ABSTRACT

Studies on the nature and characteristics of children who are gifted and talented show that these children are inquisitive in nature. Their curiosity may lead to rejection by family members, teachers, peers and society as a whole. Feeling frustrated and different from their peers, these children may rebel in school, home or in the society and end up being labeled delinquents. In Kenya, juvenile delinquents are referred to Rehabilitation Schools and Children Remand Homes as stipulated in 2001 Children’s Act. The purpose of this study was to explore giftedness among learners with juvenile delinquency in selected rehabilitation schools in Kenya. The study population comprised of teachers, social workers and children in Rehabilitation Schools in Kenya. Random sampling was used to select three Rehabilitation Schools; two for boys and one for girls representing 33.3% of the rehabilitation schools in Kenya. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected and analyzed. All learners in the selected schools participated in the study. The study utilized Ravens Progressive Matrices, teachers and peer nomination forms and Observation Checklists to identify children who are gifted. Children’s committal records were also analyzed. The study revealed that about 13% of children in the rehabilitation schools are gifted and talented. If this population is not well taken care of the Kenyan society may end up losing a very important human resource. There is need therefore to sensitize different stakeholders on the nature and needs of children who are gifted and talented.

Key words: Children who are gifted and talented, Giftedness, Juvenile Delinquency, Rehabilitation School
Introduction

Studies on the characteristics of Gifted and talented learners show that these children may question rules, customs and traditions. Their questioning on rules, customs and traditions breaking cause discomfort to their teachers, parents, peers and significant others, who find them embarrassing or challenging to the set ways of life. According to Webb et. al (1985) a gifted and talented child values logic and rational approaches thus most of the traditions, customs, rules and limits are illogical, irrational or arbitrary which makes it difficult for a gifted child to accept. Feeling frustrated and different from others the gifted and talented child is likely to become rebellious at home, school and the society thus end up becoming a delinquent.

Due to their high reasoning and thinking ability children who are gifted and talented may be a source of problems to parents and teachers. These children may want explanations from their parents and teachers why the adults break rules yet they expect them (children) to follow them. This reasoning ability may be a source of rebellion in form of delinquency and even crime (Ingule et al. 1996).

Normally, the society view delinquent behaviour in children and students as a protest against the norms and values of the society. Since children who are gifted and talented are unable to achieve success legitimately, they may experience a cultural conflict, which is also referred to as status of frustration and often join together in gangs and engage in behaviours that are normally non-conformist. Like the average children and those with other special needs, children who are gifted have problems unique to them. There are children who are gifted and talented, who do not perform because of emotional, motivational or circumstantial factors. Others may use their talents in socially unacceptable ways. All of us need to be appreciated by being recognized for whom we are and this helps us to develop positive attitude towards the society. When the potentials of the gifted and talented persons are not recognized or appreciated, they may use them against the society like engaging in cyber crimes, joining illegal gangs among others.

Education programmes in Kenya lay more emphasis on intellectual ability and academic achievement thus neglecting the other areas of child development. The KIE Report on the implementation of the Revised Primary Education Curriculum (2005) noted that the content area does not take into account individual differences among the learners. The report also noted that the non examinable subjects which include Physical Education and Creative Arts are not being taught at primary school level. It was also noted that most of the teachers are unable to teach the whole content of the creative arts which includes Art, Craft and music components. From these findings, one can conclude that children with specific talents such as Art, Music and Psychomotor abilities but lack high level of intelligence are usually neglected. Due to lack of understanding of the unique needs of learners by the teacher and the education system being exam oriented in Kenya, the gifted learners may be labeled difficult, stubborn and irritating and most of them may drop out of school.
According to Njenga in the Daily Nation, of May 11 2005, most of the children suspended from school have Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD). After carrying out diagnosis of these children he noted that most of them were intelligent and get bored by the school. Lemov (1979) also estimated that as many as 15-30 % of high school drop outs are gifted and talented. Njenga recommended training of teachers on how to recognize the symptoms of this condition. This would help the teachers and parents assist their children through different educational programmes and especially guidance and counseling programmes.

