

**MULTI-FACTORIAL DYNAMICS AND CRIMINAL RECIDIVISM IN  
MUNZENZE PRISON, NORTH KIVU PROVINCE, DEMOCRATIC  
REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

**BWANASAFI MUHESI ARSENE,**

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**DECLARATION**

This project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university or any other award.

Signature: .....Date: .....

**BWANASAFI MUHESI ARSENE**

S201F/CTY/PT/27483/2019

Department of Security, Diplomacy and Peace Studies.

**Supervisor**

I confirm that the work reported in this project was carried out by the student under my supervision as the university supervisor.

Signature: ..... Date: .....

**DR. GEORGE OYOMBRA**

Department of Security, Diplomacy and Peace Studies.

## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to my cherished father Paluku Lufungula Herman and my beloved late mother Kavira Malinga Christine, my brothers, sisters, aunts, and uncles for always being there for me and for their emotional support.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

ADF:	Allied Defense Forces
DRC:	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FBI:	Federal Bureau of Investigation
ISIS:	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
OJP:	Office of Justice Programs
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNODC:	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UK:	United Kingdom
US:	United States

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Criminal:** A person who has committed an act that carries the possibility of jail sentence as punishment.

**Criminal Justice:** The system through which crimes and criminals are identified, apprehended, judged, and punished.

**Convict:** A person found guilty of a criminal offense and serving a sentence of imprisonment.

**Multifactorial Dynamics:** The forces or properties which stimulate growth, development, or change within a system or process.

**Felonies:** Are the more serious offenses, and someone who commits a felony can be punished with more than a year in jail or prison.

**Inmate:** A person confined to an institution such as a prison or hospital.

**Incarceration:** The state of being confined in prison; imprisonment.

**Prison:** Institution in which people are legally held as a punishment for a crime they have committed or while awaiting trial.

**Recidivism:** Fact of being sent back to prison for reoffending after being released.

**Recidivist:** A person convicted of a crime who was previously convicted of crimes.

**Security:** Freedom from fear and freedom from want.

**Violent Crimes:** Felonies such as murder, rape, kidnapping and robbery.

## ABSTRACT

Many countries around the world are confronted with the challenge of recidivism. Recidivism has become a global phenomenon that challenges the efficiency of both criminal justice systems and security systems. One of the most important measures of the efficiency of prison programs is the reduction of recidivism rate. Meant to rehabilitate convicts, prisons play an important role within the criminal justice. By exploring multi-factorial dynamics of criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison, this study is a package of knowledge and solution on personal, institutional, and societal risk factors of criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison. The following objectives guided this study; to investigate personal factors that influence criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison; to examine institutional factors contributing to criminal relapse of offenders in Munzenze prison, and to interrogate societal factors contributing to criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison. The study was guided by reformation theory of punishment to analyze institutional factors which may cause recidivism, labeling theory of crime to explain societal factors that may be responsible recidivism, and social learning theory to analyze individual factors. This study adopted Exploratory Sequential design using mixed method approach. The target population consisted of 1089 recidivists in Munzenze Prison, Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo. The target population also included prison officers, religious leaders and civil actors. A sample of 100 recidivists was drawn for questionnaires and focus group discussions, while prison officers, religious leaders and civil actors participated as key informants. Questionnaires, focus group discussions guides, and key informant interviews schedules were used as data collection instruments. Qualitative data was thematically analyzed using content analysis and presented as quoted verbatim. While quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented using percentages, tables, average and mean, and pie charts. The study found that institutional, societal and individual factors played a critical role in recidivism. The study concluded that lack of prison rehabilitation program in Munzenze, unemployment, ineffective reintegration and stigmatization were important determinants of recidivism. Additionally, the study recommends addressing the institutional, societal and individual issues that fuel recidivism. As a result, this study offers important new insights into the complex problem of criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison and offers a strategy for overcoming this urgent issue. It also emphasizes the crucial role that rehabilitation and societal support play in ending the cycle of repeat offending.

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.1 Introduction

This chapter includes the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, the research questions, the significance of the study, the scope of the study, and the limitations and delimitations.

## 1.2 Background to the study

Criminal recidivism is a problem that is posing a serious challenge to many states around the world. The tendency of individuals getting back to crime after serving their sentences is causing a significant challenge to criminal justice systems in terms of funding allocation, rehabilitation effectiveness and public safety issues among others. For that reason, various studies have been conducted that support the assertion that criminal recidivism poses a pervasive global challenge. For instance, a study conducted by Smith et al. (2023) revealed the widespread prevalence of criminal recidivism across multiple countries, underscoring its global nature. Similarly, findings from a study by Johnson and Garcia (2022) further emphasize the ubiquity of criminal recidivism, indicating its significant impact on criminal justice and security systems worldwide. Thus, the relationship between personal, institutional and societal factors and criminal recidivism is not a fundamentally new conceptual issue.

Ian O'Donnell (2020) explained that recidivism is measured in several ways, including data captured by the police and self-report, courts, prosecutors, and bodies concerned with the administration of justice. It becomes relevant to measure how a criminal justice system performs when interpreted with the appropriate degree of caution. It is also known as reoffending, and it relates to whether a person who is dealt

with by the criminal justice system goes on to reoffend again. At the individual level, reoffending is prevented when an offender refrains from committing a crime, as defined by the UNODC (2018). In an ideal situation, criminal justice institutions particularly correction institutions such as prisons should reform and rehabilitate convicted offenders who have been sent to them. However, this is sometimes not the case, given that reoffending also referred to recidivism has long been a global problem.

From an etymological point of view, Payne (2007) noted that recidivism comes from the Latin word *recidere*, which means to go back. It means a return to crime after an offender has had a first term of imprisonment. In the case of former prisoners, it is defined as the act of being sent back to prison for reoffending after release (Briggs, 2021). Recidivism is one of the biggest criminal justice concerns as it challenges not only criminal justice systems but also social norms.

The UNODC 2012 report clearly states that the effectiveness of a prevention strategy is complete when it is able to address the problem of recidivism. It is clear that a comprehensive strategy must recognize that public safety is at risk due to high levels of crimes committed by sanctioned persons but have not yet desisted from crime. The report shows that offenders do not succeed in reintegrating themselves into the community as a law-abiding citizen, even after a period of incarceration. Recidivism remains likely without effective interventions. There is therefore an urgent need for effective social integration or reintegration programs. The mentioned elements are an essential tool in the prevention of re-offending and in the enhancement of public security - two very essential objectives of social policy in every country.

Recidivism is also a pressing issue in the United States. Nearly 44% of released offenders return before their first year out of prison, according to the National Institute of Justice (2023). In the USA, within nine years of their release, five out of every six state convicts were rearrested, according to 2018 research by OJP's Bureau of Justice Statistics (Morgan, 2018). Many of these convicts had mental health or substance addiction issues when they entered jail, which may have gone untreated while they were there. But such a high rate of recidivism could be an indicator of failed rehabilitation system or that rehabilitation is not part of the prison responsibility. They left still dealing with those problems and facing challenges like employment, housing and gaining access to education, and caring for their children. More than 600,000 people are released annually from state and federal prisons, while an additional nine million people are released from municipal jails, according to Benecchi (2021). It is expected that a majority will have transformed and fit into the community as progressive citizens. But it is not the case, because, within three years of their release, two out of three former prisoners are rearrested and more than 50% are incarcerated again (Benecchi, 2021).

Recidivism is a significant burden on the criminal justice system due to its effects on public safety, rehabilitation capacity, overcrowding in correctional facilities, resource diversion, increased caseloads, burdensome probation and parole services, and perpetuation of the cycle of reoffending. It appears almost impossible for ex-offenders to successfully reenter society without jobs and basic necessities like clothing, food, and housing. Because of this, America's recidivism problem is significantly more concerning than that of any other democratic country in a comparable economic category. It is concerning that so many of the same inmates return to prison if prisons

have been successful in rehabilitating inmates, as claimed by prison officials. A new approach to the criminal justice system is necessary, as the country's high recidivism rate alone shows that its prisons are as inefficient as they are useless. This raises the question as to the influence of multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism of the USA.

In Australia, recidivism is a significant social issue as well. For instance, 53.1% of freed convicts in Australia, were back in prisons or community corrections within two years of the year that concluded on June 30, 2021, according to the 2022 annual report on government services. According to the Productivity Commission, nearly 60% of convicts of Australian prisoners had already served time in jail before; among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inmates, this percentage is noticeably greater (Tome, 2022). Over half of freed prisoners return to prison after two years, demonstrating that nothing has changed thus far (Melissa, 2024).

Recidivism is also a serious social problem in Africa. For instance, in South Africa, in the year 2020 recidivism rate is estimated to range from 50-70%, with offenders re-offending in a period of three years after release from prison (Africa International Advisors, 2020). There are several reasons for South Africa's high recidivism rate. Chikadzi (2017) states that reintegrating ex-offenders into regular society has a number of problems. These difficulties include stigma and rejection from society and family, difficulty reintegrating into the workforce after a lengthy prison sentence, inferiority complex that impairs mental health, and insufficient or nonexistent after-care services. This raises the likelihood of recidivism among former criminals and significantly impairs the efficacy of offender reintegration. As a result, programming is still subpar even in South Africa, where there is good legislation on offender

rehabilitation and reintegration, such as the White Paper on Corrections. By definition, policies are just ideas until they are implemented well through programming. Aside from this, the many convicts for whom the system is failing will continue to receive great policy documents for nothing. Even though the South Africa study is relevant, it is however limited due to the fact that it only looks at societal factors responsible for recidivism but ignored individual as well as institutional factors which the current study seeks to include.

Recidivism has been a major concern in Nigeria as well. Prisons statistics reflect that 60% of the inmates are recidivists (Oguntunde & Ojo, 2018). Otu (2015) asserts that a variety of factors interact to entice formerly incarcerated individuals to commit crimes again in Nigeria. Peer pressure, substance misuse, poor correctional conditions, prison subculture, negative public or social reaction and views toward freed inmates are some of these reasons. The prison system, the recidivists themselves, and the entire society are all negatively impacted by high recidivism rates in Nigeria. This is especially true for taxpayers, who are primarily responsible for funding the upkeep of the country's criminal justice system, which includes the prison service. It follows that tax dollars and other financial resources are directed toward the jail system at the expense of other vital organizations like the community development and education sectors.

This Nigerian study is very insightful in bringing out multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism. It was however done outside DRC and paid more attention to societal and institutional factors with little focus on individual factors. The current study therefore endeavored to look at all the multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism in DRC.

Recidivism is equally a major concern in the Kenyan society. In Kenya, on the other hand, there was a 11% increase in the number of re-offenders in prisons from 2016 to 2018 (KNBS, 2019). The country's recidivism rate is 47% in 2023 and is still growing, according to data from the Kenya Prisons Service (Cheti, 2023). This is projected to be roughly two thirds, meaning that following their release from jail, two thirds of freed prisoners will end themselves behind bars again. Because of this, a sizable portion of both current and future crimes are committed by former prisoners alone. Lower rates demonstrate the rehabilitation level attained by released offenders and the contribution correctional programs make to their reintegration into society. Recidivism is expensive for the public's safety, the government's budget for maintaining prisoners in jails and prisons, and the expense of apprehending, prosecuting, and possibly imprisoning repeat offenders (Cheti, 2023). Therefore, it was imperative to study how the personal, institutional and societal background of victims influence their criminal recidivism in DRC Congo.

DRC where this study was conducted has also over time grappled with the problem of recidivism.

