001077
Mobile: 0713 788 787 / 0735 404 245
E-mail: dg@nacosti.go.ke / registry@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke