

**ANALYSIS OF THE FACTORS LEADING TO JUVENILE DELINQUENCY:  
THE CASE OF MURANG'A CHILDREN'S REMAND HOME. //**

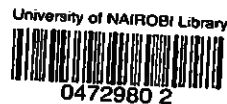
**BY**

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**A Research Project submitted in partial fulfillment of a Post Graduate Diploma in  
Project Planning and Management of the University of Nairobi.**

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**DECLARATION**


I declare that this is my own original work and to my knowledge it has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

Name: Sitati Lenah Nanjala

Signature:  .....

This research project report has been submitted with my approval as the University Supervisor.

Name: Dr. Christopher Mwangi Gakuu

Signature:  26/9/08 .....

## **DEDICATION**

**I dedicate this research project to all the children in the world. Children are tyrants; they contradict parents and gobble their food.**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I would like to take this opportunity to express my heart felt and sincere gratitude to all those individuals who made it possible to realize this report.

In particular, I would like to thank the Almighty God for the gift of life which enabled me to carry out the whole research project.

I also feel greatly honored for the support and guidance I received from my supervisor, Dr. Christopher Mwangi Gakuu during the whole research period.

I also extend my gratitude to my parents for the education they have provided me throughout my lifetime.

Finally, I would like to thank the manager of Murang'a Children's Remand Home for ensuring that I received the necessary support and facilitation during the collection and collation of the information contained in this research project.

## **ABSTRACT**

The general aim of this study was to analyze the various factors leading to juvenile delinquency among children in Murang'a Children's Remand Home. In addition, the study sought to assess the various offences committed by children in the same institution. The study also aimed at establishing some of the coping mechanisms devised by juvenile delinquents in the remand home. It also gave various recommendations to policy makers on factors attributed to juvenile delinquency.

The study applied both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. Standardized questionnaires were used, in-depth interviews were employed as well as observations were made. Secondary data was accessed through various journals and children's personal files.

Poverty, lack of access to education and breakdown of family structure were some of the leading factors in juvenile delinquency. Further more, the study found out that some of the offences committed by the children included truancy, vandalism, burglary as well as sexual offences. Some of the coping mechanism devised included stealing from neighbors, begging on the streets for food and clothing as well as doing odd jobs to earn a living.

The study provides some especially important information to policy makers regarding the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency. Parents ought to exercise strict parental care to children who are more likely to engage in delinquent acts. There is also need to improve institution-community linkages to sensitize all for change of attitude. There is also need for the government to train more workers on ways of dealing with juvenile delinquents as well as build more welfare homes for those children in need of care and protection.

Finally, there is need to achieve the set Millennium Development Goals to help curb some of the problems brought about by juvenile delinquency.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Declaration.....	i
Dedication .....	ii
Acknowledgement .....	iii
Abstract .....	iv
Table of contents.....	v
List of tables.....	vii
List of figures.....	viii
List of appendices.....	ix
Abbreviations .....	x

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

1.0 Background Information.....	1
1.1 Background to the Research Problem.....	3
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	4
1.3 Research Objectives.....	4
1.4 Research Questions.....	5
1.5 Justification of the study.....	5
1.6 Scope and Limitation.....	6

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

2.0 Introduction.....	7
2.1 Factors leading to juvenile delinquency.....	17
2.2 Offences committed by juvenile delinquents.....	23
2.3 Coping mechanisms devised by juvenile delinquents.....	26
2.4 Theoretical Framework.....	27
2.5 Conceptual Framework.....	37

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

3.0 Introduction.....	38
3.1 Research Design.....	38
3.2 Sample Frame and Sampling Procedure.....	39
3.3 Site Description.....	40
3.4 Sample Size.....	40
3.5 Methods of Data Collection.....	40
3.6 Methods of Data Analysis.....	40
3.7 Limitations and Problems Encountered.....	41

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

4.0 Introduction.....	42
4.1 Frequency Distribution by Age.....	42
4.2 Frequency Distribution by Gender.....	43
4.3 Frequency Distribution by who they live with.....	44
4.4 Frequency Distribution by Food Provision.....	45
4.5 Frequency Distribution by Delinquent Acts.....	47

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.0 Introduction.....	49
5.1 Conclusion.....	51
5.2 Recommendations.....	53
5.3 Suggestion for further research.....	54
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>55</b>



**List of Tables**

**Table 1.....Frequency Distribution by Age**  
**Table 2..... Frequency Distribution by Gender**  
**Table 3..... Frequency Distribution by Who they live with**  
**Table 4.....Frequency Distribution by Provision of food**  
**Table 5.....Frequency Distribution by Delinquent Acts**

**List of Figures**

- Figure 1.....Pie Chart showing frequency distribution by age
- Figure 2.....Bar Graph showing frequency distribution by Gender
- Figure 3.....Bar Graph showing frequency distribution by who they live with
- Figure 4.....Bar Graph showing frequency distribution by food provision
- Figure five.....Bar Graph showing frequency distribution of Delinquent Acts.

**List of Appendices**

**Appendix 1.....Semi- Structured Questionnaire**

**Appendix 2.....Interview Questions**

**List of Abbreviations**

AIDS.....Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

GOK.....Government of Kenya

MDG's.....Millennium Development Goals

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Background Information**

The Juvenile Justice system in Kenya dates back to the colonial government. However, the current system has evolved over time and a number of organizations and government organs have been involved in the whole system. These organs include the Police Department, the Judicial, Probation Department, Prisons Department and Department of Children's Services. Others include the Provincial Administration and Local communities.

Kenya's economy since the mid 1970's has had an adverse effect on marginalized groups of people especially women and children. The legacy of extreme poverty, combined with entrenched corruption particularly in relation to the police system has had a devastating impact on children caught up in the juvenile system.

Despite the existence of the legal framework comprising of the Children Act and the Convention on the Rights of Children which stipulate how to handle and deal with child offenders, the police and other law enforcement officers are guilty of violating the rights of children in Kenya.

The project looks at the Department of Children Services which runs twenty three children institutions established under the Children Act 2001. These institutions are categorized into three; the Children's Remand Homes formerly known as the Juvenile

Remand Homes established under section 50 of the Children's Act, the Rehabilitation Schools formerly known as the Approved Schools established under section 47 of the Children's Act and Children's Homes and Charitable Institutions established under section 58 of the Children's Act.

The Children Remand Homes are established to provide safe custody to children whose cases are still pending in court and offer representation of the subjects in court. The Rehabilitation Schools provide accommodation and facilitates for the care and protection of children. The schools also help in rehabilitating children and reintegrating them back to society for fully functional living. Children Homes and other charitable institutions on the other hand provide for care and protection of abandoned, neglected and other vulnerable children.

Although all these institutions were designed to cater for children in conflict with the law, the aggravating socio-economic status of the country has seen the institutions open doors to a majority of welfare cases; orphaned, abandoned, abused and other destitute children. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children has also for a long time aroused massive interest in children under the juvenile justice system. Local and foreign institutions have also come in partnership for the best interest of children in conflict with the law.

## **1.1 Background to the Research Problem**

The Kenyan government has not evolved any eligible strategy to tackle the problems faced by juvenile delinquents. Arresting and charging children with vagrancy, loitering and related misdemeanors has been the order of the day for a long time. Children involved with the juvenile justice system are incapacitated and neglected. Many children continue to suffer monstrous violation of their rights without effective legal redress. The court environment is often hostile and makes it particularly difficult for sexually abused children.

Measures taken against juvenile offenders continue to lay emphasis on punishment instead of correction and rehabilitation. Most studies show that the children who undergo the process do not deserve to be exposed to the criminal judicial system. Some are erroneously categorized as offenders. Little is also done to separate children on basis of their offences.

There is neither a special selection nor training on how to handle juveniles worsened by the states inability to provide legal presentation for deserving children. Children sometime spend inordinately long periods in Remand Homes. There is thus a general over reliance on institutional care even for children who are none and minor offenders.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Much has been documented about statutory children institutions over the years. It is regrettable however, that the resultant findings and recommendations are hardly ever implemented. Findings and recommendations from the researches undertaken hardly ever inform policy formulation, decision making and institutional restructuring. There is thus a clearly evident regrettable missing link between research and practice.