The issue of recidivism is even more complex in under developed post conflict countries like the DRC where sometimes, the correct data is not available and even when it is, it is hardly consolidated in such a way to get a complete picture of accurate recidivism rates, and the impact it has. According to Prison Insider (2021), it is approximated that the rate of recidivism as at the year 2021 ranges between 57% to 72%. A majority of the convicted recidivists are ex-combatants who commit serious crimes (Lorenzo, et al, 2021). Those statistics suggest that many offenders, are unable

to refrain from committing criminal offences and to re-socialize, even after serving prison sentences.

In Democratic Republic of the Congo, the presence of more experienced criminals, a majority of whom are ex-combatants, and their involvement in serious crimes, including violent crimes jeopardizes the efficiency of the rule of law which threatens local and national security mechanisms (Lorenzo. *et al*, 2021). The aim of this study was therefore to establish the multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, which is one of the 80 penal institutions in Democratic Republic of the Congo.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

Prisons are designed to correct the behavior of inmates and make them socially acceptable, productive and law-abiding citizens upon completion of their prison sentence. It is generally assumed that after serving their sentence, inmates are released and sent back to their communities, corrected and rehabilitated. When people leave prison rehabilitated, they are reintegrated into society, become respectful citizens and begin to lead productive and crime-free lives. To ensure effective rehabilitation, governments the world over including DRC, have come up with several initiatives including legislative regimes to ensure that upon completion of prison sentence, inmates leave a crime free life.

Despite all these efforts put in place by the prisons to correct the behavior of the inmates, there are still higher rates of recidivism whereby people who have already been to prison end up committing crimes again. DRC is grappling with a serious problem of recidivism as shown by the number of prisoners in Munzenze prison. This prison was designed to accommodate 250 inmates but as at the time of this study had

1,088 out of 3,629 were recidivists. This reality raises the question of whether prisons are really serving their intended purpose, because so many people who have left prison are still coming back and even committing more serious crimes. It is with this in mind that the study sought to investigate the multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison in DRC

## **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

### **1.4.1 General objective**

The main objective of this study was to establish the multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism among convicts in Munzenze maximum prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

### **1.4.2 Specific objectives**

The specific objectives were:

- i) Investigate personal factors that influence criminal recidivism among recidivists in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- ii) Examine institutional factors contributing to criminal relapse of offenders in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- iii) Assess societal factors contributing to criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

The study will be guided by the following research questions:

- i) To what extent do personal factors influence criminal recidivism among recidivists in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo?
- ii) In what ways do institutional factors contribute to criminal relapse of offenders in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo?
- iii) Which societal factors contribute to criminal recidivism among recidivists in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo?

### **1.6 Justifications of the study**

Recidivism in most cases results from institutional, individual or societal problems. It is a source of overcrowding in prisons and constrains meagre prison resources. Re-imprisonment also has an impact on the mindset, mental health and personality of the individual in one way or another. The individual sees himself or herself as useless failure in the society and thus loses self-confidence. The results and suggestions of this study, which looked at the root causes of the issue, could help reduce the consequences of criminal recidivism for the criminal justice system, the broader public, and individual offenders.

For instance, the study findings would also be useful to the inmates themselves in gaining a meaningful knowledge on personal recidivism risk factors so that once released from the custody they could be able to avoid those risk factors, and to control and guide their own behaviors and attitudes in the society.

To the society, the findings in helping to understand societal risk factors of recidivism would empower society members and other stakeholders to assist released convicts in

reintegrating in the society by facilitating them to settle down after discharge from prison.

The findings and recommendations of this study might also assist political decision-makers to institute policies to improve the effectiveness of prisons institutions and other institutions in the criminal justice system globally, in Munzenze prison in North Kivu province, and other prison institutions in Democratic Republic of Congo. The findings will help the government and Munzenze prison officers to understand the causes of recidivism in Munzenze and suggest relevant strategies to enhance the effectiveness of Munzenze prison in terms of reaching its purpose of deterring, incapacitating and rehabilitating convicts.

The study findings and recommendations would also enrich the Knowledge bank and inform future researches in reformation and rehabilitation of convicts. Finally, the findings will refute or confirm the existing theories on recidivism.

### **1.7 Scope of the study**

The study's interest was on establishing factors responsible for criminal recidivism among convicts in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. It focused on the possible influence of personal, institutional and societal factors.

The study was conducted at Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Even though there are other correctional institutions with in the larger DRC, the study only focused on Munzenze due to its notoriety in recidivists. The study participants were recidivist prisoners who were the study

respondents and focus group discussion participants. Prison officers and other stakeholders were engaged as Key informants.

Established as the main and maximum prison in the North-Kivu Province, the Munzenze prison welcomes convicts from North Kivu province, but also those that have been transferred by the criminal justice system from Beni, Butembo cities and Beni, Lubero, Rutsuru, Walikale, Masisi territories. Recidivist convicts in other jails in the same area of our study (North Kivu province,) were not part of this study.

### **1.8 Limitation and Delimitations**

The researcher had two limitations to this study. Firstly, some respondents did not open themselves up about the multiple reasons of their recidivating fearing that whatever they say may be used against them by the judiciary or affect their own security once back in society. For overcoming this restriction, the researcher reassured respondents that any information shared will be used anonymously and for academic purposes only.

Secondly, majority of the respondents were only comfortable speaking in French, Lingala and Congolese Swahili different from the Kenya and Tanzania ones; English may constitute an important obstacle. In front of the mentioned challenge, a local research assistant with languages skills assisted the researcher in terms of translation and explanations, for a smooth communication and effective data collection.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

It will be recalled that the main aim of this study was to establish factors of criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. This chapter reviews literature on criminal recidivism led by the objectives of the study. In addition, the chapter discusses the theoretical approach to the study, which are reformation theory, labeling theory of crime and social learning theories, selected to guide the study. Lastly, the chapter outlines the conceptual framework that was utilized in this study.

#### **2.2 Personal Factors and Criminal Recidivism**

Studies have demonstrated that there is a strong relation between personal factors and the criminal recidivism. For instance, Smith and Jones (2020) established that personal factors like age play a very significant role determining whether somebody recidivate or not. They found that the likelihood of younger offenders committing new offenses is higher. Due to factors including impulsivity and peer pressure, the recidivism rate is higher among juveniles and young adults. Additional research supports this, indicating that aging out of crime and maturing are important factors in lowering recidivism (Brown, 2019). However, it has been demonstrated that initiatives aimed at younger offenders, such as education and mentoring programs, greatly lower these rates. The above studies only focused on impulsivity and age which are personal factors, and peer pressure which is a societal factor but did not consider institutional factors.

Doe and Clark (2018) discovered a clear link between higher rates of criminal recidivism and substance abuse. They contend that because drug addiction and crime are cyclical, they compromise efforts at rehabilitation and raise the risk of reoffending. Recidivism rates have been successfully lowered by treatment and rehabilitation programs, such as Munzenze, that target substance abuse within prisons. This highlights the significance of addressing drug abuse as part of thorough reentry planning. Doe and Clark looked at the relationship—which is a personal factor—between drug abuse and criminal recidivism in this study. They did not consider institutional and societal aspects in their research which the present study undertakes to consider as well.

The correlation between unemployment and recidivism is widely established. Brown (2019) observes that the absence of stable employment opportunities following release heightens the likelihood of reoffending. This connection highlights both personal and societal aspects of criminal recidivism, which occurs when ex-offenders turn back to crime to maintain their standard of living. In order to break this cycle, vocational training and job placement programs are essential, underscoring the necessity of cooperation between correctional facilities, governmental organizations, and the private sector. This study only focused on unemployment, which is a personal factor. Institutional and societal factors were not taken into account in Brown's study.

The protective role of family stability and support in lowering recidivism is emphasized by Lee and Nguyen (2021). According to their research, successful reintegration and decreased reoffending rates are associated with strong family ties

and a stable home environment. This finding is important for prisons in war-torn areas like North Kivu, where social relationships could be strained or broken. It is vital to have programs that support family reunification and incarceration. Sampson and Laub (2016) investigates how marital transitions—such as marriage and divorce—affect people's criminal paths throughout their lives. They contend that through encouraging social ties and duties that discourage people from engaging in criminal behavior, marriage might act as a turning point in a personal's decision to abstain from crime. Turner, Exum, and Brame (2017) address a number of variables, including marital status, that are linked to a person's decision to refrain from committing crimes. They emphasize the protective effect of married partnerships in lowering criminal behavior over time by highlighting data showing a correlation between marriage and reduced rates of recidivism. These authors' researches provide valuable insights into the connection between marital status and criminal recidivism, underscoring the potential influence of marriage on individuals' likelihood of reoffending. In these studies, the focus was only on family stability and marital status, both of which are personal factors, and institutional and societal factors were not part of the picture.

There is also a strong relationship between levels of education and recidivism. Higher education levels are linked to lower rates of reoffending, demonstrating the clear impact of education on recidivism. According to Green and Fisher (2022), education and training not only give prisoners the skills they need for employment, but they also foster cognitive and personal development, which lowers their risk of reverting to criminal activity. This emphasizes how crucial educational initiatives within prisons are as a vital tactic in the fight against recidivism. Higher levels of education are often associated with greater employability and access to stable employment opportunities.

Individuals with higher levels of education may have better job prospects, reducing the likelihood that they will engage in criminal behavior as a means of survival or income generation once reintegrated into society. The study did not consider the institutional and societal factors of criminal reoffending, focusing instead on educational attainment, which is a personal factor.

Martinez and Gomez (2023) investigate the relationship between recidivism and meeting fundamental necessities such as shelter, medical care, and food. According to their research, prisoners who have their fundamental needs satisfied while incarcerated are less likely to commit crimes again after their release. This connection emphasizes how important correctional institutions are to protecting the welfare of prisoners as both a human rights issue and a calculated tactic to lower recidivism rates.

Although the research of Martinez and Gomez illuminates the personal components of criminal recidivism, there are still unanswered questions regarding the larger institutional and societal variables at work. Developing solutions that effectively lower recidivism rates requires taking into account the complex interactions of individual traits, institutional policies, and societal influences. Policymakers and practitioners can create more comprehensive approaches to rehabilitation and reintegration that satisfy the diverse needs of people involved in the criminal justice system by addressing these various multifactorial dynamics.

A complex interplay of factors determining recidivism is revealed by the literature, with implications for practice and policy in Munzenze Prison and similar contexts. A multifaceted strategy that incorporates family support services, education, drug rehab, vocational training, and efforts to address basic necessities is needed to address these

personal markers. In addition to helping ex-offenders successfully reintegrate back into society, this all-encompassing strategy enhances the general safety and stability of communities in North Kivu and beyond.

### **2.3 Institutional Factors and Criminal Recidivism**

Haney (2018) advocates for humane and rehabilitative environments while focusing on the effects of jail conditions. The study investigates the relationships between severe prison policies, prisoner stress, and higher recidivism rates. Crewe (2021) critically analyzes modern prison circumstances in "Doing Time," highlighting the significance of comprehending the living experiences of prisoners. The book provides insight into the various facets of jail life that support the continuation of criminal activity. The 2019 study by Liebling and Arnold investigates the psychological effects of prison circumstances, such as crowded quarters and restricted areas, on the wellbeing of inmates. The book explores the connection between reoffending risk, prison circumstances, and mental health.

Haney (2018), Crewe (2021), and Liebling and Arnold (2019) have all written books that focus on the relationship between recidivism rates and jail conditions, policies, and inmate experiences. These studies emphasize how crucial it is to establish compassionate and therapeutic settings in prisons in order to lessen stress among inmates, enhance mental health, and eventually decrease recidivism rates. These studies, while concentrating on institutional variables, do not go into great detail to examine the human traits and experiences that could play a role in criminal recidivism. Furthermore, the societal factors that can affect criminal recidivism rates are ignored in the literature by Haney, Crewe, Liebling, and Arnold.