Njenga’s concern was echoed by Youth Development in Kenya Report on Economic Sector in the Saturday Nation of December 3rd 2005, which noted that more than half of the Kenyan convicts are youth aged between 16 and 25 fit to be in school and training. These youth are involved in theft, assault, drug abuse and trafficking, mugging and manslaughter. The report further noted that though youth crime is a problem in Kenya, little has been done in terms of interventions to combat the issue.

**Theoretical Framework**

According to Siegel (1995) crime results from a mismatch between one’s aspiration in life and the means available to legally obtain them. When one is unable to achieve a particular goal within a conventional means they experience anger, frustration and resentment, which Siegel (1995) refers to as strain. If individuals experiencing strain are unable to accept their condition or if the state of anomie (lack of moral or social standards) prevails they choose alternative means of success outside the conventionally acceptable methods which may pre-dispose them to criminal behaviour.

According to strain theory, individual deviance is caused by negative treatment one receives from others which results in anger and frustration (Agnew, 1997). According to this theory, increase in aspiration and decrease in expectations leads to delinquency. When people are treated badly they engage in crime. Merton (1938) argues that conformity to conventional cultural values is responsible for the high rates of crime and delinquency.

Merton identified five modes of adaptation. One of these modes is through conformity, which means that one does not question the rules and regulations set. Some people will change the cultural goals or refuse to support the institutionalized means. This theory further indicates that some people will embrace the cultural goals but turn to illegitimate means. Merton referred to these people as innovators. Another group which he referred to as ritualists accept the institutionalized means but reject the cultural goals. The ritualists scale down their aspirations so that they are reached within the institutionalized means. The other group is that of rebels. These citizens reject both the goals and means and substitute them with new ones. Their objective is to change the existing system.

The strain theory indicates that children are inherently good. They only commit delinquencies when their backs are against the wall. The society therefore needs to eliminate the conditions that produce disjunctures between goals and means of achieving them.
According to Webb et. al (1985) children who are gifted and talented may question rules, customs and traditions. Their questioning of rules, customs and tradition breaking often cause discomfort to their teachers, parents, peers and significant others, who find them embarrassing or challenging to their own set ways of life. Most of the traditions, customs, rules and limits are illogical, irrational and arbitrary to some of the children who are gifted and talented. These children have high moral and thinking ability which can be a source of rebellion in form of delinquency and even crime (Ingule, Rono, and Ndambuki 1996).

According to Webb et.al (2005), the brighter an individual is, the more likely one will be aware of their own belief/value systems inconsistency with that of others. Tension and discomfort may arise from this awareness resulting to an approach-avoidance conflict in these individuals. The individuals may adopt one or a combination of Karen Horney (1945) coping mechanisms which include accepting the society’s traditions and conforming to it. The other coping strategy is moving away from the society which means rejecting traditions through withdrawal and being non-traditional. Another coping mechanism is moving against the society, being rebellious and openly nonconforming.

Characteristics of gifted and talented children show that most of them are intelligent. They demonstrate their intelligence by being imaginative, resourceful, unconventional, challenging assumptions and trying out new things. They are likely to ask themselves “what if” and try something new. They normally get bored by the obvious. By asking themselves “what if” and trying something new, they are likely to be seen as destructive by the society and labeled delinquent. Due to their self-confident, non-conformity, setting own rules and their unconcern in impressing others and resisting societal demands, the society is likely to label them “deviants”. Some gifted and talented children are risk takers.

From the foregoing, one notes that some gifted and talented children are likely to come up with different means of achieving the cultural or societal goals, own goals or both. If their means or innovations and goals are not recognized, some of the gifted and talented children get frustrated and use their special abilities to achieve their own goals while others commit crimes. If their innovations are recognized, they are likely to assist the society to achieve the societal or cultural goals. Those who come up with their own goals should also be recognized for self actualization and the development of the society.

Education of Children who are Gifted and Talented in Kenya

There is no universal definition of giftedness and/or talent. Some professionals define giftedness in terms of intelligence test scores. They define giftedness as an intelligence test score above 130, two or more standard deviations above the norm or the top 2.5% of any population. Others define giftedness based on scholastic achievement and say that a gifted child operates at two or more grade levels above his or her age. Others see giftedness as a prodigious accomplishment.
According to Koech (1999), Kochung’ (2003) and Kang’ethe, (2004) gifted and talented children are those who at any educational level are identified as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance capabilities in areas such as general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, creative and productive thinking, leadership ability, visual and performing arts and psychomotor abilities.