The need for this research therefore rose from the realization of the necessity to collect, collate and organize key research findings in a readily useable and appropriate format for the wide variety of professionals interested in the subject area. It is targeted at people working within Children Remand Homes who could utilize the strengths and limitations of various approaches to improve practice and increase effectiveness. Policy makers will find the information a useful reference tool in deliberating best practice in the light of developing national guidelines. Lastly, the research is undoubtedly a valuable resource for scholars and other researchers who would add to rather than merely duplicate the efforts made.

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

The specific objectives of the study include;

1. To determine the various factors that lead to juvenile delinquency in Murang'a Children's Remand Home.
2. To asses the various offences committed by children in Murang'a Children's Remand Home.



3. To establish some of the coping mechanisms devised by juvenile delinquents in Murang'a Children's Remand Home.
4. To give recommendations to policy makers on factors attributed to juvenile delinquency.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

Some of the questions the study will attempt to answer include;

1. What factors influence juvenile delinquency at Murang'a Children's Remand Home?
2. What offences are committed by children found in Murang'a Children's Remand Home?
3. What are some of the coping mechanisms devised by the juvenile delinquents in Murang'a Children's Remand Home?
4. To what extent has the rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents been achieved in Murang'a Children's Remand Home?

#### **1.5 Justification of the Study**

This study seeks to find out the means of reforming child offenders and determines whether or not Children Remand Homes are effective in rehabilitating young offenders. The study seeks to find the relationship that exists between re-socialization and effective rehabilitation of young offenders.

This study will thus assist staff working in the Remand Homes to better understand the underlying strengths and limitations in Remand Homes so as to build upon and improve practice. It will also assist the young offenders to be knowledgeable about their rights as children. For policy makers, the study will link policy decisions to key performance indicators at the implementation level. Prospective researchers will also find an identification of research gaps and study topics.

### **1.6 Scope and Limitation**

The study intends to trace as many documents as possible dating as far back to the genesis of the Department of Children Services in Kenya where possible. A semi structured questionnaire will be used to collect data from the subjects. Interviews will also be conducted to collect the required data from the subjects. The use of secondary data will also aid in providing the necessary information required in the study.

However, due to limited and poor management records in most government offices, it will be hard to trace the earliest records on establishment of children remand homes. Most children found in the remand homes stay for a while awaiting their cases in court. On completion of their cases, they leave the remand homes. This means that it is difficult to rely on one particular child to provide the required information. There is a limitation in the time available to conduct the whole research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

Distributive or social justice provides an equal share of what is valued in a society to each member of that society. This includes power, prestige and possessions. Retributive justice seeks revenge for unlawful behavior. Unlawful behaviors and crime were originally differentiated in two ways; *mala in se*, an act considered wrong in and of itself based on mores, natural law and common law and stable over time; *mala prohibita*, a prohibited wrong, originating in folkways and manmade statutory law and changeable overtime.

Within the last 10 years there has been an abundant amount of research done on the variables that cause juveniles to commit crime. Juvenile crime has been on the rise in Kenya and other developing countries within the last few years (Esbensen & Osgood, 1999, p. 2). Perkins (2001, p. 612) noted, "juvenile delinquency, defined as antisocial or criminal behavior by children and adolescents, is a widespread societal problem that is threatening the wellbeing of families and communities throughout the country". While sociologists are discussing the distinction between delinquency and deviance, psychologists, placing the accent on the person rather than the behavior, were studying the delinquent person. Traditionally psychology has tended to consider antisocial behavior as the manifestation of a profound and general problem of adaptation.

While it is acknowledged that past national statistical surveys undertaken did not collect data on children in conflict with the law, a review of the literature shows that various organizational researchers have undertaken many case studies covering juvenile delinquency

Chloe Campbell's article, *Juvenile Delinquency in Colonial Kenya, 1900-1939* (Mar., 2002), examines policy towards juvenile delinquency in colonial Kenya in the interwar period, arguing that juvenile offenders were the subject of scant official interest until the 1930s, when a series of official reports was commissioned and legislation enacted which attempted to modernize the management of juvenile offenders in keeping with current metropolitan policy.

This impulse for reform is placed in the context of colonial discourses on eugenics and the effects of urbanization and detribalization on young Africans, arguing that while key metropolitan principles about delinquency retained their influence on transferal to the colony, they were blended with a distinctive colonial rhetoric about African psychology and capacity for development.

Another study by Lillian A. Ackerman (1971) was concerned with the causes of juvenile delinquency among the Nez Perce Indians of Idaho. Marital instability is examined in the past and present for its relationship to contemporary juvenile delinquency. Additional factors considered include the loss of aboriginal communal

discipline, the loss of patrilocality, and the continuation of inappropriate aboriginal male and female roles into the present.

An article by Erdman B. Palmore and Phillip E. Hammond (1964) examined interacting factors in juvenile delinquency using Cloward and Ohlin's theory of delinquent gangs implies that delinquency rates are proportional to the product, not the sum, of positions in legitimate and illegitimate opportunity structures. This implication is illustrated with data on 319 youths from Aid to Dependent Children welfare rolls.

An article by Cauffman et al. (2004) examined the relationship between social emotional adjustment, gender, and delinquent acts among juveniles. Results show a strong relation between stress and restraint in predicting deviance, a finding that was invariant among gender. Their findings suggest that females internalize more than males, but they are as equally likely to externalize or outwardly express themselves as males. It appears from the study males tend to be less stressed out than females but do show signs of stress if involved in high rates of delinquency.

Until recently, "girls and young women have been largely overlooked in the Development of juvenile policy and programs and few resources have been directed at them" (Bloom, Owen, and Deschenes, and Rosenbaum, 2002, p.37). Recently our country has seen an increase in female juveniles committing delinquent acts. According to Bloom et al. the family is the most important risk and protective factor

for young women. Presently, many families are being separated which seems to affect females more. This report suggests that the needs of delinquent girls within the justice system are tied to specific, exclusive risk and protective factors that model gender-appropriate interventions. Also, this report suggests the need for more studies to determine what is needed to diminish delinquency by girls.

Bloom et al. explained that the office of Juvenile Justice has provided grant money towards new policies and programs for convicted juvenile females. The authors report that there is an increase in female offenders who are committing more serious crimes and there is no answer to what works for those juveniles.

Casper, Belanoff, and Offer (1996) examined the psychiatric symptoms in Adolescents. Moreover, "several studies have noted qualitative differences in the way adolescent boys and girls describe their feelings and how they act upon them" (Casper et al., p.500). Their report determined that female adolescents regardless of race reported higher levels of emotional stress.

Furthermore, females have higher levels of depression, anxiety, and mood swings than male juveniles. According to Casper et al. mood swings could be attributed to biological and psychological factors.

The next survey was by Rhodes and Fischer (1993). It looked at the relationship between gender and delinquency among inner-city adolescents involved in court

diversion programs. The investigation found a gender difference in both the referral source and behavioral patterns of the juveniles involved. Interestingly, it appears, “males were more likely to be referred to the program for violations of the law, to have been arrested, and to have engaged in aggressive offenses and selling drugs” (Rhodes, & Fischer, p. 879). In contrast females were more likely to be referred due to status crimes.

According to the authors, gang members had a large effect on the delinquent behaviors of all juveniles. Male gang members were more likely to be arrested, but female members were more likely to carry weapons (Rhodes & Fischer). Next, within the past two years males were significantly more likely than females to be arrested for delinquent acts. The research suggests that females are often dealt with more harshly than males who commit the same crimes. Also, Rhodes and Fischer suggest that males were more likely to get referred for violating the law while females got referred for truancy and runaway behaviors.