The evaluation of correctional officer training programs by Guerino and Mulako-Wantale (2021) shows a clear link between well-structured training and favorable outcomes for inmates. In order to lower recidivism, the research highlights the necessity of staff training that uses evidence-based methods. In their 2020 study, Trammell and Payne examine how staff training differs in punitive and rehabilitation-focused institutions and evaluates the effects on recidivism rates and institutional behavior. The study emphasizes how critical professionalism is to the effective rehabilitation of inmates. The 2018 survey-based study by Stohr and Lovrich investigates the skills and training requirements of correctional leaders. The study pinpoints crucial areas where improving training and leadership abilities could have a significant impact on prisoner rehabilitation and lower recidivism.

The literature mostly looks at how leadership skills and training programs for correctional officers affect the rates of criminal recidivism and institutional conduct in prisons. These studies highlight how crucial professional staff behavior, well-organized training programs, and strong leadership are to encouraging convict rehabilitation and lowering criminal recidivism rates. Although these studies concentrate on institutional variables, they do not fully investigate the individual inmates' personal traits and experiences that could also play a role in criminal recidivism. Furthermore, the sociocultural elements that may have an impact on criminal recidivism rates are ignored in the literature by Stohr and Lovrich, Guerino and Mulako-Wantale, and Trammell and Payne.

Felicity, Jane Ryan, et al. have demonstrated a link between the attitudes of prison staff and criminal recidivism (2020). They draw attention to the ways that unfavorable attitudes held by prison staff—such as stigmatization, a lack of empathy, and

punishing methods—can weaken the will of prisoners to rehabilitate and raise the possibility of recidivism. In order to increase the efficacy of rehabilitation programs and lower recidivism rates, the study highlights the significance of developing positive staff-inmate interactions and encouraging supportive and rehabilitative attitudes among correctional officers. According to research conducted in 2019 by Stefan LoBuglio, Joycelyn M. Pollock, et al., correctional officers' unfavorable views on substance misuse and treatment can make it more difficult for prisoners to enroll in and benefit from rehabilitative programs, which in turn raises the likelihood that drug-related offenders will reoffend. The study highlights the need for training and interventions to address the attitudes and perceptions of prison officers in order to improve the effectiveness of substance misuse treatment and reduce recidivism among the prison population. These studies focused only on the attitudes of prison staff and the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs, both of which are institutional factors in reoffending, but ignored personal factors such as gender, age, gender, level of education, and societal factors such as lack of social support and social stigma.

In-depth analysis of social contagion in correctional facilities by Darmody and Warr (2020) examines how exposure to aberrant inmate behavior fosters the development of criminal mindsets. In order to lower recidivism, the study underlines how crucial it is to address social factors. In their sociological analysis of the sociological features of incarceration, Bales and Piquero (2022) look into how interactions among inmates affect criminal behavior. Their research emphasizes the necessity of recidivism mitigation strategies that interrupt harmful social contagion. In their study on inmate-to-inmate violence from 2021, Hensley and Tewksbury highlight the importance of

social learning and assistance in prison environments. Comprehending these multifactorial dynamics is essential to developing therapies that stop the spread of harmful habits and lower recidivism rates. The studies ignored personal factors like age, sex, education level and societal factors like stigmatization and social support that contribute to criminal recidivism in favor of focusing on exposure and interactions within prisons, which are institutional components of criminal recidivism.

#### **2.4 Societal Factors and Criminal Recidivism**

The difficulties people have when trying to reintegrate into society after serving time in prison are examined in Petersilia's extensive work (2019). The book examines how social exclusion and stigmatization obstruct successful reentry, which in turn raises recidivism rates. In their research from 2021, Travis and Western examine how mass incarceration affects society and highlights the stigma that people with criminal records must endure. Their research emphasizes how stigma affects housing, job, and social interactions on a widespread basis, which exacerbates the cycle of recidivism. The relationship between race, involvement in the criminal justice system, and job market results is examined in Pager's (2018) study. The study demonstrates how racial and criminal history-based stigmatization feeds into social injustices by impeding successful reintegration and raising the risk of recidivism.

The literature mostly looks at how racial differences, social exclusion, and stigmatization affect recidivism rates and successful reintegration into society. These studies demonstrate the widespread stigma and discrimination that people with criminal histories experience. They also show how these societal variables exacerbate hurdles to housing, employment, and social connections, which in turn feeds the cycle

of recidivism. These studies, while concentrating on societal variables, do not go further into the institutional practices and policies that could be linked to criminal recidivism. The personal traits and experiences of people that could affect the nature of criminal recidivism are ignored in the research.

In their 2018 study, Western and Pettit explore how incarceration affects social inequality, with a particular emphasis on how social support networks for those entangled in the criminal justice system break down. The study emphasizes the connection between recidivism and absence of support from family and the community. The study by Nurse and Woodall (2021) looks into the function of social support in the rehabilitation of offenders, highlighting the significance of peer and family interactions in lowering recidivism. The study emphasizes the necessity of initiatives to fortify social support networks both within and outside of prisons. The book by Clear and Latessa (2022) provides insights into the difficulties faced by offender reintegration programs, especially with regard to the dearth of strong social support networks. The authors suggest evidence-based tactics for enhancing social support networks among released prisoners in order to lower recidivism rates. When analyzing the factors that contribute to criminal recidivism, the studies concentrated on the social support of the society, which is a societal issue; however, they ignored personal and institutional aspects in their studies.

Current study provides strong evidence for the link between criminal recidivism among released inmates and a lack of employment opportunities in society. For example, Walters (2021) examines the five-year predictive value of job problems on recidivism among a cohort of recently released inmates. His study emphasizes how important steady work is to ex-offender's successful reintegration. In a similar vein,

Thompson and Uggen's (2022) research, focuses on juvenile offenders making the transition to adulthood. They discover that having a job considerably reduces the chance of reoffending, highlighting the significance of work possibilities as a successful strategy for rehabilitation. Taken together, these studies provide strong evidence that employment is a crucial factor in reducing the risk of reoffending, suggesting that improving employment opportunities could be a central pillar of efforts to reintegrate ex-offenders into society. These studies focused on the lack of employment opportunities, which is undoubtedly a societal factor in criminal recidivism. They ignored institutional factors like prison conditions and prison staff attitudes, as well as personal factors like gender and educational level, all of which in some way also contribute to criminal recidivism.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

Three theories guided this study: Reformation Theory, Labeling Theory of Crime and social Learning theory. The three were taken as appropriate theoretical frameworks for analyzing and interpreting the multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism, not only in Democratic Republic of the Congo but worldwide as well.

### **2.5.1 Reformation Theory**

According to Wright, (2010), reformation refers to changing the character and personality of convicted offenders into law abiding individuals. As a theory of Punishment, Reformation Theory posits that correctional institutions should offer convicts the opportunity to change into law abiding citizens. Therefore, to reform offenders into law abiding citizens is a cardinal responsibility of prisons. Convicted offenders are reformed to enable or make them fit back into their societies as law

abiding citizens. Correction institutions seek to change the personality and behavior of convicts. This is normally done through educational, vocational or therapeutic measures such as guidance and counselling. Some convicts whom might have committed crimes because of poverty are also equipped with vocational skills on which they are expected to earn a living by legitimate means.

However, for reformation measures offered in correction institutions such as prisons to succeed, it is expected that the prison authorities must first establish the cause of criminality in each and every individual convict since there are various categories of offenders with varied causes behind their criminal activities. If this is not fully understood then the reformation efforts will be in vain. The prison institutions must also be equipped to deal with human and infrastructural capabilities to reform the prisoners. This is important because it is only when convicts are fully reformed that they can be rehabilitated back into the communities as law abiding individuals (Wright, 2010). Convicts who leave prisons without being reformed are most likely to recidivate. However, convicts may be reformed by correction institutions but may relapse back to crime after discharge because of problems and challenges faced in the community such as social stigma and discrimination (Wright, 2010). Based on reformation theory, the study will assess whether or not Munzenze prison in Goma/DR Congo has the capacity to reform inmates by evaluating the effectiveness of existing reformation programs. While the emergence of reformation theory might contribute in explaining the how the inmates may be reformed by the prisons, but as a theoretical model it fails to illustrate how the component of society might erode the change of character that the prison might have inculcated in the former inmates. Labeling theory of crime has proposed some answers to this question.

### **2.5.2 Labeling Theory of Crime**

With labeling theory of crime, criminal behavior in an individual begins with society labelling some actions as criminal. It then labels as criminals those individuals who have committed these actions. Over time, the labelled person internalizes the negative label, commits criminal acts that fit the label, taking on the characteristics that define the real criminal. Siegel (2014) noted that people become criminals when they are labelled as such by significant members of a society, and they accept these labels as part of their personal identity. They will be what their description is, noted Williams (2001). This is reinforced by having been labelled a criminal by society, he/she suffers from labelled injustice, as getting rejected by employers or profiled by the police, and poor relations with the respectable members of society, Williams reiterated (2001).

This social stigma and discrimination as a result of labeling is a societal factor which can cause recidivism because when an ex-convict is denied an opportunity for a job which would be of benefit to him or her become self-sufficient and the loved ones by legitimate means they may resort to crime and latter re-offend after punishment. This theory explains the situation in many developing countries including in Goma City and Democratic Republic of Congo as a country. However, Charlotte (2021) noted that labelling theory is criticized for failing to take into account the ability of individuals resistance to labelling and the assumption that labelling is an automatic process. While the labeling theory of crime might contribute in explaining the component of society might erode the change of character that the prison might have inculcated in the former inmates, but as a theoretical model it fails to illustrate how

the whole society contribute to former inmates recidivate to crime. Social learning theory has proposed some answers to this question.

### **2.5.3 Social Learning Theory**

Developed by Albert Bandura (Zanden Vander, 1987; 120), this theory postulates that bad or good behavior is learnt through observation and imitation. The theory view individuals as self-organizing, proactive, reflective and self-regulating, rather than as reactive creatures design and guided by the environment or controlled by hidden inner impulses.