Marland (1972) in Walter and Joseph (1981, P 57) define gifted and talented children as those who are capable of outstanding performance in one or more of the following areas: general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, creative or productive thinking, leadership ability, visual and performing arts aptitude and psychomotor ability. Ross (1993) in Kirk, Gallagher and Anastasia (1997: 128) describe the gifted children as those with outstanding talents, they perform, or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience or environment.

In Kenya, the Presidential Working Party on Education and Training for the Next Decade and Beyond (Kamunge Report, 1988) noted that every society Kenya included, has its specially gifted children who need special education to develop their special intellectual, creative, artistic or other talents to the maximum level possible. Accordingly, the committee recommended that such children be identified early and special programmes developed to enable them to realize their full potential in order to enable them to contribute to the society. Special educational programmes for such children should be developed in the interest of national development. The committee proposed the establishment of “Centres of Excellence” as pacemakers for advanced knowledge and technology in order to meet the needs of the society these centres of excellence have not been established yet.

Kang’ethe (2010) notes that the Kenyan system of education is built on the assumption that a child who is gifted and talented can manage to go through the education system without the provision of special services. According to her, this is not always true; on the contrary, these children get bored by the repetition of materials which they have already mastered. Accordingly, these children become frustrated and unhappy with the system. Innate or inborn abilities require challenging opportunities throughout one's lifetime for high levels of actualization. In order for these children to develop to their full potentials they should be provided with programmes appropriate to their level of development (Clarke, 2012, Kamunge, 1988, Koech 1998 and Kang’ethe 2004).

According to Kang’ethe and Mugo (2010), from 1964-2005 several gaps existed which showed inconsistency in the implementation of educational policies and programmes. They also noted that children who are Gifted and Talented are not mentioned in most of the Education Policy documents in Kenya. According to them there has been no clear commitment and political strategy targeting gifted and talented persons. Their concern is echoed in Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 on a Policy Frame Work for Education, Training and Research, and the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme 2005-2010, where the Kenyan Government notes that the special education schools and units continue to cater for the education of learners with
special needs in the four traditional areas namely; Mental handicaps, Physical handicaps, Visual impairments and Hearing impairments leaving out other areas such as that of the gifted and talented.

During the National Conference on Gifted and Talented Young Persons in Kenya held on 27th to 30th July 2010 at Kenyatta University (KU), it was noted that the national teacher curriculum prepares teachers in identifying learners with special needs who include those who are gifted and talented. It was also noted that Kenyatta University and Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE) train teachers for learners who are gifted and talented but there are no programmes for learners who are gifted and talented in Kenya as yet.

The National Youth Situation Analysis Report of 2009 indicate that majority of Kenya’s population comprises of youth aged between 15 - 29 years who are vulnerable to delinquent behaviours and violence. The report further noted that the youth have talents but have no opportunities to exploit or market them. The report cites the absence of recreational facilities and play fields as one of the reasons why young people turn to negative activities including crime, violence and drug abuse. They expressed the need for resource centres where the youth could spend time to gain useful skills and develop their talents such as sports, music and art. In response to this challenge the Kenya Government through the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports established a pilot National Youth Talent Academy in March 2010 to provide the youth with an opportunity to identify and nurture their talents.

Summary of Reviewed Literature

From the literature reviewed, it is noted that children who are gifted and talented are likely to develop behavior problems if their unique needs are not met. If their special abilities are recognized and nurtured and their unique needs are met, they can play a great role in the development of the community. When the special abilities of the gifted and talented persons are not recognized, they (gifted persons) can use them against the society. In their review of literature on juvenile justice in Kenya Mugo, Musembi and Kang’ethe (2006) noted that most of the studies done in the Rehabilitation schools have focused on reaction to juvenile delinquency and that most of the recommendations seem to be curative in nature rather than preventive. They suggested the need to carry out studies that can promote the understanding of juvenile delinquency in Kenya. Bearing in mind that there are no special programmes for learners who are gifted and talented in Kenya and that no studies have been carried out in Rehabilitation schools in Kenya in relation to giftedness, there was need to explore giftedness among learners with juvenile delinquency in rehabilitation schools and whether the rehabilitation processes are meeting the unique needs of the gifted and talented learners with juvenile delinquency.