A recent article written by Giordano, Cernkovich, and Rudolph (2002) analyzed Data from the first detailed long-term follow-up of a sample of serious adolescent female delinquents and similarly situated males. Neither marital attachment nor job stability, factors associated with male desistance from delinquency, was related strongly to male or female desistance. The literature suggests that females are more strongly connected to their family than are male juveniles. The study suggests as a result of the findings it is apparent that males commit more violent delinquent acts than

females. Moreover, females “are more likely to commit delinquent acts with a mixed-gender group, while males are typically accompanied by same-gender companions (Giordano et al., p. 994). The study revealed that families’ not supervising their children was significantly related to male reports of actions involving aggressive or violent behavior while those outside the families controlled for levels of female involvement (Giordano et al.).

Numerous studies suggest an increase in psychological disturbance among youths in the justice system (Espelage et al. 2003). Researchers Espelage et al. found that not only do girl delinquents have more acute mental health problems; they also exhibit qualitatively distinct psychiatric profiles. Their research suggests the need for gender appropriate treatments but also the need for assessing the mental health symptoms of girl and boy delinquents.

“Studies have found significant levels of conduct disorder, substance abuse, depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and other mental health problems among juvenile offenders” (Espelage et al., p. 771). The research found that among males there were more drug abuse, depression, suicidal attempts, and alcohol abuse. Females had a significantly greater amount of anger, depression, and suicidal ideation than males.

Karen Wilkinson (1974) in her article *The Broken Family and Juvenile delinquency: Scientific Explanation or Ideology?* Examining the relationship between broken homes



and juvenile delinquency was widely accepted from about 1900 until 1932. Then the broken home was rejected for a period of time. In the past 20 years, there has been a revival of interest in the broken home as an important factor in predicting delinquency. More recent studies have provided contradictory evidence; some evidence supports the hypothesis, while other evidence fails to support it. It is the contention here that these periods of varying acceptance reflect changing cultural and ideological conditions rather than scientific empirical evidence. Because cultural bias seems to have been influential in affecting the acceptance of the broken home as a factor in delinquency etiology, further research is justified before either accepting or rejecting the importance of the broken home as a significant variable in delinquency theory.

Delinquency within schools, alcohol abuse, and weapons carrying has become a large issue. A study done by Matherne and Thomas (2001) examined the family environment as a predictor of juvenile delinquency. They noted, "It is estimated that in the United States, 1,234 youths run away from home and 2,255 teenagers drop out of school each day (Matherne, & Thomas, p. 655). Recent researchers have attempted to decrease delinquency and also find what factors lead adolescents toward delinquency. Research suggests that delinquency can be placed into three etiologies' positing societal, individual, and family (Matherne & Thomas). Basically, their research looked at the traditional family and non-traditional family to see what factors may cause juvenile delinquency. Results showed the frequency of delinquent acts for those children living in a non-traditional family but failed to predict criminal acts by juveniles within traditional homes. Sadly, "every five minutes a youth is arrested for

some type of violent crime, and every two hours a child is killed by a gun” (Matherne & Thomas, p. 655).

The study confirms that family involvement is a key element in the deterrence of juvenile delinquency. Their research supports the ideology that adolescents without family supervision are more likely to be engaged in criminal acts. It is reported that those children from a traditional household are less likely to be involved in school problems than those individuals from a non-traditional home. Kierkus and Baer (2002) studied the relationship between family structure and delinquent behavior. According to the article it is still unclear to how family structure affects delinquent behavior.

Furthermore, most of past studies have only looked at how family structure is related to misbehavior (Kierkus & Baer). The purpose of this study was to discover if the parental attachment component of social control could show how family structure is connected to delinquency. The research showed a significant predictor “of most self-reported delinquent behaviors at the zero order level and when age, sex, and SES are controlled” (Kierkus & Baer, p. 425).

Basically, once parental attachment is placed into the equation, delinquency is reduced especially in traditional families. They said that the social control theory may provide an answer to how family structures are linked to delinquency. Also, it appears from the study that children from non-traditional families experience lower levels of parental attachment which leads to delinquent activity (Kierkus & Baer).

Lamin Sesay (1977) in his paper "Crime and development in Africa", observes that: By itself, development seems to have nothing to do with crime. But when considered as a dynamic process of change, development and deviant behavior become inseparable. As the move away from traditional society gains momentum, the traditional institutions and way of life give way to new ideas of social organization, behavior, and authority, and many see this change as an opportunity to discard old values.

The situation is further complicated by the rapidity of change which leaves little time to adjust to development problems. Industrialization accompanied by population redistribution, dissipation of traditional forms of social control, social mobility and technological changes, and improved mass communication are some of the factors of development which tend to increase opportunities for deviant behavior. Poor housing, disorientation of family life, unemployment, rapid population growth, and special labor needs of some enterprises also are conducive to crime and delinquency.

There is a need for a determined effort to correct or remove the socio-economic imbalances that are known to be detrimental to development through systematic planning and programming. A number of theorists argue that delinquency stems from the adolescent's need for autonomy. In particular, the systematic blockage of this need in the United States is said to lead to delinquency by reducing social control and increasing the adolescent's level of frustration and anger.

Robert Agnew (1984) tested this theory by examining the effect of the need for autonomy on delinquency among a national sample of adolescent boys. Data support the theory, indicating that (1) the need for autonomy is able to explain individual and group variations in delinquency, and (2) the effect of the need for autonomy is explained largely by level of social control and frustration/anger.

John Hagan and Bill McCarthy (1992) found out that, the correlation between class and delinquency often observed in real studies and assumed in prominent sociological theories is elusive in studies of individuals commonly used to test these theories. A restricted conceptualization of class in terms of parental origins and the concentration of self-report survey designs on adolescents in school have removed from this area of research street youth who were once central to classic studies of delinquency.

They argue that street youth experience current class conditions that cause serious delinquency, and that life on the street is an important intervening variable that transmits indirect effects of control and strain theory variables, including parental class origins. Data gathered from nearly 1000 Toronto school and street youth are analyzed with important implications for the conceptualization of class and delinquency, testing and integrating sociological theories of delinquency, the measurement of delinquency, and the use of cross-sectional and longitudinal research designs. Their findings especially encourage incorporation of street-based samples into research on class-based aspects of theories of delinquency.

A more recent study by Laura V. Scaramella, et al (2002) empirically examined three theoretical approaches designed to predict risk for delinquency during adolescence: an individual difference perspective, a social interaction model, and a social contextual approach. Hypotheses derived from each perspective were tested using two independent samples of early adolescents followed over a 4-year period. Six-hundred sixty-seven children (in sixth grade at Time 1), and their parents comprised the first sample (Project Family); and 451 children (in seventh grade at Time 1), their parents, and a close-aged sibling made up the second sample (Iowa Youth and Families Project). Results from a series of structural equation models suggested that a social contextual approach provided the best fit with the data across both samples and genders.

Consistent with the social contextual approach, results indicated that a lack of nurturing and involved parenting indirectly predicted delinquency by increasing children's earlier antisocial behavior and deviant peer relationships; child antisocial behavior also predicted similar decreases in nurturing parenting over time. Both child antisocial behavior and deviant peer affiliations at Time 2 predicted delinquency one year later.

## **2.1 Factors Leading To Juvenile Delinquency**

There are several factors that have led to increased juvenile delinquency among the youth in Central Province. For the purposes of this research, these factors can be either pull factors or push factors.

### **2.1.1 Poverty**

Poverty is a state of inability to obtain a certain minimum level of consumption of food and essentially non-food items universally considered adequate to satisfy the minimum requirements for human sustenance. Poverty is not always an absolute state but can relate more generally to a situation in which the family income is not sufficient to meet outgoing and where alternative means of meeting these outgoing needs must be found.

Poverty may be a state in which a family lives with no possessions at all and cannot afford to put food on the table. It may be a temporary situation where a family has entered into debt, for example by borrowing money it cannot afford to repay, or by acquiring goods and defaulting on repayments.

Poverty has pushed most children to performing delinquent acts as a means of survival.

Overall, the people most affected by poverty are well defined by other socio-economic categories namely, the landless, pastoralists, the handicapped, female-headed households, households headed by people without formal education, unskilled casual workers, AIDS orphans, street children and beggars. The major contributing factor to the exposure of these categories of persons to poverty in Kenya is the increasing inequality in the distribution of wealth and income, poor access to economic and social goods as well as remunerative employment, inequality in the participation in social and political process and in other life choices.