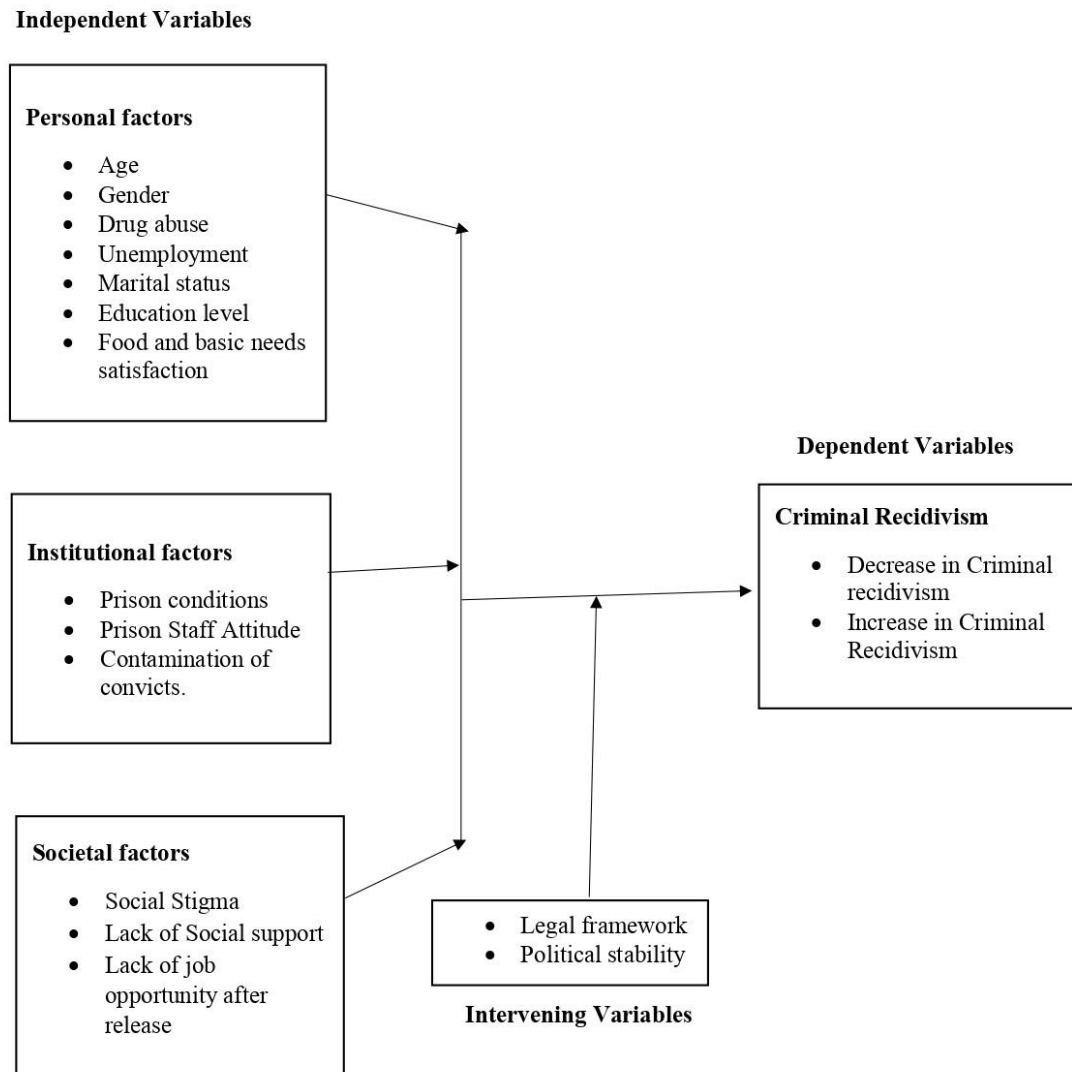
From the perspective of social learning theory, human functioning is based on dynamic interactions of three elements: personal, behavioral and environmental influences. How individuals justify or explain the results of their own actions informs and changes their environment and the individual factors that they have at their disposal, which in turn influences and changes subsequent conduct. Bandura's notion of reciprocal determinism is based on this, the view that individual factors, expressed as cognition, influence behavior, and environmental influences interact to create a triadic interrelationship.

This implies that the reoffenders might have learnt their criminal activities from others who are also criminals. This is because crime is, by its nature, a social condition. It cannot be dissociated from the society. The offenders therefore may have had close friends or relatives from whom they acquired their beliefs about the anti-social behaviors. The theory postulates criminal techniques and attitudes are learned by becoming intimately involved with criminal peers; crime is therefore learned. Furthermore, by observing human social interactions, it posits that human behavior is modelled, either directly through observation of those close to them and through

intimate contact, or indirectly through the media. It is argued that interactions that are rewarded will be imitated, while those that are punished will be avoided.

In summary, social learning theory suggests that when a role model to an individual is a criminal, then there is a high likelihood that s/he will also turn into a criminal through learning. This begins with observation and imitation of criminal behaviors, followed by social reinforcements such as encouragement, and being invited to commit crimes. Those who are weak and can resist the temptation will turn into recidivists and repeat crimes even after punishments.

## 2.6 Conceptual Framework



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework**

The study of criminal recidivism inside Munzenze Prison in North Kivu Province, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, offers a convincing look into the complex phenomenon of recidivism. Personal, institutional, and societal influences are the three key multifactorial dynamics that form the foundation of this research on criminal recidivism. Every one of these dimensions contains unique components that,

when combined, show the intricacy of the reentry pathways into criminal activity after release.

Personal factors play an important role reoffending. These include dynamic and static risks. The static risk drivers are aspects of a convict's history that forecast reoffending and cannot be modified. These include the (young) age at first crime and the amount of previous convictions. Unemployment and gender are among the dynamic risk factors associated with reoffending. Young people reoffend more often than their elders. Unemployed people are more exposed to recidivate than the employed ones.

Secondly, institutional factors are factors that can influence the behavior of the prisoner. They include prison conditions, prison staff attitude and prison capability to effectively rehabilitate prisoners. Overcrowded inmates, the atmosphere in which rehabilitation programs are conducted, inmates psychological support, are one of the core institutional factors of recidivism.

Thirdly, Social stigma towards released prisoners, lack of social support, lack job opportunities are the main of societal risk factors associated with criminal recidivism. Society as a living environment has a greater role in the contribution or lack of contribution to reoffending. Research confirms that released ex-offenders who remain in contact with criminal associates after release are more likely to reoffend. Truants and delinquents even if back in the community are more likely to recidivate.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the research methodology that was employed in the study. These include the design of the study, target population, sampling procedure, research instruments and procedure of data collection, and lastly, methods of data analysis.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

Exploratory sequential design was used for the purpose of this study. The exploratory sequential design is flexible and adaptable, as noted by Snyder and Cardona (2019). This facilitates researchers to begin with qualitative data gathering and analysis to thoroughly examine a phenomenon before proceeding to quantitative data collection and analysis. They argue that this approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of complex research questions through the triangulation of multiple sources of data. In order to describe, explain and present research findings on multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism in Munzenze Prison, exploratory sequential design is a suitable research method for this specific study from which the research design questions “what, how” on multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism in Munzenze Prison will be answered. Exploratory sequential not only described and explained a societal phenomenon but the researcher also, used qualitative findings to corroborate quantitative data on the study subject.

#### **3.3 Study Site**

The research was conducted at Munzenze Prison. Munzenze is a maximum-security prison located in the Eastern part of Democratic Republic of the Congo in North Kivu

province, 5 Kilometers from the Central Business District. Munzenze prison was built to accommodate around 250 detainees, currently houses about 3 629 male prisoners including 150 females.

Munzenze maximum prison was selected as a suitable site for this study because it houses considerable number of both male and female hard-core convicts mainly from North Kivu province, a province with one of the highest rates of criminality in the DRC and it is a province most affected by conflicts in the country. The prison was established in 1953 for a total capacity of 100 inmates then expanded in 2010 to 250 inmates but is currently overflowing with convicts more than ten time its capacity. It is believed as per the prison records that about 1 088 out of a total of 3629 of these inmates are recidivists.

In addition, the North Kivu province is exposed to more security challenges, not only because of its strategic geographical location, but also because of the availability of mineral resources around the city, which attract rebel groups that then create insecurity in North Kivu province by facilitating the small arms proliferation throughout the region and many other illegal activities (trafficking in drugs, people and minerals by armed groups, etc.). North Kivu province attracts many criminals; it has become a criminogenic city. Studying the multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison and their impact on security in this particular zone is really important because some prisoners are not only recidivists but also ex-combatants and members of criminal groups.

### **3.4 Target population**

All recidivists in Munzenze prison were the target population for this study. However, prison officers, counselors, religious leaders and civil actors who are normally

engaged in rehabilitation programs participated in the study as Key Informants in order to assist in understanding and factors responsible for criminal recidivism in the prison.

### **3.5 Sampling techniques and sample size**

In this study, to select subjects who took part in the study, the researcher first of all purposively selected recidivists, after which a simple random technique was employed. Only the recidivists confirmed by prison authorities were included in the study as respondents, and in focus group discussions. Focus group discussion panel comprised of recidivists who were in Munzenze prison at the time of the study. Both male and female recidivists were engaged in the study.

Similarly, the selection of key informants followed purposive sampling method. The key informants were prison officers from the same prison, counselors, religious leaders and civil actors to participate in the study. The prison officers have been selected on the basis of their length of service - the number of years they have worked at Munzenze maximum security prison.

The study used the formulae of Yamane, (1967) to determine the sample size. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select inmates to interview.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

meaning:

n= sample size

N= population size

e= error level

1= constant

For this study, the formula considers 90% as our confidence level and 10% the margin error.

$$\begin{aligned}n &= 1088 / 1 + 1008 (0.1)^2 \\ &= 1088 / 10.89 \\ &= 99.9 \sim \mathbf{100} \text{ criminal recidivists.}\end{aligned}$$

### **3.6 Instruments of data collection**

The study used questionnaires, key informant interviews guides and focus group discussion guides.

#### **3.6.1 Questionnaires**

The questionnaires were used as the primary tool to collect data from repeat offenders in Munzenze prison. The structured questionnaire had open and closed questions. Questionnaires are generally preferred because they are a relatively cheap, fast, and effective way to obtain large amounts of information from a large sample of the target population. The researcher included in the questionnaire related topics about the factors affecting the offender's recidivism.

#### **3.6.2 Key Informant Interviews Guides (Appendix 3 & 4)**

Key informant interviews are in-depth qualitative interviews with people who have in depth information on a subject matter. Gathering information from a variety of people, including community leaders, professionals or residents with direct knowledge of the community, is the purpose of key informant interviews.

**Table 3.1: Key Informants Size**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Size</b>
Prison Officers	6
Civil Actors	4
Religious Leaders	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>

### **3.6.3 Focus Group Discussion Guides (Appendix 2)**

The study also used Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) as a pivotal tool in qualitative data collection. FGDs are invaluable in qualitative research for their ability to unearth deep insights, illuminate the interplay of complex factors, and foster a nuanced understanding of issues like criminal recidivism. Their use significantly enriched the qualitative data collection process and provided a solid basis for developing interventions that were both effective and contextually relevant.

### **3.7 Validity and Reliability**

Validity and reliability are the two most important criteria for the evaluation of both qualitative and quantitative research.

#### **3.7.1 Validity of the instrument**

Babbie (2013) as cited by Leavy (2017) noted that validity is the degree to which an intervention actually promotes what we think it promotes. Validity refers to the consistency of the results obtained. A good measurement has to be valid – that is, measure what it measures. A pre-test of data collection tools was conducted in Kangbayi prison in Beni which had more less similar features as the actual site of the study. Pre-testing, assessed the relevance of the questions and removed the less relevant ones. As for the data collection instruments, their effectiveness was assessed,

then data analysis techniques and methods achieved their accuracy in generating valid results.

### **3.7.2 Reliability of the instrument**

When an intervention, survey instrument, or experimental intervention is reliable, it produces consistent results. Inter-item reliability relates to the use of multiple questions or indices to measure a single variable, as Fallon (2016) notes.

In addition, the degree to which a research instrument consistently produces data or results after multiple trials is known as its reliability. Random mistake influences study reliability. Reliability declines with increasing random error (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

For reliability, the criterion tool was used whereby it measured the reliability of the data by benchmarking it a list of criteria defined based on the theoretical concept. According to reliability, the internal consistency mechanism was used whereby the data received was confronted from source A to the same from source B and C and whatever was consistent was considered reliable.

### **3.8 Data Collection procedures**

**Questionnaires:** Amongst the inmates who are recidivists, questionnaires were administered to them by research assistant, who was present as the recidivists filled.

One-on-one interviews were scheduled through a phone call and by visiting the organization and booking an appointment. While taking notes during the interview, close attention was given to ensure the interviewee and the quality of the interview.