Purpose of the study

This study was necessitated by the concern raised by different researchers in rehabilitation schools in Kenya. It has been noted that most of the learners in these institutions are school drop-outs who are arrested while loitering in the streets and child offenders. Currently there are no standardized diagnostic assessment tools for these children. In addition, these children
are placed in these institutions through courts. The Commission of Inquiry on Education System in Kenya, (Koech, 1999) also echoed the same concern and noted that there is an urgent need to develop comprehensive assessment tools for learners who are emotionally and behaviourally disturbed and those who are gifted and talented.

**Assumptions of the Study**

The study assumed that in every population there are people endowed with giftedness (special abilities and talents). It also assumed that special abilities affect one's aspiration in life and academic achievement. Another assumption was that the individual pupil's records were correct and truthful and that problems faced by pupils in the sampled institutions are similar in nature and that special ability are inherited or inborn. It was also assumed that special abilities may lead to special problems and especially when these abilities are not identified early.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Study Design**

The study employed a descriptive survey design and used mixed method approaches of data collection. According to Johnson and Christensen (2008), mixed design allows the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data to help him/her answer research questions. Data is collected using different methods while studying the same phenomenon. This enables one to make a statement with confidence. It also increases the credibility or trustworthiness of research findings. In mixed research, different methods are used to collect data.

During the study various methods were used to collect data. These methods included nomination of children who are gifted and talented by both their peers and teachers using nomination forms. Learners, behavior was observed during task performance using observation schedules. Different teachers were involved in rating pupils' behaviours. A group test was administered to the learners which was later marked and analyzed. All the learners who scored above 2 Standard Deviations were also nominated as being gifted and talented. Pupils' progress and admission records were analyzed.

**Location of the study**

The study was carried out in Kakamega, Likoni and Kirigiti rehabilitation schools which were randomly sampled. The sampled institutions comprised of 33.3% of the study population. There are nine Rehabilitation Schools in Kenya. One of them, Getathuru Rehabilitation School is the reception centre for boys while Dagoretti Rehabilitation School acts as the reception centre for girls. There are seven rehabilitation schools for boys and two for girls.

**Sampling Procedures**

Random sampling was used in identifying three Rehabilitation Schools catering for children ages twelve to eighteen years. All the learners, teachers, managers and social workers in the sampled schools were purposively sampled to participate in the study during the nomination of gifted learners. All the nominated learners were purposively sampled to participate in the study. The nomination was done after the teachers and the other members of staff filled in the
attitudinal questionnaire which sought their opinions of learners with behavior problems. The teachers and the significant others were also taken through the observable characteristics of the learners who are gifted and talented before they were requested to do the actual nomination.

Sample Size
The sample size comprised 3 managers, 21 teachers, 108 girls and 187 boys. It is also important to note that the pupils' population keeps on changing depending on the number of children being committed into these rehabilitation schools and those being released after completing their committal period or transferred to other rehabilitation schools.

Instruments of the Study
The study instruments included, Peer and Teacher nomination Forms, Raven's Progressive Matrices, Observation Checklists and Pupils' Academic Progress Records and questionnaires. Peer and teacher nomination forms were generated from the literature reviewed. The observation checklists were used by the researcher and teachers to record the child's behavior during task performance. The teachers who had interacted with the child were also required to give information about the child's behavior in different settings like how the child reacts to failure, problem solving behavior, interaction with significant others in the school among other behaviours.

Data Collection Procedures
Various approaches were used to collect data which included nomination of gifted learners using nomination forms and observations using an observation schedule and a group test. In addition secondary data was sought. One of the data collection procedures involved screening of the students. The purpose of screening was to enable the researcher to avoid missing out children who are gifted and/or talented. At this stage the assessor is supposed to seek nomination from several respondents such as teachers, school counselors and peers among other significant others in the selected rehabilitation schools.