Poverty has increased the number of street children who continue to devise ways of surviving in the streets. This leads to formation of small gangs among the street children leading to deviant behavior.

### **2.1.2. Lack of access to education**

In many parts of the world, children who are denied access to education( for example because of the costs involved, geographical factors or insufficient resources) or whose experience of the neighborhood school is negative(poor quality teaching, abusive or absent teachers) tend to get involved in juvenile delinquency to a large extent.

Going to school has been a major problem to most juvenile delinquents. First schooling is believed to be expensive and others lack schools in their community. Even where free education is provided, there are related costs for example clothing, books, writing materials as well as meals. All these push free education beyond financial capacity of the child's family. Lack of education therefore creates idleness among the youth who continually engage themselves in criminal activities.

### **2.1.3. Breakdown of family structure**

Family instability is the state where there is no equilibrium in a family. The indicators are quarrels, fights, violence, family murders, juvenile delinquency, separation, and divorce.

The definition of family instability is adopted from Fletcher (1952); it is evidence of moral decline in a family unit. Instability presupposes a situation where family relationships are characterized by stress and strain plus spouses quarrel regularly.

Hodges (1971) observes that family has four fundamental functions to human social life- the sexual, the economic, the reproductive and educational. He believed that without the provision for sexual and reproductive functions society would become extinct. This

shows a family as an important institution. He further goes saying that family is an institution which is universally assigned the responsibility of replenishing societal membership and placing individuals in the system of social positions.

The problem of family instability is widespread and calls for more attention than has been the case in the past. According to a study done by Groove (1941), one out of every four marriages in America ended up in divorce. This was in 1941 and 66 years later, today, family problems have not been actually solved. This problem has continued therefore continued unabated.

A study done by Clinard (1980) showed that, one out of every four marriages still in America ended up in divorce. Normally, only those problems brought before courts for legal dissolution get publicity. The majority of families Mushanga (1988) says, prefer lesser publicity and may continue having relationships problems or desert one another without involving any publicity or third party to recon ciliate. Mushanga (1988), further states that divorce in Africa is difficult to estimate because of different systems and rules regarding marriage and divorce in different countries and within one country. He continues that, if we go by official (court) records, we may end up by saying that divorce is virtually non-existence, as hardly any divorce cases reach the courts. The truth is that there is divorce and that the rates may be increasing especially among the wealthy, the educated and the urban workers. This in turn make family problems worst as they spread out among others members of the family causing problems, like juvenile delinquency, the aged being neglected, destitute, unemployment and desertion from marital homes by



spouses who cannot solve their marital problems. In other cases, spouses have committed suicide or homicide or have sought court proceedings to terminate their unhappy marriages.

There are other presenting problems like children going without food, clothes or the mother running away from matrimonial home or a father who stays away from home, while staying in an urban centre without going to see the family at all.

All these factors have led to most of the young people engaging in delinquent acts in an attempt to seek identification in society.

#### **2.1.4 Breakdown of Religion**

According to Hummulah (1987), the Muslim view is that there should either be a successful marriage or no marriage at all. By allowing divorce, Islam declares its policy that it cannot tolerate empty shell marriages which are much more harmful than divorce. However, not all partners who insist on living together are happy.

Administrators, church elders and national leaders seem to compromise to the fact that today as compared to the past, more families are under tension and stress. This has been in the attempt to assimilate changes and survive well.

Christianity on the other hand forbids divorce. Marriage is believed to be God's will and wives and husbands are to live in harmony with each other. Women are to be submissive to their husbands. However, with increased urbanization, divorce cases have been on the

rise. Children no longer identify themselves with their religion. Religion ought to teach these children what is right and wrong.

The Bible for example teaches of the Ten Commandments that everyone ought to obey. Lack of commitment in attending churches and mosques has led to increased breaking of the law among the youth. They fail to obey the laws set in the Bible as well as the Quran leading to increased delinquent acts.

### **2.1.5 Drug Abuse**

Drug abuse has been a major cause of juvenile delinquency. Not only are more youth using mood- altering substances, they are beginning to ingest them at increasingly younger ages. Youths, who persistently abuse illegal substances experience an array of problems including academic difficulties, health related problems, poor peer relationships as well as involvement in delinquent acts of behavior. Drug ingestion may also cause economic compulsive behavior, in which the drug user resorts to violence support their behavior.

Alcohol abuse has long been associated with all forms of violence. A direct alcohol-violence link may occur because drinking reduces cognitive ability, making miscommunication more likely while at the same time limiting the capacity for rational dialogue and compromise.

## **2.2 Offences Committed By Juvenile Delinquents**

Offences are based solely on the offender's age and are unique to juveniles. The age limit ranges from 16 to 19, but in most cases it is 18. Some of the offences committed by the juvenile delinquents include;

### **2.2.1 Truancy**

Truancy is the most frequent offense for those under age 15, probably because after that age those who would be truant have simply dropped out of school. When children skip school, habitually, they miss some very valuable lessons, not only academically but socially. They also tend to engage in delinquent or criminal activity while on these unsanctioned hiatuses. For this reason, truancy has been a major problem faced by most children in the remand homes.

### **2.2.2 Vandalism**

Vandalism is usually a mischievous, destructive act done to get attention, to get revenge or to vent hostility. Philip Zimbardo, a Stanford psychologist, reported in 1969 on some experiments that tested human behavior and vandalism. He arranged to have two comparable automobiles without license plates parked with their hoods up on a street in the Bronx, New York, and on a street in Palo Alto, California. The car in the Bronx was attacked by vandals within ten minutes of its abandonment. The car in Palo Alto sat untouched for more than a week. It was confirmed that most vandals were teenage children. Rowdy children sometimes send a message of personal problems by vandalism.

Destructive behavior can occur because children lack ways of communicating a need for help.

### **2.2.3 At Risk Behaviors**

Many of the child offenders are a means to identify at risk behaviors. Doyle (1996:90) defines at risk as the potential and willingness of a young person to take unnecessary risks or chances outside of socially-accepted norms and mores, for the purpose of self gratification, aggrandizement and peer acceptance. At risk behavior include incorrigibility, gang activity, drug abuse, alcoholism, suicide, promiscuity, tattooing as well as possession and use of weapons. There is also a propensity for using violence against others as a means of gaining power.

### **2.2.4 Burglary**

Common law defines burglary as the breaking and entering of a dwelling house of another with intent to commit a felony within.

Burglary is usually committed for quick financial gain, often to support a drug habit. It is the most accessible route to money for most juveniles.

### **2.2.5 Arson**

Arson, like vandalism, sends a message through a delinquent act. For many children setting fires is a symbolic act, often a symptom of underlying emotional or physical stress. Children who do not abandon normal childhood experiments with fire often are crying for help, using fire as an expression of their stress, anxiety and anger. What turns

these troubled youths into repeat fire setters is positive reinforcement for their incendiary activities. Fire setting provides a sense of power and control. Juvenile fire setters often take out their hostility on school property.

### **2.2.6 Sexual Offences**

Sexual offences may be classified as rape or prostitution. Most rape cases involve young boys while prostitution is linked to young females. The concept of rape and prostitution can be linked to the psychoanalysis theory developed by Sigmund Freud.

Sigmund Freud states that personality imbalances had their roots in abnormal emotional and mental development. A person might become fixed at a certain development stage or regress to an earlier stage. Fixation and regression arises at the phallic stage of development that is three to six years of age. Fixation and regression to this stage may result in sexual assault, rape or prostitution. It may also result in unresolved oedipal or Electra conflicts.

According to Bohm (1997:56), many criminal offenders are presumed to be psychopaths, sociopaths or antisocial; personalities and are characterized by no sense of guilt, no subjective conscience and no sense of right and wrong.

## **2.3 Coping Mechanisms Devised By Juvenile Delinquents**

There are several mechanisms devised by juvenile delinquents in an attempt to survive.