**Focus Group Discussion:** A small group of about ten (10) serial recidivists were brought together to answer questions in a moderated setting. The group was chosen

due to the fact that they had recidivated severally and were therefore better placed to shed more light on the multifactorial dynamics of recidivism. The participants to the focus group discussion were welcomed and the introduction of the topic, the researcher, and co-moderator was done. The researcher went over ground rules and suggestions for a successful discussion. It was important to make the participants feel at ease and forthcoming with their responses.

### **3.9 Data Analysis, Presentation and Discussion**

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed. Quantitative data was processed using the SPSS program. It was presented and analyzed in tabular and graphical form, such as graphs and pie charts. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies in terms of explaining relationship between dependent and independent variables were presented. Content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. Qualitative data was coded using a heuristic coding technique. This is where data is encoded based on its core content or meaning. The data in the code is then the subject of a value assignment and thematic analysis and then expressed in the form of statements and arguments.

### **3.10 Data Management and Ethical Considerations**

The authority to carry out the study was sought from Kenyatta University. Also, a clearance for the study was requested from the Director Office of Munzenze Prison, in Goma, where a Research Approval was appended to the Kenyatta university clearance for data collection. While conducting research no respondent was forced to answer questions, and ethical rights were observed.

The researcher informed all participants through a covering letter (Appendix 5) of their voluntary participation and confidentiality of the information they give. Thus, an informed consent was sought from all respondents.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the analysis, presentation and discussion of data that was collected for this study. The discussions were done in relation to the specific research objectives. The purpose of the research was to establish multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism among prisoners in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. The chapter is organized in three sections along the research questions that guided the study. The first and second sections present the response rate and demographic characteristics of the respondents who participated in the study, while the third section is based on the study objectives which focused on the following:

- a) Investigating personal factors that influence criminal recidivism among recidivists in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- b) Examining institutional factors contributing to criminal relapse of offenders in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- c) Assessing societal factors contributing to criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

#### **4.2 Demographic Data**

##### **4.2.1 Response Rate**

The researcher focused on a specific group of 100 serial recidivist offenders, who were serving at Munzenze Maximum Prison in Goma City, within the Nord-Kivu County of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The total questionnaires completed

and returned were 100, having none as spoilt due to incomplete data, and that represented a 100% response rate of the total sample population. This is more than the required sufficiency framework of between 33% and 66% as advised by Hagaman and Wutich (2017). According to Baguley (2004), statistical power is enhanced when the sample size is increased. Together with the Prison Officers (6 respondents), Civil Actors (4 respondents) and religious Leaders (4 respondents), the response rate was 100% (114 respondents). The response rate for those who participated in the study is reflected in the figure below.

<b>Recidivist Respondents</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Male	80	80%
Female	20	20%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

**Table 4.1: Gender of the Respondents**

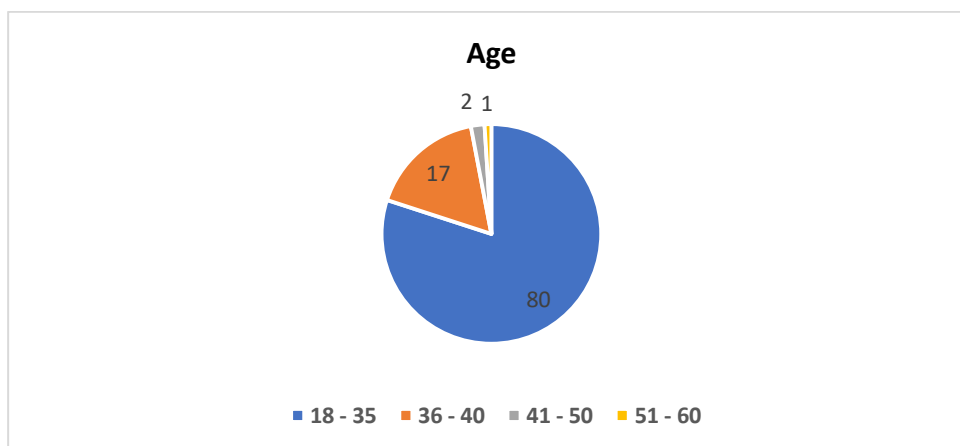
**Source: Field Data (2023)**

In addition to the primary data collection, the researcher conducted interviews with 14 key informants. These informants were selected based on their seniority within Munzenze Maximum Prison, their length of service, and their expertise in the specific information we needed. The pool of key informants included also prison officers, religious leaders, and civil representatives from Goma City. This diverse group of participants was integral to broadening our exploration and gaining a more comprehensive understanding of our research subject. Furthermore, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held with select groups of inmates to gather additional perspectives and insights, enriching the qualitative data obtained from individual interviews.

The research conducted by Adams, et al. (2021), on correlation between gender and criminal recidivism all highlight the significance of considering gender as an important factor in understanding and managing criminal recidivism, which is supported by the data presented above. These authors' recognition of the distinct experiences and challenges faced by male and female offenders contributes to the development of more intricate and effective criminal justice procedures and laws. The study looks into how a person's gender interacts with many social, economic, and contextual factors to affect their likelihood of engaging in criminal activity and committing new crimes. To comprehend the recidivism patterns among male and female sexual offenders, the research examined a variety of factors, including criminal histories, types of offenses, and demography.

#### **4.2.2: Age of the Respondents**

Respondents were asked to indicate age by placing a mark next to the relevant option provided. The data is captured in Figure 4.2 below.



**Figure 4.1: Age of the Respondents**

**Source: Data Field (2023)**

From the results, the combined clusters of all the respondents was as follows: 18–35 years' age category was the highest with 80 (80%) of the respondents. Second, was the 36–40 years' age category with 12 (12%) of the respondents. Third, was the 41-50 years' age category with 2 (2%) of the respondents. The least of the sample was the 51-above years' age category with 1 (1%) of the respondents.

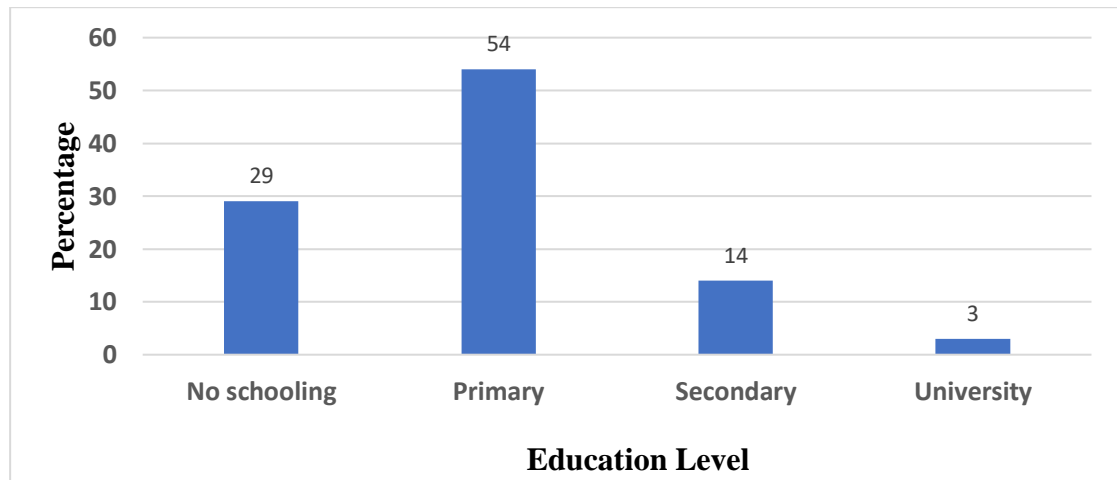
This idea that age can contribute to recidivism is consistent with Smith and Jones (2020) and Brown (2019), who also found that younger offenders have a higher likelihood of committing new crimes. Adolescents and young adults have higher recidivism rates due to things like impulsivity, peer pressure and lack of maturity.

Some studies have identified potential causes for the increased risk of recidivism among young offenders between the ages of 20 and 35. In this age range, young adults are frequently still going through their social and psychological growth. They may not be able to control impulses, make decisions or plan for the long term. Due to this, they may be more inclined to commit crimes and are more likely to do so again (Moffitt, T. E., 1993).

The United States Sentencing Commission performed a research in 2016 that found that the 20- to 34-year-old age bracket experienced the highest overall adult arrests for federal offenders. They came to the conclusion that it is not surprising that federal offenders who join and leave the federal system at younger ages are more likely to recidivate as arrests are closely related to age. Older age groups experienced fewer arrests, according to both the FBI's data on national 2016 arrests and the prior arrest records of federal offenders.

### 4.2.3 Level of Education

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of education by placing a mark next to the relevant option provided. The data is captured in table 4.2 below.



**Figure 4.2: Respondents Level of Education**

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

The results showed that the majority of respondents, 54%, had completed primary school. This group represents those who had laid the foundational stones of their learning journey. Moving up the educational ladder, approximately 29% had ventured into secondary education, showing a commitment to advancing their knowledge and skills. An intriguing discovery was that a small but notable 3% of our participants had reached the pinnacle of academic achievement by attaining a university level education, a testament to their dedication and hard work.

Perhaps one of the most thought-provoking aspects of our study was that 14% of the individuals we engaged with had not experienced formal education. This segment

adds a unique dimension to the research, as it highlights diverse life experiences and backgrounds within sample.

You need to explain how level of education was a key variable in explaining recidivism e.g. you may note that education is key in helping individuals gain knowledge and skills to navigate through life. Since vast majority of recidivists had low levels of education it means they were in a way for instance able to get formal employment.

This idea that educational level can contribute to reoffending is in line with Green and Fisher (2022), who also found that educational attainment and training not only provides prisoners with the skills they need for employment, but also promotes cognitive and personal development, which reduces their risk of returning to criminal activity. This underlines the importance of educational initiatives in prisons as a key tactic in the fight against reoffending.

Levels of education, school enrolment and literacy rates are critically low, especially in rural mining areas, depriving young people of the opportunity for education. Many starts working in the mines at a very young age, forgoing education. One of the main issues is illiteracy, which pushes individuals into depravity and marginalizes them. Sometimes, in an attempt to escape this depravity, the person decides to follow the criminal route.

An uneducated person is more likely to commit crimes such as threatening, injuring, vandalizing and assaulting among others, and crime rates are generally higher in areas where people with lower levels of education live. Thus, it is possible to consider that a lack of knowledge contributes to people turning to crime. However, this does not

imply that those who have more knowledge acquire any unique traits that make them less criminally inclined. This is consistent with the findings of Swisher and Dennison (2016), who found that educational pathways that led downward were linked to higher rates of crime, whereas those that led upward were linked to lower rates of crime.

### **4.3 Objectives of the Study**

Having presented and analyzed the demographic features of participants, this section focuses on analysis and presentation of the main research objectives. Recall that the study set out to accomplish three goals.

#### **4.3.1 Personal Factors That Influence Criminal Recidivism among Recidivists in Munzenze Prison, North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of The Congo.**

In addition to examining the multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism, the study also looked at how age, gender, substance abuse, education level, unemployment, marital status and the satisfaction of food and basic needs can influence the criminal character of prisoners.

**Table 4.2: Marital Status**

<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Married	5	5%
Single	86	86%
Separated	8	8%
Widowed	1	1%
Divorced	0	0%

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

The results show that, among our respondents, 5% were in a marital relationship, 86% were single, 8% were separated, 1% were widowed, and none were divorced. But among those who were single, around half of them had children. The survey reveals a high proportion of single parents among respondents, with around 50% of unmarried participants, both male and female already having children. Several socio-economic factors prevalent in the region help to explain this trend. The overwhelming responsibilities of a family when an individual is not in an employment, predisposes one to engage in crime to get proceeds to utilize on the family. This is in concurrence with Mowen and Boman (2020) who indicated that, the family can have a role of positive and negative influences on offending behaviors.