The nomination was done after the teachers and the other members of staff filled in the attitudinal questionnaires seeking their opinions on learners with juvenile delinquency. The teachers and the significant others were then taken through the observable characteristics of the learners who are gifted and talented. Wang et al (1991) recommends that before the nomination of the gifted and talented learners is carried out, the nominators be taken through some training or orientation on the behavioral indicators and the levels of performance expected. They also argue that good nomination instruments play a major role in communicating to the nominators the concepts concerning the types of learners being sought. The nominators were expected to nominate individually the gifted and talented children sought.

In addition, secondary data was sought. This included analyzing the available school records especially the pupils’ progress records which were used to screen the learners who have high potentials. The pupil's progress records yield intelligence and academic achievement potential in general and specific subjects. By referring to percentiles Wang, et. al (1991), noted that children in the top 5% can be gifted and talented. Grade norms also serve in identifying those who are two or three years beyond the grade placement in several academic subjects. The
researcher used the standard deviation to identify those scoring in the upper 95 percentile in the class in general academic performance and specific subjects and placed them in the talent pool.

According to Gorret (2007) standard deviation is less affected by sampling errors than the mean, and that it is a more stable measure of dispersion. It has been noted that 68% or two thirds of the population fall between +1 and −1 while about 95% fall between -2 and +2. It is noted that the potential gifted and talented children would fall between +1 and +2 while those with superior abilities are found in the +2 and above standard deviation in a normal distribution curve.

Identification of Gifted and Talented Children in Rehabilitation schools

The identification of the gifted and talented children in the rehabilitation schools was done through nomination by teachers, social workers and peers. In addition Ravens Progressive Matrices was also used for this purpose. Those who scored above 1 standard deviation in the Ravens Progressive Matrices, were considered to be potentially gifted and talented, anyone who received two or more nominations by the teachers in any area was considered to be gifted and talented and those who received majority nomination by the peers in any area were also picked as potentially gifted and talented learners. A total of 36 children were identified as gifted and talented representing 12.8% of the total population of the study which was 281. Those nominated comprised of 14 girls and 22 boys.

Offences Committed by Children who are Gifted and talented in the rehabilitation Schools

The researcher sought to establish the nature of offences committed by the learners nominated as gifted and talented in the rehabilitation schools. The findings are presented in the following table

Table 4.1.1 Nature of offences N=36

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of offence</th>
<th>Frequency (x)</th>
<th>Percent [x/N X 100]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual relationship / Prostitution</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running away from home</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stealing money from home</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begging</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snatching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stealing without using force</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug use</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extortion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some of the offences committed by learners were sexual relation below the age of 18 years, truancy, assault, stealing, and drug use among others. It was further established that the staff working in the rehabilitation schools were to take special caution for learners committed in these institutions. The findings of the study established that twenty six (26) children comprising 72.2% of the 36 who were nominated as gifted and talented had run away from their homes, while 16 (44.4%) had stolen money from their homes. It was further established that 13 of the students or 36.1% were involved in sexual behaviour at an age below 18 years.

**Drug Use**

While drug use is a deviant act, the study found that 33.3% of those children who were identified as gifted and talented were occasional drug users, 22.2% had their lives affected by drugs, 11% were chronic alcohol abusers and 5.6% were chronic drug users. According to the records some of the offences totaling 13.9% were linked to substance abuse. The findings on drug abuse among the learners who are gifted and talented in Rehabilitation schools are presented in the following Figure.

**Figure 4.1 Drug Abuse**

![Figure 4.1 Drug Abuse](image)

Adolescents tend to imitate their peers. This is not different in the case of the alcohol and substance abuse. If a peer happens to be acquiring status due to alcohol use, others may seek the same social experience through similar social experience. The parents who use drugs may not be able to advice their children who are gifted and talented on the effect of drug and substance abuse. This is because children who are gifted and talented questions why the adults tell them not to do something while they themselves are doing it. This is one of the characteristics of gifted and talented children who want to know why things are the way they are "why tell me not to do something while you yourself are doing it".
Truancy

Truancy was another problem behavior which was noted among the gifted and talented learners in rehabilitation schools. The study found that 26 children or 72.2% of the children identified as gifted and talented in these institutions were away from home for more than a month or had dropped out of school as shown in the following table.