### **2.3.1 Food**

There are several coping mechanisms that juvenile delinquents employ in an attempt to get food for survival. Most of them are street children hence spend most of the time begging on the streets for food. They continually scavenge for food disturbing passer-bys. Some of them even go as far as stealing from the people they beg from. For those from poor families, there is always a tendency to beg from neighbors. There are a few cases of juvenile delinquents stealing from neighbors. Some of them go as far as doing manual jobs to earn money which they use in buying food. Food is also well provided by their parents and guardians.

### **2.3.2 Shelter**

Most juvenile delinquents rarely reside at home with their parents or guardians. They spent most of their nights sleeping on the streets. For those who operate in gangs, they continue living with their friends as they engage in criminal behavior. Juvenile delinquents tend to prefer slum dwellings where they can easily operate without getting noticed. Some of the delinquents are provided with shelter by their parents and guardians.

### **2.3.3 Clothing**

Most of the juvenile delinquents residing on the streets at times get clothes donations from well wishers. Some beg from neighbors in cases where they come from poor

families. There are a few cases where they steal on the streets from shops and from people passing by. In rare cases, some of the delinquents do manual jobs to earn money that they use in buying second hand clothes. Some of them surprisingly are provided with clothing by their parents and guardians.

#### **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

Many theories have been developed to explain why people fail to obey society's laws. During the first half of the twentieth century, several interpretations of the cause of juvenile delinquency gained prominence. The earliest theories explored biological and psychological factors. Infact, physical and psychological examinations of children who were brought before the courts were standard orders in the juvenile court process. Judicial disposition often included individual counseling and psychological therapy. In the 1950's, under the influence of therapists such as Carl Rogers, group counseling became common in most juvenile institutions.

Slowly, this approach was replaced with social milieu and environmental explanations for delinquency. Delinquency prevention attempts focused on reorganizing the social environment, both physically, through housing renewal, and socio economically, through social welfare. There was a significant philosophical shift of the blame for delinquency from personal to social factors.

There are several theories that attempt to explain the causes of juvenile delinquency. Some researchers propose biological explanations for juvenile delinquency. They find that some biological characteristics appear more frequently in criminals than in non-

criminals. In other words, they believe there are such things as criminal genes. Some of the biological theories include Physiognomy studies, Phrenology, Body type theories and Heredity Studies.

Physiognomy studies assign character traits to physical features, especially facial features. Curran and Renzetti (1994:39) note that in the Middle Ages the law specified that if “two people were suspected of having committed the same crime, the uglier one should be regarded as more likely the guilty party.” Indeed, people tend to have a mental picture of juvenile delinquency. Some researchers have pointed out that criminals tend towards large, prominent or crooked noses, abnormal ears, lantern jaws, high cheek bones, higher sex drives, lower intelligence, larger body types, longer arms, larger lips or abnormal amounts of body hair. Researchers search for predominant factors among criminals and compare these factors with their presence or absence in the general population.

Phrenology studies on the other hand study the shape of the skull to predict intelligence and character. This was the approach used by Cesare Lombroso, who believed that at birth criminals are recognizable by certain anomalies. Such anomalies do not cause crime, but they indicate a predisposition to criminal behavior.

Going beyond the study of the skull to predict predisposition to criminality, William Sheldon(1898-1977) theorized that humans can be divided into three distinct body types, or soma types, corresponding to three distinct personalities: the endomorphic-soft, fat-



easygoing, the mesomorphic-athletic, muscular, aggressive and the ectomorphic- thin, delicate-shy, introverted.

Bohm (1997:39-40) describes studies of twins and of adopted boys that tend to support a biological basis for one's predisposition to crime. More than a half a century of using this methodology reveals that identical twins are more likely to demonstrate concordance (where both twins have criminal records) than are fraternal twins. This supports the heredity link. A problem with the twins' studies however, is the potential confounding of genetic and environmental influences.

The findings from adoption studies reveal that the percentage of adopters who are criminal is greater when the biological father has a criminal record than when the adoptive father has one. Thus like the twin studies, the adoption studies presumably demonstrate the influence of heredity but cannot adequately separate it from the influences of the environment.

Causation theories indicate that chromosomal factors may be responsible for criminal behavior. Some researchers believe that nutritional factors are related to abnormal behavior. High testosterone has been associated with aggressive physical and sexual behavior. Testosterone injected into female rats causes them to adopt the male physical characteristics of aggressive physical and sexual behavior.

Some biological studies have indicated that high levels of specific chemicals in the body as well as allergic reactors, contribute to aggression and perhaps criminality. Abnormal levels of manganese, zinc, copper or chromium may cause antisocial behavior. As noted by Donohue (1995:1), "The genetics and crime issue is one very hot potato and results in a crime –causation hornet's nest". He notes, "Many scientists doubt the existence of a so-called crime gene, adding fuel to the age old nature verses nurture debate with respect to crime causation",

Exploring psychological theories of crime on the other hand has produced a number of explanations including the following;

- Criminals are morally insane; what they do criminally they do not perceive as wrong.
- Personality is developed in early childhood. Future behavior is determined in early childhood. Subsequent sociological and environmental associations do not change this early behavior development.
- Certain people have personalities so deviant that they have little or no control over their impulses.
- There are criminal families in which succeeding generations gravitate towards criminality.
- Mental and moral degeneration cause crime.

Psychological theories about crime focus on intelligence and psychoanalysis.

H.H.Goddard (1866-1957) believed that criminals are not necessarily biologically inferior, although they might be intellectually inferior. This correlation was again brought to public attention by Hernstein and Murray (1994) who used the bell-shaped normal curve from statistical studies to promote the idea that individual's intelligence falls within this curve and may also account for criminality.

The Psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud (1859-1939) is a popular explanation for human behavior. He states that personality imbalances had their roots in abnormal emotional and mental development. A person might become fixed at a certain development stage or regress to an earlier stage. Fixation and regression arises at the phallic stage of development that is three to six years of age. Fixation and regression to this stage may result in sexual assault, rape or prostitution. It may also result in unresolved oedipal or Electra conflicts. According to Bohm (1997:56), many criminal offenders are presumed to be psychopaths, sociopaths or antisocial; personalities and are characterized by no sense of guilt, no subjective conscience and no sense of right and wrong.

Critical theories also attempt to describe the causes of juvenile delinquency. These theories include labeling theory, conflict theory and radical theory. George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) in explaining the labeling theory argued that human beings act towards things on the basis of the meaning that the things have for them. The meaning of things arises out of the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. These meanings are handled in, and modified through an interpretative process people use to deal with things

they encounter. If a person commits a delinquent act and is labeled a delinquent, this may affect the person's chance to make friends or get a good job. It may also become a self-fulfilling prophecy-that is, the person may accept the label and act accordingly.

Messner and Rosenfeld(1978:45) came up with the conflict theory and argued that the amount of crime in society is a function of the extent of conflict generated by stratification, hierarchical relationships, power differentials or the ability of some groups to dominate other groups in that society. Crime, according to them is caused by relative powerlessness.

Radical criminologists explaining the Radical theory focus their attention on the social arrangements of society, especially on political and economic structures and institutions. Crime is a product of the political economy that, in capitalist societies, encourages and individualistic competition among wealthy people and among the poor people (the inter-class struggle and the practice of taking advantage of other people (exploitation).

Bilchik (1998:3) stressed that there is a clear correlation between substance abuse and other forms of delinquency. The prevalence of juvenile drug use burdens the juvenile justice system and places the future of the youth at considerable risk.

Crowe (1998:4) reports that not only are more youth using mood-altering substances, they are beginning to ingest them at increasingly younger ages. She cautions that youths who persistently abuse illegal substances experience an array of problems including

academic difficulties, health-related problems, poor peer relationships and involvement with the juvenile justice system

Sociological theories provide the best explanation on the causes of juvenile delinquency. They focus on human social structures and their relationships. People start life as members of families and later learn to live with other work and social groups. Some sociologists believe that criminals are molded by social conditions and the environment in which they develop. Not everyone has the same goals or ways to achieve them. Some people choose to reach their goals of financial success and power through illegal acts.