Marital status can influence criminal behavior. Marital stressors such as financial problems, conflict or relationship problems can contribute to reoffending. For some individuals, these stressors may lead to criminal behavior as a coping mechanism or as a means of escaping from marital difficulties that may then lead to spousal separation. On the positive side, however, a supportive and stable marital relationship can play a protective role against reoffending. A spouse who encourages

rehabilitation, provides emotional support and helps the individual to reintegrate into society can be a crucial factor in mitigating the risk of reoffending. The findings show that, married people were few among the reoffenders, while single people made up more than 85% of the reoffenders.

The correlation between marital status and the likelihood of recidivism in criminal cases has been repeatedly demonstrated. Married people with family obligations typically have stronger social networks and support systems, which can act as deterrents to reoffending. On the other hand, people who are widowed, divorced, or single could not have access to these social supports, which could raise their risk of recidivism. In their work *"When the Ties that Bind Unwind: Examining the Enduring and Situational Processes of Change Behind the Marriage Effect,"* Bersani and Doherty (2013) explore the processes through which marriage affects recidivism. They discover that a criminal's life can change significantly after getting married. The study emphasizes how social ties made during marriage can cause substantial adjustments to a person's routine and peer relationships, removing them from environments that are conducive to crime and decreasing the chance that they would commit crimes again. Turner, Exum, and Brame's (2017) study, which examined several factors, including marital status, that are connected to an individual's choice not to commit crimes, has corroborated this. By presenting evidence that demonstrates a link between marriage and lower recidivism rates, they underline the protective role that married unions have in gradually reducing criminal conduct.

High unemployment and few job opportunities combined with a booming young population lead to idleness and feelings of despair. Some turn to early parenthood to gain social status and meaning.

Poverty and lack of prospects also mean that many young people cannot afford to get married. Having children out of wedlock is often seen as more achievable. Addressing these structural issues of educational inequality, economic struggle and social norms around relationships and parenting is key to tackling the high incidence of early single parenthood in the region.

**Table 1.3: Employment Status**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	15	15%
No	76	76%
Self-employed	9	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

Among the personal factors, the research also sought to establish whether there was an association between employment status and recidivism. Based on the above findings, at the time of their arrest, 15% of our respondents were employed, which means they had jobs. A significant majority, 76%, were unemployed, indicating that they didn't have regular jobs when they were arrested. Lastly, 9% of our respondents were self-employed, suggesting that they were running their own businesses or working independently.

Economic distress is frequently a direct or indirect cause of imprisonment. According to Abramson (2023), many crimes, such as homelessness and inability to pay child support or other costs, are directly tied to a lack of resources, while other reasons for incarceration, including substance misuse, are indirectly related to poverty. In addition, a Bureau of Justice statistics study of people who had been jailed previously

found that at least 60% of them had been unemployed prior to their initial incarceration, with differences by race, ethnicity, and gender. The same racial and ethnic groups that have a higher chance of being incarcerated are also disproportionately affected by poverty.

Lack of employment opportunities in Goma may be the main reason for this higher reoffending rate in the first semester after release. The similar claim was made in a focus group when a participant gave an explanation of why he returned to Munzenze just a few weeks after being released. He remarked...

"We get lost in society since there are no jobs for us and we also have to eat. If my friends reach out to me in this scenario and invite me to take part in activities where I might at least receive something, I will have to make a decision" (FGD, September 18, 2023).

From the above quote it is clear that lack of employment can push someone into crime. Those who can't get a job could easily be persuaded to take part in criminal activities.

Being rearrested so soon after such a delay is an evidence that the Munzenze prison as an institution is unable to rehabilitate inmates, but it also raises concerns about the efficacy of rehabilitation programs. Based on reformation theory, the prison must have the ability to transform condemned criminals' personalities and character into law-abiding citizens. The prison assesses the efficacy of existing reformation programs to determine whether the programs are suitable, a response to the requirements of the convicts, and may help ex-prisoners to reintegrate into society.

### 4.3.2 Institutional Dynamics and Criminal Recidivism in Munzenze Prison, North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of The Congo.

Being in prison is not the same as being out of danger, because sometimes in prison the risk of experiencing violence seems to increase, as shown in the figures below, where 97% of respondents said they were faced with violence at least once in Munzenze prison. And only 3% have never experienced violence in Munzenze prison. These findings raise concerns about the prison's conditions and capacity to fulfill its primary goal of rehabilitation.

**Table 4.4: Prison Conditions and Violence in Munzenze Prison**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	97	97%
No	3	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

The results show that 97% of respondents confirmed that they had experienced violence at least once during their time in prison. 3% of respondents said they had not experienced violence during their time in prison.

Based on reformation theory, inmates may be subjected to violent socialization in a prison setting where violence is common. As a result, they might observe or engage in violence used to settle disputes or establish dominance. Individuals may adopt violent attitudes and methods of resolving disputes if they are exposed to such aggressive norms and behaviors. Violence might encourage an inmate's criminal behavior while they are inside. To defend themselves or their property, establish authority, or respond

to perceived threats, inmates may use violence. This reinforcement of aggressive and confrontational behavior can undermine the rehabilitative goals of the prison system.

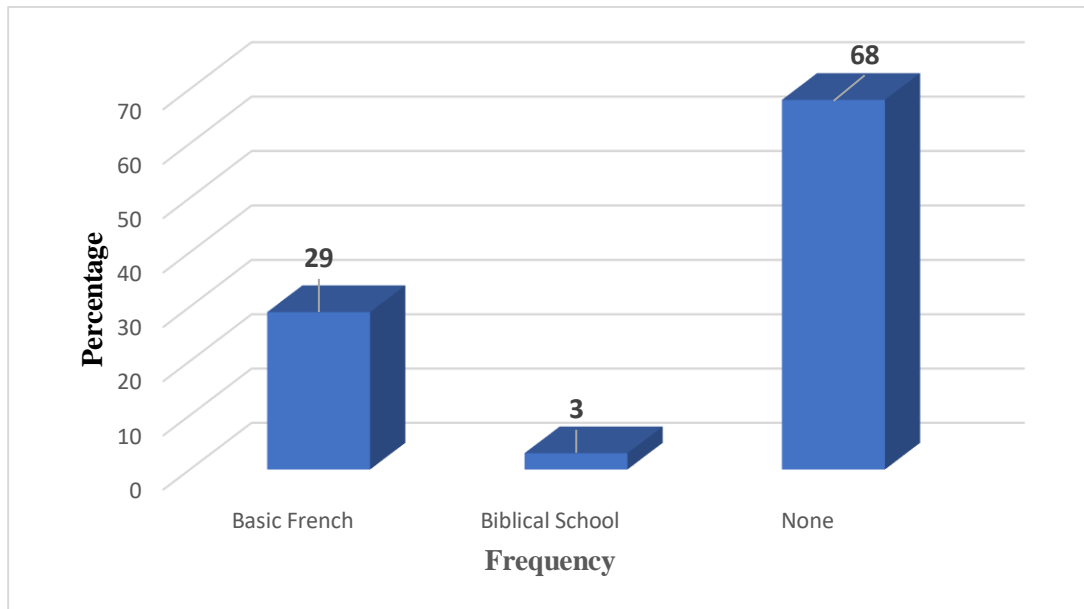
The information from interviews with prison officers reveal that some former rebel prisoners or members of groups who during their time in prison recruit certain prisoners who once released, they also in turn join these armed groups or these rebel groups who also operate in the city of Goma and control certain mining areas in the surrounding areas of Goma is the second case illustrating the relationship between recidivism and security in the city of Goma, a case which is frightening. This is one of the factors that contribute to women being raped, population displacement, violations of human rights, and a sizable number of homicides and assassinations in that region.

Criminals are probably more likely to congregate in Munzenze prison, making them much more active in crime after they are released. Participants in focus groups talked about their lives and environment...

“Some prisoners who had received prison sentences for using and trafficking illegal narcotics continued to engage in these unlawful activities while incarcerated”, they said, “and the prison guards are well aware of this” (FGD September 18, 2023).

It is clear from the above quote that the lack of adequate prison conditions is seriously linked to reoffending on release. Based on reformation theory, implementing efficient rehabilitation programs may be difficult in a violent prison setting. Violence can stop rehabilitation and educational processes and prevent inmates from accessing materials that encourage personal development. As a result, prisoners could not get the help and rehabilitation they need to deal with the underlying issues that led to their illegal behavior. The ongoing exposure to illegal activity inside the prison impedes the whole rehabilitation process. This incident calls into doubt the facility's ability to

rehabilitate inmates once more. This is supported by Haney (2018) who advocates for humane and rehabilitative environments while focusing on the effects of jail conditions.



**Figure 1.3: Prison Conditions and Rehabilitation Programs in Munzenze Prison**

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

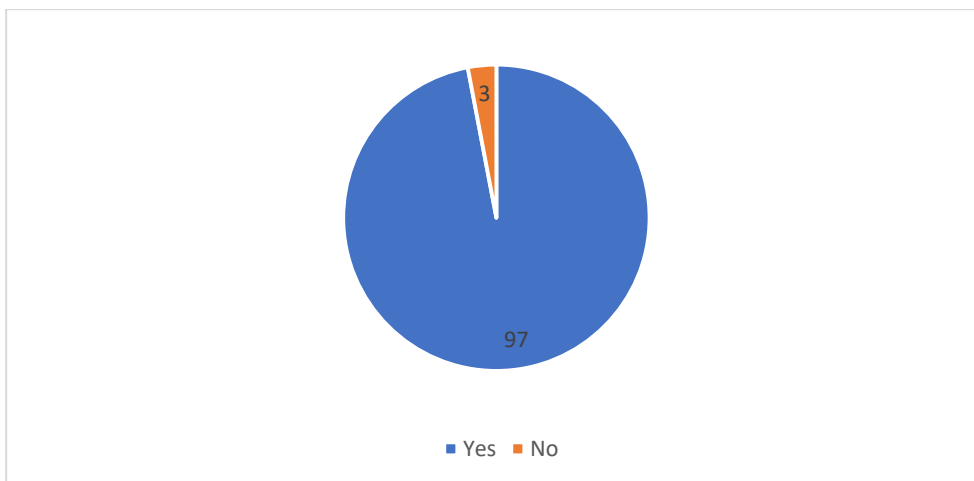
The findings showed that only 29% of respondents had the French language proficiency to read, write and say something. 3% learned skills in Bible school and 68% learned no skills in prison.

We were aware that the inmates at Munzenze Prison participated in a variety of educational activities such as carpentry, Farming skills, computer, kitchen, etc. No practical programs are offered to the detainees, which surprises us much. There are only two organized activities: lessons in fundamental French and Bible study. How can we now count on these inmates to not recidivate when they have not picked up any useful skills in all the time they have been incarcerated?

The same anxiety also came during an interview with a senior prison officer stated that...

“The government and the Ministry of Justice had pledged to organize these practical programs starting in 2019. An inspection team has even visited the prison. And it appears that they opted to wait until the prison was transferred to Mugunga so they could restart as Munzenze Prison was going to be moved there” (KII September 19, 2023).

From the above quote, it is clear that the lack of rehabilitation programmes has a strong relationship with the criminal recidivism of prisoners. Studies have shown how crucial prison rehabilitation programs are for meeting criminogenic needs, encouraging positive behavior changes, building necessary skills, and facilitating a smooth transition back into society after release. Rehabilitation programs are essential for lowering recidivism and improving public safety because they target the reasons of criminal recidivism and provide inmates with the tools and support they need to live law-abiding lives.