A Truancy N=36

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Truancy</th>
<th>Frequency (x)</th>
<th>Percent [x/N x 100]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Away from home for more than one month</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep on the street</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changed name/age</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scavenging</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tattooing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification with a base</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings of the study also show that out of the identified gifted and talented children, 47.2% had slept on the streets, 13.9% had changed their names, and 36.1% identified themselves with a base or a place where other gang members could meet, while 19.4% were scavenging. It was further noted that 6% had tattoos. According to Seeley (2001), gifted children who receive poor grades due to poor behavior rather than the concept attainment often demonstrate further misbehavior which produces a push out programme or dropping out of school for these learners. The school dropout is also linked to drug and substance abuse and poor grades (Yablonsky, 2000). According to Njenga (2005) some of the children who are labeled delinquents are gifted learners who are bored by school and therefore run away from school. Others might run away from home so that they are not punished by parents after refusing to attend schools. The characteristics of learners who are gifted and talented show that these children are comfortable with adults who share their views which might make them run away from their homes or school to look for the peers.

Other Problem Behaviours Children are likely to engage in while in Rehabilitation Schools

From the analysis of pupils’ admission records it was established that teachers and other service providers were to observe special caution while rehabilitating these learners for some of them were likely to engage in some activities which are detrimental to themselves and others. The areas of special caution noted in the admission records included sexual behavior, escape from the rehabilitation schools, suicide, disobedience and intimidating others. The findings are presented in the following Figure.
Figure 4.2 Areas of Special Caution

It was noted that 38.9% of those identified as gifted and talented were labeled disobedient, 36.1% were likely to engage in inappropriate sexual behavior according to school records. It was further noted that 36.1% were likely to intimidate their peers, 22.2% were likely to escape from the rehabilitation centre's while, only one or 22% was likely to commit suicide. Members of staff in the respective rehabilitation schools were supposed to take special caution against these behaviours.

In summary it is noted that less than half of the learners who were nominated as gifted and talented are likely to engage in disobedience, intimidating others, inappropriate sexual behaviour and escaping from the rehabilitation institutions. In general one can conclude that majority of the children nominated as gifted do not have major problems, though even the minor problem will need to be checked so that they do not develop into major ones.

**Previous Conflict with the Law**

The researcher also sought to find out whether the identified learners who are gifted and talented had committed crimes previously prior to the current one. The findings are presented in the following table.
Previous Conflict with the Law N=36

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Previous arrests</th>
<th>Frequency (x)</th>
<th>Percent (\times 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Previously arrested</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>61.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three or more prior arrests</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to comply with court order</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision orders by children's officer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Committal Orders to Children's Remand Homes</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Committal Orders to Rehabilitation Schools</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previously found guilty</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior escape from rehabilitation school</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the study it was noted that 61.1% of children identified as gifted and talented had been arrested previously. This high rate of re-offending among the gifted and talented children raises some questions regarding the rehabilitation process whether it is really meeting the needs of the gifted and talented children or even those other children with juvenile delinquency. The records showed that among those identified as gifted and talented with prior arrests, 38.9% had been arrested three or more times. This raises concern about the rehabilitation process of learners who are gifted and talented with behavior problems.

Children who are arrested for various offences are taken to Children's Court who has jurisdiction over children up to 18 years of age except in murder case or where a child is charged together with a person of or above 18 years. The children magistrates preside over children cases and can issue several orders which include committal to borstal institutions, probation hostels, or rehabilitation schools. Children found guilty of offences can also be issued with community service order where they are expected to serve the community for a maximum of one year. These children can also be placed over the supervision of a Children's Officer or under the care of a parent or a guardian. The researcher sought to establish whether the twenty two children identified as gifted and talented previously arrested for various crimes complied with court orders issued to them. It was established that 15 (68.2%) of those previously arrested had complied with court orders previously issued.