Sociologists believe that crime occurs due to various reasons;

- Lack of education, poverty-level income, poor housing, slum conditions and conflict within home and family.
- Continued law breaking causes an individual to become part of a sub-culture that advocates crime and violence as a way to achieve goals or solve problems. It operates outside societal rules.
- Behavior is learned. There is good and bad, right and wrong behavior. Identical behaviors affect criminals and non- criminals alike.

Sociological theories provide the best explanation on the causes of juvenile delinquency. This is because they focus on the relationship between an individual and the existing social structures. Sociological theories include ecological models, social disorganization theory, functionalism, anomie or strain theory, learning theories and social control theories.

Ecological studies the relationships between organisms and their environment. Findings from ecology were described by Robert Park et al. (1928) who compared the growth of a city and its attendant crime problems with growth in nature. The ecological model stressed that any explanation of criminal behavior cannot be taken out of its social context.

Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay (1942) explaining the social disorganization theory suggested that ecological conditions predicted delinquency and that gang membership is a normal response to social conditions. They contended that urban areas produced delinquency directly by weakening community controls and generating a sub-culture of delinquency passed on from one generation to the next.

Talcott Parsons (1902-1979) explaining functionalism described criminal behavior as an integral part of society. According to him, without crime, there would be no need for laws, lawyers, police officers, courts, judges as well as jails.

Robert Merton (1910-1938) explaining Anomie or strain theory identified two elements of the social and cultural structure which were important for explaining deviance. First and foremost are the cultural goals which are legitimate goals which members of a society wish to obtain. Secondly are the institutionalized norms which define the appropriate methods for attaining the cultural goals. Cultural goals and institutionalized norms do not hold a constant relationship to one another, rather, during certain periods one

may take precedence over the other. According to Merton therefore, a complete explanation of crime must consider the socio-cultural environments in which the people are located.

Cohen (1955) in his study found out that delinquency was caused by social and economic limitations, inadequate family support, developmental handicaps and status frustrations. The result: short-run hedonism and group autonomy.

Agnew (1992) also identified three sources of strain that lead to juvenile delinquency. Firstly, is the failure to achieve positively valued goals, secondly, is the removal of positively valued stimuli and thirdly is the presentation of negative stimuli.

Explaining the learning theory, Edwin Sutherland (1883-1950) set forth that criminal behavior is learned through imitation or modeling. Among his prepositions included;

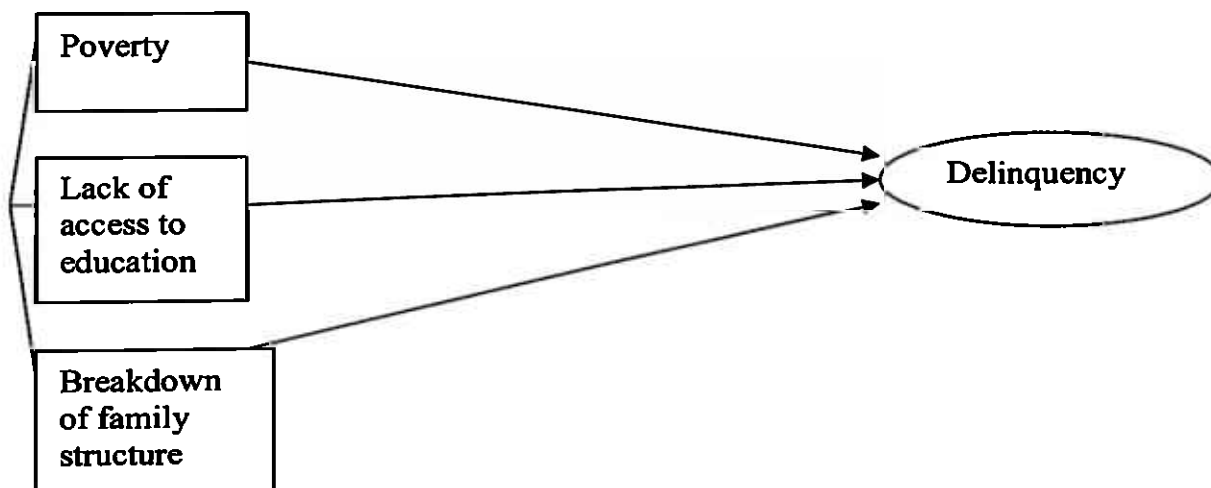
- Criminal behavior is learned in interaction with other people in a process of communication.
- The principal part of deviant behavior occurs within intimate personal groups.
- The process of learning criminal behavior by association with criminal and anti-criminal patterns involves all the mechanisms involved in any other type of learning.

- A person becomes delinquent because of an excess of definitions favorable to the violation of law over definitions unfavorable to the violation of law. This is the principle of differential association.

Describing social control theory, Travis Hirschi in his text *Causes of Delinquency (1969)* traces delinquency to the bond that individuals maintain with society. Social controls rather than moral values are what maintain law and order. A lack of attachment to parents and school can result in delinquency. Hirschi believed that delinquency resulted from a lack of proper socialization and particularly ineffective child-rearing practices. Proper socialization in this case involves the establishment of a strong moral bond between the juvenile and the society. The bond to society consists of attachment to others, commitment to conventional lines of action, involvement in conventional activities and belief in the moral order and law.



**2.5 Conceptual Framework showing the relationship between Poverty, Lack of access to education, Breakdown of family structure and incidences of juvenile delinquency. (Source: Author 2008)**



The conceptual framework of this study tries to show the relationship between factors attributed to juvenile delinquency. Poverty would lead individuals to search for alternatives as a means of sustenance.

Lack of access to education make most children employ coping mechanisms majority of which involve delinquent acts such as petty theft. Breakdown of family structure seems also to be a major determining factor as far as delinquency development is concerned. Children who live with both parents are most likely to be guided and influenced by their parents more than those without parents. Also weak social controls within the immediate community in which the child lives in are attributed to the development of juvenile delinquency. However all the three factors when occurring in an interactive pattern are most attributable to juvenile delinquency. Though each factor occurring in an isolated manner creates predisposing factors towards juvenile delinquency.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

The study was carried out at Murang'a Children's Remand Home. Simple random sampling was employed to get the informants. Both open and closed ended questionnaires were used alongside observation of general behavior. Examination of secondary data was also used to obtain the relevant information for the study.

### **3.1 Research Design**

The research was a cross sectional study that employed both qualitative and quantitative approach. The survey approach was also used to obtain data from the respondents. The data was collected using both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources included information derived from respondents, who in this case were the juvenile delinquents using questionnaires containing both open-ended and close-ended questions. Self reported interview questions were also administered to the subject.

Observation as a primary source of data was also used to collect data. Secondary sources included books and literature documented by different governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations as well as people documents written by people dealing with the same issue of juvenile delinquency. All these sources provided additional information concerning all issues discussed in the study.

The target population was the children found in Murang'a Children's Remand Home. This was because the study dealt with analyzing the various factors leading to juvenile delinquency and the remand home provides safe custody to juvenile delinquents.

The study investigated incidences of juvenile delinquency in Murang'a Children's Remand Home. It focuses on the factors leading to juvenile delinquency.

However, since the study was designed to meet the needs for a dissertation write up, it was not able to include other issues that may appear relevant to the topic chosen.

### **3.2 Sample Frame And Sampling Procedure**

The sampling frame in the study was Murang'a Children's Remand Home where the juvenile delinquents reside. In sampling procedure, simple random sampling was employed to obtain the actual sample size for the study.

### **3.3 Site Description**

#### **3.3.1 History of Murang'a Children's Remand Home**

Murang'a Children's Remand Home was started in 1954 as a detention camp by the colonial government. The institution was used to detain the Mau Mau fighters. In 1958, the same regime converted it to Murang'a juvenile remand home. Its main purpose then was to take care of the children whose parents were detained during the Mau Mau uprising.

After independence, the home was inherited by the Kenyan Government for providing safe custody and care to child offenders and those in need of care and protection. The Children's Act of 2002 later changed the name to Murang'a Children's Remand Home.

### **3.4 Sample Size**

All the children in the remand home were interviewed. The sample size was twenty.