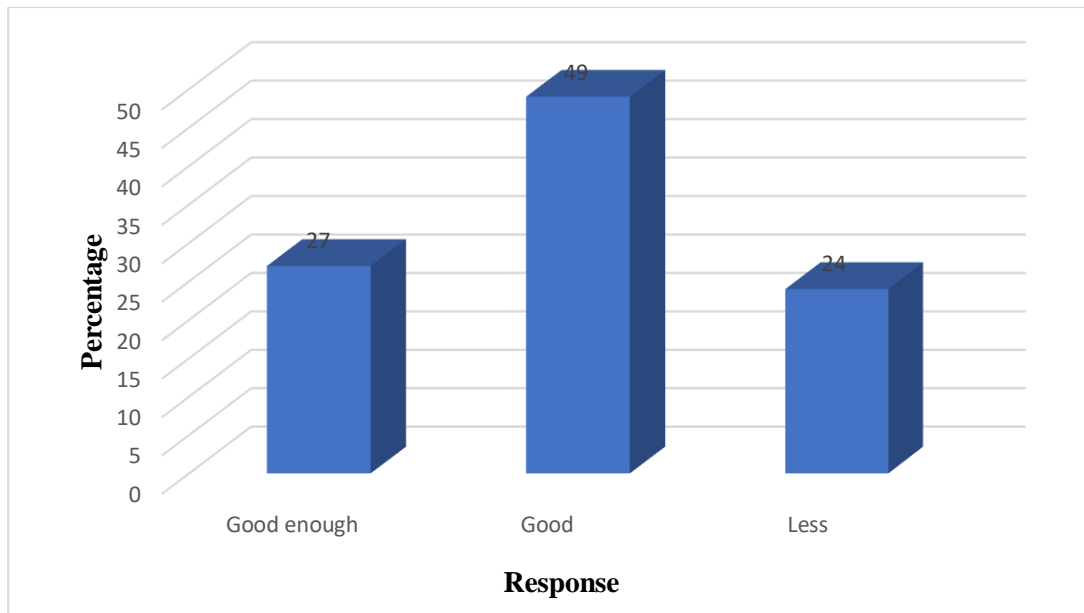


**Figure 4.4: Prison Conditions and Respondents expressing need of Professional Training in Munzenze Prison**

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

The findings show that 97% of respondents expressed the need of acquiring professional training in prison, only 3% were not interested. One of the most immediate consequences of the lack of rehabilitation programs is higher reoffending rates. Without access to treatment programs that deal with the root causes of criminal conduct, prisoners risk leaving prison without the knowledge and assistance necessary to properly reintegrate into society. As a result, there is a greater likelihood that they will reoffend and return to prison. We must not lose sight of the fact that high reoffending rates lead to increased costs for the criminal justice system. Prisons become overcrowded and the financial burden of incarcerating repeat offenders can be significant. Funds that could be used for rehabilitation and re-entry programs are instead spent on incarceration. Knowing that Munzenze prison, which normally holds 250 criminals, is today filled to maximum with more than ten times that number of prisoners.

According to social learning theory, reinforcement is essential in the acquisition and maintenance of behavior. Personal factors such as history of substance abuse, mental health problems and socioeconomic status can influence an individual's susceptibility to reinforcement. For example, individuals with a history of substance abuse may be more susceptible to peer pressure and social influences that reinforce criminal behavior, increasing their likelihood of reoffending.



**Figure 4.5: Prison Staff Attitude**

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

The results show that 29% of respondents felt the treatment they received from prison staff was good enough, 49% felt it was good and only 24% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the treatment they received from staff.

The information from interviews with prison officers indicate that many inmates at Munzenze prison have a history of reoffending. This is often due to a combination of factors, including a lack of access to effective rehabilitation programs within the prison, limited opportunities for education and job training, and underlying issues like addiction and mental health problems. Some prisoners here maintain connections with criminal networks both inside and outside of the prison. These networks can influence inmates to continue engaging in criminal activities, leading to reconvictions for similar offenses. This is supported by Guerino and Mulako-Wantale (2021) who show that the evaluation of correctional officer training programs has a significant impact

on criminal behavior of inmates. In order to lower recidivism, the research highlights the necessity of staff training that uses evidence-based methods.

The findings reveal that Munzenze prison, like many others, faces challenges in providing comprehensive rehabilitation programs and services. This limitation can hinder an individual's ability to reintegrate into society successfully, leaving them vulnerable to relapse into criminal behavior upon release. Many inmates lack stable support systems upon release, which can make it challenging to transition into lawful and stable lives. This lack of support increases the likelihood of reoffending as individuals may resort to familiar criminal activities to meet their basic needs.

Drug and alcohol addiction is prevalent among inmate population in Munzenze, and it significantly contributes to reoffending. Without adequate treatment and support, individuals may continue their pattern of criminal behavior to sustain their addiction. Some inmates at Munzenze prison have extensive criminal histories, making it difficult for them to break the cycle of criminal behavior. Their past convictions can hinder their chances of finding legitimate employment or reintegrating into society.

The Munzenze environment itself can indeed contribute to criminal behavior. Peer pressure, exposure to criminal networks, and a lack of positive role models can influence inmates to engage in criminal activities both inside and outside of prison. Ultimately, the decision to reoffend is a personal one. Some individuals may choose to commit crimes again due to various motivations, including financial gain, a sense of belonging, or a lack of belief in alternative paths

**Table 4.5: Contamination of Convicts**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	35	35%
No	65	65%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

The findings show that only 35% were recidivating because of bad influence in Munzenze prison, then 65% were saying that it is not because of bad influence.

On the one hand, the substantial percentage of respondents (35%) who acknowledged poor influence raises the possibility that unfavorable interactions and connections within the prison setting contribute to recidivism. This is consistent with other studies that show how peer pressure, criminal networks, and outside factors affect the behavior of prisoners and their recidivism rates. It emphasizes how crucial it is to deal with contamination among prisoners, put policies in place to lessen harmful influences, and foster a helpful and rehabilitative prison atmosphere. This agrees with Bales and Piquero (2022) who studied how interactions among inmates affect criminal behavior. Their research emphasizes the necessity of recidivism mitigation strategies that interrupt harmful social contagion.

However, a majority of respondents (65%) denied that negative influence played a role in their recidivism, indicating that other factors can have a greater influence in motivating reoffending behaviors. These could include personal factors such as age, gender, education level, as well as institutional and societal factors such as lack of access to rehabilitation programs, limited opportunities for education and employment on release, and wider social and economic challenges. Understanding and addressing

these multifaceted factors is essential for developing comprehensive strategies to reduce reoffending and promote successful reintegration into society.

#### **4.4 Societal Factors and Criminal Recidivism**

The study also sought to understand society's attitudes towards former prisoners, the behavior of their families and the support of social and religious leaders to facilitate their peaceful reintegration into social and social life.

**Table 4.6: Social Stigma**

<b>Society Attitude</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Receptive	17	17%
Refractory	83	83%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

The findings revealed that only 17% of people surveyed believe society is welcoming. 83% that they are not welcome in the society upon completion of prison sentence. The idea that stigmatization in society may have a role in criminal recidivism is supported by research by Travis and Western (2021), Pager (2018), and Petersilia (2029), who discovered that social exclusion and stigmatization pose challenges for individuals attempting to reintegrate into society after serving time in prison. Regrettably, these factors also contribute to the cycle of recidivism.

Based on Labeling theory, those who are classified as criminals or ex-offenders frequently face social stigma. They might experience discrimination in job, housing, and social relationships, as well as distinct treatment from society, and they might be shut out of some chances. This stigmatization might contribute to feelings of

helplessness or hostility as well as cement their criminal identity. People with criminal records may experience rejection and isolation due to social rigidity. Lack of social support, which is essential for a successful reintegration into society, might result from this rejection. People who feel alone and rejected could seek recognition and a sense of belonging through illegal networks or activities. A risk factor for recidivism is when ex-prisoners are labeled by the society as criminals or offenders.

**Table 4.7: Job Opportunity after Release**

<b>Job opportunity after release</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	12	12%
No	81	81%
Self-employment	7	7%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

Regarding job opportunities, 12% of respondents thought they would be able to find a job after being released from prison, 81% remained skeptical and 7% thought they would be able to reorganize themselves. These findings align with the research conducted by scientists Western and Pettit (2018), Nurse and Woodall (2021), and Clear and Latessa (2022) who examined the relationship between recidivism and inadequate familial and community support. They stressed how important it is to launch programs to strengthen social support systems both inside and outside of jails.

All Key Informants interviewed expressed skepticism when asked if they could employ previous Munzenze detainees. This is due to their lack of faith in the facility's capacity to transform inmates into contributing members of society. In an interview

on September 19, 2023, a parish priest, expressed a willingness to give ex-convicts a second chance if they have truly reformed.

“If someone with a criminal record demonstrates through their attitude and actions that they have positively changed and see themselves as a new person, then yes, I would consider employing them” Nyirinde stated (KII, September 19, 2023).

From the above quote, it is clear that if the prison plays its role in rehabilitating prisoners and equipping them with skills, the social stigma could be reduced and prisoners could even be employed after release. Because some people in society are willing to employ them if and only if the prison has changed their attitude.

Civil society raised the recent case of a prisoner who was killed by neighborhood residents this year at dawn, at around 4am, after an armed raid and robbery in a Goma neighborhood. Unexpectedly, the bandit who was killed was a prisoner, despite the fact that he was supposed to have been incarcerated at the time the crime was done. However, it was found that in addition to being a recidivist, he was also a part of a criminal organization operating in the town and its surroundings, most likely working in concert with a certain local authority or prison officers who provided weapons and uniform.

Information from interviews with key informants reveal that the risk of recidivism is still significant in Goma, because some offenders continue to be connected to criminal networks both inside the jail and in the outside world. They have the power to incite murder from within.

Religious leaders underline the importance of providing released inmates with moral and emotional support. They recognize that a lack of a strong moral foundation might lead to persons reverting to illegal acts, particularly if they lack a feeling of purpose and belonging. Religious leaders are concerned about addiction's impact in

recidivism. They think that stopping the pattern of criminal activity requires spiritual and therapeutic help for addiction treatment. Religious leaders realize the challenges that recently released inmates have in reintegrating into society. They emphasize the necessity of community acceptance and aid in easing the transition of ex-convicts.

The absence of training and career prospects for ex-offenders is highlighted by civil actors in Goma. They contend that depriving people of these resources may make it difficult for them to start living lawfully and increase the likelihood that they would commit crimes again. They support lessening the negative societal stigma attached to former offenders. They think that for former inmates to successfully complete their rehabilitation, it is essential to alter public opinions and encourage their reintegration into society. Civil actors place a strong emphasis on the neighborhood in reducing recidivism. They emphasize the value of getting community members involved in support initiatives, offering mentorship, and creating a safety net for people trying to put their criminal pasts behind them.

**Table 4.8: Social Support**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	61	61%
No	39	39%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

According to the findings, 61% of participants claim to receive visits on a regular basis, while 39% claim not to receive regular visits in Munzenze. Frequent visits establish social links and offer emotional support, both of which are essential for a

successful reintegration and a lower risk of recidivism. On the other hand, because of their diminished social ties and increased isolation, the 39% of people who have few visitors are more likely to commit crimes again. This situation emphasizes the need for improved visitation regulations, which could reduce these hazards by enhancing each prisoner's social integration. This agrees with a study by Nurse and Woodall (2021) which looks into the function of social support in the rehabilitation of offenders, highlighting the significance of peer and family interactions in lowering recidivism. The study emphasizes the necessity of initiatives to fortify social support networks both within and outside of prisons.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter provided an overview of the research findings, new implications, and conclusions in relation to the study's objectives. The principal objective of this study was to establish multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. The study was guided by three objectives. They included investigate personal factors that influence criminal recidivism among recidivists in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo; to examine institutional factors contributing to criminal relapse of offenders in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as assessing societal factors contributing to criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. The chapter also presents recommendations.