The children's magistrate can make several orders when children are taken to children's court, among these orders is that the child can be placed under the supervision of children's officer. The study attempted to find out whether there was any of those identified as gifted and talented who had been issued with supervision orders by Children's courts. The study found that only 2 (5.6%) of children identified as gifted and talented had been previously placed under the supervision of Children's officers.
Generally when children are arrested, they are supposed to be taken to Children's remand homes. It was found that half, 18 (50%) of those identified as gifted learners had previously been committed to children's remand homes for various offences. The findings show that there are some children who are arrested and either taken directly to children's court or are taken to police cell before appearing before a Children's magistrate as findings on previous arrests show that 61.1% of those identified as gifted and talented had been arrested previously.

It was also observed that 55.6% of those identified as gifted and talented had been committed to rehabilitation schools previously for various reasons while the others either had no prior committal orders or had been committed to other institutions. The study shows that either the rehabilitation schools are not achieving their objectives or there is no follow up. From among those identified as gifted and talented the records showed that majority 20 (55.6%) had previously been found guilty prior to the current offence. It was further established that 80% of them had been found guilty for two or more times.

It has been observed that some of the children committed to rehabilitation schools escape from these institutions, the researcher sought to find out whether there are any of those nominated as gifted who have ever escaped from the rehabilitation schools. This information was sought through document analysis. The analysis revealed that 35% of those nominated had previously escaped from rehabilitation schools.

The study established that majority 72.2% of the children nominated as gifted and talented had lived away from home for more than a month. It is surprising to note that less than half of them had slept on the streets, so the question arises as to where the others spent their time while away from their homes. There are those who could identify themselves with a base while others had changed their names.

According to literature reviewed some of the gifted and talented children run away because of the environment at home or school. This is due to the fact that sometimes the school or even the home environment might not be supportive, others feel rejection from peers and even family members due to their questioning nature and non-conformity to the traditions. The gifted and talented children might look for their gifted and talented peers. When children run away from home majority of them end up in the streets.

On drug use among those nominated as gifted and talented, it was noted that less than half of those who had engaged in drugs were occasional drug users and very few were chronic drug users. Drug abuse had interfered with 22.2% of those who were using it. Drug abuse has been found among gifted and talented individuals. In daily nation of July 25, 2011, the author talks of talented musicians who die at 27. Most of these deaths were connected to drug and substance abuse.

It is also worth noting that one can still come out of drug and substance abuse as the case of Ken Peter Munyua in the daily Nation family magazine page 4 November 7, 2012 "From street to life skills consultant" the author talks of how he resisted to be moved from his home to his grandparents' home. Normally, this would be regarded as rebellion. The author's life is that of
rebellion, truancy, stealing, going to live in streets and hating school. The author writes of his reformation and how he has ended up becoming a motivational speaker, which shows that all is not lost especially with proper interventions. The persons who have had such experiences could be used as mentors for these children.

In summary it is noted that some of those nominated as gifted and talented had previously been arrested, committed to children's Remand homes or to rehabilitations schools. Others had been arrested for more than three times. Among those previously arrested, the study observed that more than half of them had been found guilty, and committed to either rehabilitation schools or children's Remand homes. It was further established that among those who had been previously found guilty, almost half of them had also been found guilty for two or more times. There is need therefore to establish why these children continue to commit crimes despite the previous rehabilitation processes.

**Implications of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to explore giftedness among learners with juvenile delinquency in selected rehabilitation schools in Kenya. The study established that there are children endowed with giftedness and talent among those committed for various offences in rehabilitation schools in Kenya. The major reason for committal was running away from home or school. There is need therefore to re-assess the parenting style and to organize public education for parents in order to educate them on the characteristics of the children who are gifted and talented to prevent delinquency among this population of children. It was also noted that some of these children came from families where either the parents were not or unable to provide adequate supervision for their children or were unable to control them.

Some of the identified children were away from home for more than a month but had not spent time in the streets. This leaves one wondering where they were spending their time. There is need therefore to look for ways of reducing truancy among these children for they might be used by adults in crime. This scenario might be worse for young girls and boys who might be involved in prostitution for their survival. Some of these children were members of a gang, there is need therefore to establish the types of gangs they had joined.