### **3.5 Methods Of Data Collection**

The study employed a survey approach where a semi-structured questionnaire containing both structured and unstructured questions was used. Self reported interview questions were also used. This allowed for standardization of responses as well as in-depth responses. The unit of analysis was the child offenders found in the Remand Home.

The research was conducted in the month of August 2008. Several methods of data collection were used drawing from primary and secondary sources.

Primary sources included questionnaires, interviews and observation. Secondary sources included literature survey in documented information.

### **3.6 Methods Of Data Analysis**

The data was analyzed under different themes associated with juvenile delinquency. Techniques used include descriptive and summary statistics including mean frequency tables, pie charts and cross-tabulation.

### **3.7 Limitations and Problems Encountered During the Study**

The study focused on sensitive matters relating to children rights. It was therefore difficult to access sensitive information from the respondents themselves. Another limitation was lack of co-operation in answering the questions. Finally, there was lack of adequate time to carry out the whole research process.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Introduction

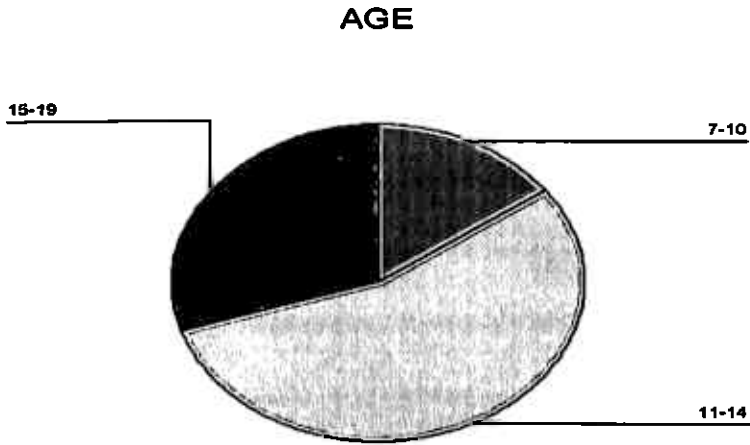
The tables below show the summary statistics for all of the variables used in this study. The table shows the number of males and females who participated in the study, the participants' age, gender, food deprivation, and number of times they have been institutionalized before and who they live with their responses towards food provision by always, sometimes, rarely or never provided with food, the statistics on the independent variable, and whether they live with their mother, father, both, grandparents, other relatives or streets.

#### 4.1 Frequency Distribution by Age

Table 1. Frequency Distribution by Age.

Value	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
7-10	3	15	15
11-14	11	55	70
15-19	6	30	100
TOTAL	20	100	

Figure 1. Pie Chart showing Frequency Distribution by Age



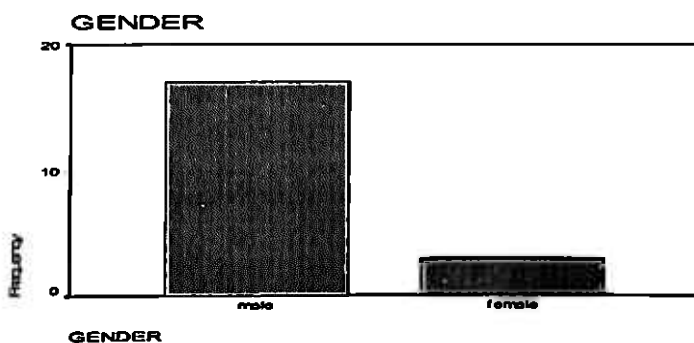
It was noted that juvenile delinquency increases with an increase in age. 55% of the respondents were aged between 11 years and fourteen years. 30% of the respondents were aged between fifteen years and nineteen years. However, only 3% of the respondents were aged between seven years and ten years of age.

#### 4.2 Frequency Distribution by Gender

Table 2. Frequency Distribution by Gender

Value	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	17	85	85
Female	3	15	100
TOTAL	20	100	

Figure 2. Bar graph showing Frequency Distribution by Gender



Of those respondents interviewed, 15% were females and the remaining 85% were males. It was noted that there is a higher number of male children involved in delinquent acts as compared to their female counterparts.

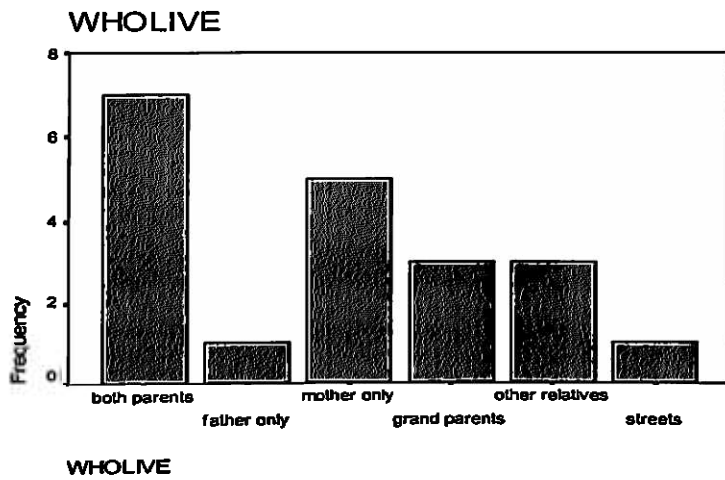
#### 4.3 Frequency Distribution by Who they live with

Table 3. Frequency of who they live with

Value	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Both Parents	7	35	35
Father only	1	5	40
Mother only	5	25	65
Grandparents	3	15	80
Other Relatives	3	15	95
Streets	1	5	100
TOTAL	20	100	



Figure 3. Bar graph showing Frequency Distribution of who they live with



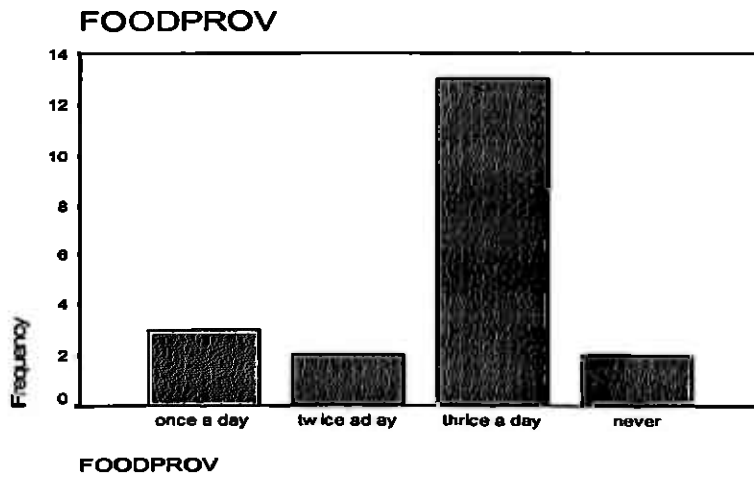
Out of 20 respondents interviewed, 25% lived with their mother, 5% lived with their father, 35% lived with both, 15% lived with other people, 15% lived with grand parents and 5% lived on the streets. It was noted that a higher percentage of juvenile delinquents lived with both parents

#### 4.4 Frequency Distribution by Food Provision

Table 4. Frequency by provision of food

Value	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Once	3	15	15
Twice	2	10	25
Thrice	13	65	90
Never	2	10	100
TOTAL	20	100	

Figure 4. Bar Graph showing Frequency Distribution by provision of food.