#### **5.2 Summary of Findings**

##### **5.2.1 Personal Factors**

The primary research objective sought to investigate personal factors that influence criminal recidivism among recidivists. The age distribution of respondents showed that the majority (80%) fell into the 18-35 age group, followed by 12% in the 36-40 age group, 2% in the 41-50 age group and 1% in the 51+ age group. In terms of education, 54% had completed primary school, 29% had pursued secondary education, and 3% had attained a university level education.

The results revealed that 5% of our respondents were married, 86% were single, 8% were separated, and none had previously been divorced. The irony is that nearly half of individuals who were single had children even though they had not legally married. which prompts us to consider the environments in which these kids are growing up and their living conditions. The results showed that 15% of our respondents were employed at the time of their arrest. 76% of them were unemployed. 9% of our respondents identified as self-employed.

### **5.2.2 Institutional Factors**

The second aim of our study was to examine institutional factors contributing to criminal relapse of offenders in Munzenze maximum prison in Goma in Democratic Republic of Congo. The findings revealed that 97% of respondents said they had been the victim of violence at least once while incarcerated. 3% of those polled claimed they had not been subject to violence while incarcerated. Additionally, the study found that only 29% of respondents had the French skills to be able to read, write and speak. 3% had learnt skills in Bible school and 68% had learnt no skills in prison.

The findings revealed that 97% of respondents expressed the need of acquiring professional trade in prison, only 3% were not interested. The results showed that 29% of respondents esteemed good enough the treatment from the prison staff, 49% found it good and only 24% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the treatment they received from staff.

The findings show that only 35% were recidivating because of bad influence in Munzenze prison, then 65% were saying that it is not because of bad influence. The substantial percentage of respondents (35%) who acknowledged poor influence raises

the possibility that unfavorable interactions and connections within the prison setting contribute to recidivism.

### **5.2.3 Societal Factors**

The third objective was to assess societal factors contributing to criminal recidivism in Munzenze maximum prison in Goma in Democratic Republic of Congo. The findings revealed that only 17% of people surveyed believe society is welcoming. 83% that they are not welcome in the society. Regarding job opportunities, 12% of respondents thought they would be able to find a job after being released from prison, 81% remained skeptical and 7% thought they would be able to reorganize themselves. According to the findings, 61% of participants claim to receive visits on a regular basis, while 39% claim not to receive regular visits in Munzenze.

The labelling of ex-prisoners as criminals has also been identified as a social factor of recidivism. Labeling theory emphasizes the role that society's refractory attitude, which stigmatizes and marginalizes people with criminal records, can have on recidivism. This idea emphasizes how crucial it is to change societal attitudes and give people the tools they need to end a cycle of criminal conduct and reintegrate into society as law-abiding citizens.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The study highlights the complex interplay of institutional, societal, and personal factors influencing criminal recidivism in Goma. A comprehensive strategy for rehabilitation and reintegration is required. The criminal justice system and society at large must work together to address these complex issues in order to stop the recidivism cycle and promote the successful reintegration of ex-offenders into society.

In addition, the research wanted to find out if there was a link between criminal recidivism and security in Goma. Fortunately, the study was able to illustrate this link through three real cases, thanks to careful and meticulous research. The study demonstrated that recidivism not only poses risks within the prison system but also has broader implications for the safety and stability of the entire region. Addressing this issue necessitates comprehensive measures, including improved prison management, rehabilitation programs, and efforts to disrupt criminal networks that exploit recidivists. Furthermore, a broader societal approach is required to provide opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration to break the cycle of recidivism and enhance overall security in Goma.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

It would be helpful to develop a few recommendations in order to address the weaknesses identified by our study after taking into account the findings of this research.

The study recommends that comprehensive rehabilitation programs within Munzenze prison must be developed. Create and implement comprehensive rehabilitation programs within the Munzenze prison system that address the personal factors contributing to recidivism. These programs should focus on mental health support, addiction treatment, vocational training, and education to equip inmates with skills and coping mechanisms to reduce the likelihood of reoffending.

To improve prison conditions and reentry support. The government should invest in improving the conditions within Munzenze maximum prison, including sanitation, inmate's safety, and the categorization of convicts according to their

categories to prevent the infiltration of juvenile offenders by hardcore offenders and to also prevent the potential for the recruitment of armed groups or criminal organizations inside the jail.

Promoting community reintegration and social support by encouraging community-based organizations and local governments to collaborate with the prison system in Goma to support the reintegration of released inmates. Develop community outreach programs that offer mentorship, counseling, and employment opportunities to help Munzenze ex-offenders rebuild their lives and reduce societal factors that contribute to recidivism. The security situation in the city of Goma will improve as a result of creating job opportunities in society and reintegrating ex-offenders into society by giving them the opportunity to access these jobs, especially since our data has shown that criminal recidivism has a high rate of recidivism.

### **5.5 Recommendation for Further Studies**

The primary objective of this study was to establish the multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. A further study should explore the collaboration among the population in general, state security agencies and other non-governmental organizations so as to decrease criminal recidivism so as to improve the security of people and their property.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire

This questionnaire will help in understanding multifactorial dynamics of criminal recidivism in Munzenze prison, and their impacts on security in Goma City, RD of the Congo. Kindly answer the following questions honestly. Note that your responses will be kept in confidence. Do not write your name on this paper.

Prison..... Date.....

#### Part A: General Information

Gender:        Male

                  Female

##### 1. Age in years

18-35

36-30

41-50

51-60

61+

##### Highest Level of Education

University

Secondary

Primary

None

Others (specify) .....

## Part B: Personal Factors

2. Were you employed initially before your first conviction?

Yes  No

3. If yes, what type of employment did you engage in?

Employed

Self-employed

4. What is your marital status?

Married

Single

Widowed

Divorced

Separated

5. Do you have regular access to food and basic needs in your life?

Yes  No

6. Have you ever been in contact with drugs while in Munzenze prison, at least once??

Yes  No

## Part C: Institutional Factors

7. Did you experience violence while serving your imprisonment at Munzenze?

Yes  No

8. What skills did you acquire in prison?

Carpentry

Farming

skills  French

Biblical

Others

9. Do you require a beneficial professional training while serving your sentence?

Yes

No

10. How is the attitude of the prison staff?

Good

Good enough

Bad

11. Did prison contamination affect your criminal behavior?

Yes

No

**Part D: Societal Factors**

12. What was the attitude of the society towards you as an ex- convict?

Receptive

Refractory

13. Do you get regular support from the society as you serve your sentence?

Yes

No

14. Do you think you will find any job opportunity after your release?

Yes  No

## **APPENDIX 2: Focus Group Discussion**

Group code .....

Characteristics .....

1. How are imprisonment conditions?
2. What are your views about prison rehabilitative programming and its role in empowering offenders to desist from crime?
3. What support systems are in place to help you as you near release from prison to society?
4. Which are some of the difficulties you faced and continue facing during your stay here?
5. What elements of prison programs should be enhanced?
6. What should be done to enhance prison programs so that you easily integrate yourself in the society?
7. Do you find prison officers supportive?
8. Are you ready to go back home?

### **PPENDIX 3: Key Informant Interview Guide-A**

Respondents: **Prison officers**

Date.....

1. How is your relation with inmates?
2. How does the Direction reorganize prisoner's visitation?
3. How do you categorize inmates within Munzenze prison?
4. What programs are offered to prisoners in Munzenze ?
5. Do you think this is enough to deter them from their criminal behavior?
6. What are the challenges you face?
7. What happened when an offence is committed among prisoners in Munzenze?
8. What are the common offences?
9. What is the social support towards inmates?
10. Why inmates come back in Munzenze after serving their sentence?

**APPENDIX 4: Key Informant Interview Guide-B**

Respondents: **Civil actors and Religious Leaders**

Date.....

1. What do you do to assist the Munzenze jail in rehousing inmates?
2. If so, how frequently do you go there annually?
3. Do you have any knowledge of released prisoners?
4. Do you approve of the manner in which convicted offenders are reintegrated into society?
5. Do you believe their presence makes the neighborhood safer?
6. Do you consider them a threat to the society?
7. Can you hire a rehabilitated former prisoner?
8. What actions should be taken to lower recidivism?

## **APPENDIX 5: Letter Requesting Participation from Respondents**

Kenyatta University,

P. O. BOX 43844,

Nairobi.

Dear Participant,

I am Bwanasafi Muhesi Arsene a student at Kenyatta University pursuing a Masters of Arts in Security Management and Police Studies. This study seeks to carry out a research whose result will be better security for the community due to the understanding of the influence of Multifactorial dynamics of Criminal Recidivism in Munzenze Prison, North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is part of my Master's study requirement fulfillment for the degree. This study should provoke scholarly work benefit Security Studies as a young and evolving social science in Kenya, East Africa and many other countries. Also, through this research, various effective ways of policing would be known.

You have randomly been selected as one of the respondents in this study. You are kindly requested to complete the questionnaire attached as accurately as possible. The information supplied will be used strictly for academic purposes only and will be treated with uttermost confidentiality. You are free to withdraw from the exercise.

I take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your taking part in this study.

Yours sincerely,

**Bwanasafi Muhesi Arsene**

**Student**

## APPENDIX 6: Research Authorization



### KENYATTA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: [dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke](mailto:dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke)

Website: [www.ku.ac.ke](http://www.ku.ac.ke)

P.O. Box 43844, 00100  
NAIROBI, KENYA  
Tel. 8710901 Ext. 57530

Our Ref: S201F/CTY/PT/27483/2019

DATE: 24<sup>th</sup> August, 2023

Director General,  
National Commission for Science, Technology  
and Innovation  
P.O. Box 30623-00100  
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR BWANASAFI MUHESI ARSENE - REG. NO. S201F/CTY/PT/27483/2019

I write to introduce Bwanasafi Muhesi Arsene who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. The student is registered for M.A degree programme in the Department of Security, Diplomacy & Peace Studies

Bwanasafi intends to conduct research for a M.A Project Proposal entitled, "Dynamics of Criminal Recidivism and Security: A Case of Munzenze Prison, Goma City, Democratic Republic of the Congo."

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'E. Kimani', written over a blue grid.

**PROF. ELISHIBA KIMANI**  
EXECUTIVE DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

JL/mo

## APPENDIX 7: Authorization for Data Collection



### KENYATTA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: [dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke](mailto:dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke)

Website: [www.ku.ac.ke](http://www.ku.ac.ke)

P.O. Box 43844, 00100  
NAIROBI, KENYA  
Tel. 8710901 Ext. 57530

Our Ref: S201F/CTY/PT/27483/2019

DATE: 24<sup>th</sup> August, 2023

Director General,  
National Commission for Science, Technology  
and Innovation  
P.O. Box 30623-00100  
NAIROBI

Vu le 12 septembre 2023.  
Sénatorial PRISON CENTRALE DE GOMA

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR BWANASAFI MUHESI ARSENE - REG. NO. S201F/CTY/PT/27483/2019

I write to introduce Bwanasafi Muhesi Arsene who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. The student is registered for M.A degree programme in the Department of Security, Diplomacy & Peace Studies

Bwanasafi intends to conduct research for a M.A Project Proposal entitled, "Dynamics of Criminal Recidivism and Security: A Case of Munzenze Prison, Goma City, Democratic Republic of the Congo."

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

PROF. ELISHIBA KIMANI  
EXECUTIVE DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

JL/mo

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