The study has also revealed some of the characteristics of gifted children who are at risk of developing behavior problems. There is need therefore for teachers in general to be in-serviced on these characteristics to reduce juvenile delinquency. The problem behavior might be caused by the schools themselves as had been noted in a previous study by the Kenya Institute of Education in 2005, that non examinable subjects are not taught in primary schools. These subjects include creative arts, music and physical education. The gifted and talented children have been noted to have a lot of energy thus they need to be given an opportunity to utilize it in a positive way. The gifted and talented children should also be given opportunities to express themselves creatively, which could be through creative Arts, Drama or Music. Teachers need to be informed of the importance of these subjects. The learners who are gifted and talented could also be given challenging tasks/work at the school to keep them occupied. These tasks should be interesting to them.
One of the National goals of Education is to promote individual development and self fulfillment, which further expounded by the objectives of primary education where one of them is to develop opportunities to develop individual talents and promote social responsibility and make proper use of leisure time. The study noted that some of those nominated as gifted and talented had limited organized activities during their leisure time or could make better use of their leisure time. There is need to provide facilities for these learners to use their leisure time constructively.

The curriculums offered in these institutions seem to differ from one school to the other though all the schools reported that they follow Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) curriculum. The time table differed significantly some schools have eight lessons per day while others have nine lessons, the subjects offered also differed from one school to the other, there is need therefore to harmonize these curricula and also develop educational programmes for learners who are gifted and talented with juvenile delinquency.

Staffing especially for academic staff is wanting with one school with only five teachers, the others with eight teachers some of whom are not trained offering Artisan courses. The department of children services needs to work with the Ministry of Education to ensure proper staffing bearing in mind that rehabilitation schools are special institutions offering special education. There is need for the government to ensure that rehabilitation schools fall under the ministry in charge of education to ensure that children in these institutions are provided with proper education with teachers trained in this area. Teachers trained in the area of behavior problems will be able to offer individualized education to meet the unique needs of these learners. Head teachers and teachers suggested that they be trained in Special Needs Education.

**Conclusion**

From the findings it is noted that there are children endowed with giftedness and talent in the rehabilitation schools. Several methods should be used in the identification of learners who are gifted. The major problem behavior by learners who are gifted and talented is truancy either from home or school which might be caused by parents' inability to control these children's behavior. Rehabilitation schools are not meeting the needs of the gifted and talented learners which might be the reason for high re-offending by the gifted learners. The rehabilitation procedure is not uniform in all the rehabilitation schools as evidenced by subjects and number of lessons offered in different schools. Teachers also lack training on rehabilitation process but their attitude toward learners who are gifted and talented is positive.

**Recommendations**

The rehabilitation schools need to organize open days for parents where they can share information about their children with teachers, social workers working in the institutions and other specialists. According to the constitution every child has a right to basic education and one of the goals of education in Kenya is to enable individuals to develop to their fullest potential,
there is need therefore to set up secondary schools for learners with juvenile delinquency in Kenya to take care of those children who are already in secondary schools.

Parents and the general public should be sensitized on the nature of the children who are gifted and talented. Parents should also be encouraged to have open communication with their children on the rules and regulations and to allow and encourage creativity in their children. Parents and other significant others should model appropriate risk taking and leisure activities and expect age related behaviours from children. Children's opinions on issues affecting them like transfers from one school to another, disposal of child's or family properties and even change of jobs by parents should be sought. Teachers teaching these learners should be sensitized on the nature, characteristics and needs of children who are gifted and talented. Conducive environment should be provided to enable children who are gifted and talented exploit and develop their potential like offering leadership training, encouraging cooperative learning and providing mentorship programmes and appreciating and recognizing children's creative work. Learners should also be involved in decision making especially in issues that affect them. Teachers are also encouraged to foster independent or self-directed learning to allow learners to exploit and develop research or inquisitive skills and develop their talents in Art, music, creative writing, Acting among others. Teachers should also involve the children in coming up with Individualized Educational Programmes (IEPs).

References


Department of Children services (2008). *National Standards and Regulations for Children's Institutions.*