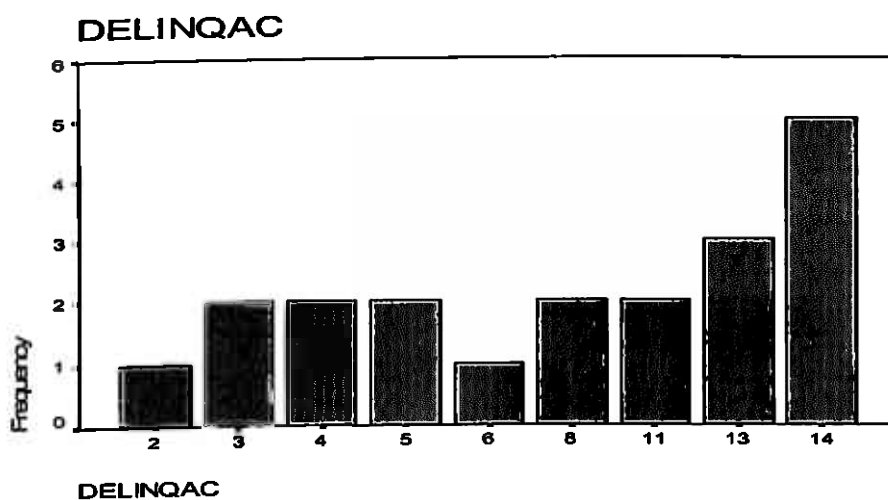
The response to the question on how many times one was provided with food on a daily basis had the following responses; 15% were provided with food once a day, 10% had food twice a day, 65% indicated that they had food three times a day while 10% were never provided with any food.

#### 4.5 Frequency Distribution by Delinquent Acts

Table 5. Frequency of Delinquent Acts

Value	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	1	5	5
3	2	10	15
4	2	10	25
5	2	10	35
6	1	5	40
8	2	10	50
11	2	10	60
13	3	15	75
14	5	25	100
TOTAL	20	100	

Figure 5. Bar Graph showing Frequency Distribution of Delinquent Acts



The responses to the question concerning how many times one had been institutionalized before shows that 25% of the respondents stated that they had been institutionalized once before, 15% had done time twice, while 60% had been institutionalized thrice. Finally, in terms of delinquency acts committed, 5% had committed two acts, 5% had committed six acts, 10% had committed three, four, five, eight, and eleven acts, 15% had committed 13 acts and 25% had committed 14 acts of delinquency

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

A survey done by Rhodes and Fischer (1993) looked at the relationship between gender and delinquency among inner-city adolescents involved in court diversion programs. The investigation found a gender difference in both the referral source and behavioral patterns of the juveniles involved. Interestingly, it appears, “males were more likely to be referred to the program for violations of the law, to have been arrested, and to have engaged in aggressive offenses and selling drugs” (Rhodes, & Fischer, p. 879). In contrast females were more likely to be referred due to status crimes. According to the authors, gang members had a large effect on the delinquent behaviors of all juveniles. Male gang members were more likely to be arrested, but female members were more likely to carry weapons (Rhodes & Fischer). Males were significantly more likely than females to be arrested for delinquent acts.

The research suggests that females are often dealt with more harshly than males who commit the same crimes. Also, Rhodes and Fischer suggest that males were more likely to get referred for violating the law while females got referred for truancy and runaway behaviors.”

According to the study conducted it was concluded that there was a higher number of males involved in delinquent acts as compared to their female counterparts.

A second study by (Matherne & Thomas, p. 655) confirms that family involvement is a key element in the deterrence of juvenile delinquency. Their research supports the ideology that adolescents without family supervision are more likely to be engaged in criminal acts. It is reported that those children from a traditional household are less likely to be involved in school problems than those individuals from a non-traditional home. Kierkus and Baer (2002) studied the relationship between family structure and delinquent behavior. According to the article it is still unclear to how family structure affects delinquent behavior.

Furthermore, most of past studies have only looked at how family structure is related to misbehavior (Kierkus & Baer). The purpose of this study was to discover if the parental attachment component of social control could show how family structure is connected to delinquency. The research showed a significant predictor “of most self-reported delinquent behaviors at the zero order level and when age, sex, and SES are controlled” (Kierkus & Baer, p. 425). Basically, once parental attachment is placed into the equation, delinquency is reduced especially in traditional families. They said that the social control theory may provide an answer to how family structures are linked to delinquency. Also, it appears from the study that children from non-traditional families experience lower levels of parental attachment which leads to delinquent activity (Kierkus & Baer). According to the research carried out, households lacking proper parental control tend to have a great number of juvenile delinquents.

Lamin Sesay (1977) in his paper "Crime and development in Africa", observes that: By itself, development seems to have nothing to do with crime. But when considered as a dynamic process of change, development and deviant behavior become inseparable. As the move away from traditional society gains momentum, the traditional institutions and way of life give way to new ideas of social organization, behavior, and authority, and many see this change as an opportunity to discard old values. The situation is further complicated by the rapidity of change which leaves little time to adjust to development problems. Industrialization accompanied by population redistribution, dissipation of traditional forms of social control, social mobility and technological changes, and improved mass communication are some of the factors of development which tend to increase opportunities for deviant behavior. Poor housing, disorientation of family life, unemployment, rapid population growth, and special labor needs of some enterprises also are conducive to crime and delinquency. There is a need for a determined effort to correct or remove the socio-economic imbalances that are known to be detrimental to development through systematic planning and programming. Poverty has thus had an adverse effect on juvenile delinquency according to the study carried out.

## **5.1 Conclusion**

Implications involving this study are significant. There is numerous research reviewed in this study that reveals that the rate of juveniles in crime and delinquency is a problem in the Kenya. The commit rate of juveniles is troubling due to the affects it can produce on society. This study provides some especially important information to policy makers regarding the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency. The results did show that the more a juvenile is provided with basic needs such as food, the less likely they are committing crime and involved in delinquency. Second, the study is important to authorities because it shows the parents that they influence their children. Parents need better understanding and should be empowered to assume parental responsibility and provide quality life to children.

There is need to improve institution-community linkages, there is thus need to sensitize parents and the wider community for change of attitude.

Despite all the statutory provisions, there is an over reliance on institutionalization of offenders as a corrective measure. All these suggestions need to be taken into account to help curb the increasing rate of juvenile delinquency.



## **5.2 Recommendations**

The study provides several recommendations to various people involved in administration of juvenile justice and those dealing with juvenile delinquent matters. Some cases encountered during the study were welfare cases but were placed in the same category as criminals. The government should build welfare homes for children who need special protection instead of lumping them together with their delinquent counterparts.

The Juvenile court should not commit any child to an approved school unless reform is unobtainable by other means. This is because juvenile delinquency is mainly a social problem and its solutions lie within the child's social environment.

Rehabilitation programmes should be constantly evaluated to ensure effectiveness and relevance. There is need for the government to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme poverty to help curb the increasing rate of juvenile delinquency.

More school going children who are out of school should be encouraged to seek the free education provided by the government to discourage idleness among the youth.

There is need to train more welfare officers on how to deal with juvenile delinquents. Staff employed in remand schools should be trained social workers, sociologists, psychologists and even psychiatrist. Proper parental guidance should be exercised by those concerned to avoid involvement of children in delinquent acts.

Finally, there is dire need to create more public awareness on matters dealing with juvenile delinquency.

### **5.3 Suggestion for Further Research**

Although there have been several researches done dealing with juvenile delinquency, there is still need for more scholars to come up with related topics concerning the same. Poverty as a major factor leading to juvenile delinquency should be researched on to enable policy makers find various implications of the same. Breakdown of family structure as well as lack of access to education have also been a major cause of juvenile delinquency. These two topics can further be researched on to give relevant information on the same phenomena. There is thus need for scholars and other people related to the whole juvenile system to do further research on factors attributed to juvenile delinquency.

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## Appendix 2

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

**During the past 12 months prior to institutionalization, how many times have you....**

- Purposely destroyed or damaged public or private property that did not belong to you?
- Taken anything from a shop without paying for it?
- Used a weapon (stick, knife, rock) while fighting with another person?
- Had a fist fight with another person?
- Threatened to beat up someone to make that person do something he did not want to do?
- Sold or bought any kind of drugs?
- Skipped school without a legitimate excuse?
- Broken into and entered somewhere with the intention of taking something?
- Bought, used or sold something you knew had been stolen?
- Had sexual relations with a person of the opposite sex?
- Taken part in a gang fight between adolescents?
- Been away from 'home' for more than 24 hours and your whereabouts unknown?
- Gotten drunk on any alcoholic beverage?
- Gotten high on any kind of drug?

1. Once
2. Twice
3. Thrice
4. More than thrice
5. Never
6. N/A