

**GENDER DIFFERENTIALS IN CRIME: A CASE STUDY OF  
KIAMBU COUNTY.**

**BY**

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### DECLARATION

I confirm that this research thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university/institution for certification. The thesis has been complemented by referenced works duly acknowledged. Where text, data, graphics or tables have been borrowed from other works including the internet, the sources are specifically accredited through referencing in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

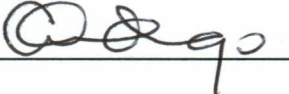
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### DEDICATION

To my father Shem Maina Mbatia and my late mother Rachel Wambui Maina.

In memory of my late mother who I owe a lot of gratitude for instilling in me the value of hard work, but passed away before she could see the completion of my post-graduate studies.

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**DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL TERMS**

- Community Policing:** Involves citizens' crime patrols that indentify crime incidences.
- Criminality:** The act of a person involving in criminal activities.
- Criminal Justice system:** The agencies of government charged with enforcing law, adjudicating crime and correcting criminal conduct and is, therefore, an institution of social control.
- Grey figures of crime:** Crimes that have been committed but not recorded.
- Felony:** A serious crime which attracts imprisonment of more than three years in the Kenyan penal code.
- Fences:** A person who accomplices with criminals to store and dispose of the stolen goods.
- Gender:** Refers to socially given attributes, roles and responsibilities connected with being men and women in a given society at a given time.
- Gender differentials:** The differences between men and women criminality in terms of the types of crimes committed by either gender, the difference in their offending patterns, differences in their underlying motives to commit various types of crimes as

well as the societal view on men and women criminals.

- Gendered patterns of crime :** The recognition of regular characteristic and matching certain behaviour inputs depicted by men and women as they commit crime in terms of choice of victims, gender and age of the victims and offender, time and season of crime.
- Societal view:** The opinion that the society holds on various issues related to gender and crime.
- Larceny:** Taking and carrying away the personal property of another with the intent to keep and possess it.
- Misdemeanour:** Minor crimes in which the imprisonment term does not exceed three years (Kenya penal code).
- Motive:** The driving force or reason behind committing a crime.
- Offenders:** A person who has intentionally (with full knowledge of the nature of his/her act) committed an anti-social act.
- Offending patterns:** Offenders' regular demographic and other characteristic that will be observed per each type of crime.

- Sexism:** The oppressive attitudes and discriminatory practices and behaviours directed towards either gender, primarily at women.
- Penal code:** A system of laws connected with crime and punishment.
- Person-to-person violent crimes:** (Crimes against a person). These include murder, kidnapping, manslaughter, rape, assault, robbery/with violence and stealing from a person.
- Person-to-person property crime:** Includes burglary and breaking in, larceny (petty theft), vandalism, arson, shoplifting, carjacking, extortion and motor vehicle theft.
- Public order crimes:** Include drug peddling, drug abuse and prostitution.
- Triangulation method:** Collecting data from various respondents using different methods and instruments to gather diverse points of view on the same subject.
- White collar crimes:** Crimes against the state such as forgery, bribery and corruption.

**ABBREVIATIONS/ ACRONYMS**

ATMS	Automated Teller Machine Services
BoG	Board of Governors
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
MCPC	Members of Community Policing Committees.
D O	District Officer
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GPRS	General Packet Radio Service
KPLC	Kenya Power and Lighting Companies
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NFPSA	National Focal Point on Small Arms
NGOs	Non- Governmental Organizations
OCS	Officer Commanding Station
OCPD	Officer Commanding Police Division
PCEA	Presbyterian Church of East Africa
PTA	Parent Teachers Association
SIM	Subscriber Identity Module cards
UCR	Unformed Criminal Records
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes

## ABSTRACT

This study is on gender differentials of crimes committed in Kiambu County, Kenya. It was inspired by the fact that, due to stereotype, gender-type expected behaviour, the society associates women with minor crime and men with major crime. Documented information shows that social and behavioural scientists tend to focus on stereotyped male crime and generalise their findings on women. Therefore, there is scarcity of studies on women's involvement in crime, especially in Kenya. This study addressed the gaps by examining gender differences in crime in Kiambu County. It presents a situational analysis of the types and causes of crime so as to establish its pattern(s) among men and women in Kiambu County. It explores the motives behind criminal activity and the effectiveness of the strategies put in place to curb it. The study was informed by Gender-based Schema Theory of criminal behaviour which in essence is a gender stereotype of what it means to be a man or woman in the society. The study used a case study design, employing triangulation method to collect gender disaggregated data (quantitative) and gender analytical information (qualitative data) as a way of gaining insight both at micro and macro levels of understanding crimes. The study samples were selected through non-probability. A total of 268 respondents were sampled. However, 263 responded. Quantitative data was collected through content analysis of Occurrence Book (OB) crime files recorded between January 2011 to December 2012, in Kiambu and Lari police divisional headquarters as well as questionnaires administered to the police officers working in crime department. Qualitative data was gathered through focus group discussions held with members of community policing committees, in-depth interviews with Officer Commanding Police Divisions (OCPDs) and Officer Commanding Stations (OCSs) and interviews with men and women convicts. Quantitative data was coded and analyzed. Qualitative data was presented thematically according to research objectives. The findings indicate that contrary to Gender Schema Theory and societal expectation, women, just like men, committed minor as well as major crimes. This study established that gender schema organization determined the pattern of crime committed, in terms of choice of victims' gender and age, time, season, venue, and methods. It also emerged that there were gender differentials in motive to commit crimes. It was clear that strategies put in place by stakeholders neither addressed the root cause nor were they gender specific, hence ineffective in curbing crime within the region. The study recommends that Kiambu County requires empowerment projects for men and women, gender studies to be introduced in the police training curriculum and other management strategies that are not only gender responsive but also tailored to suit the prevailing conditions.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

This Chapter presents the background information to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives and questions. It also contains significance, justification, scope, limitations and assumptions of the study.

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Crime is a global problem which affects every aspect of the society (Roberts, 2003). Crime hampers socio- economic development and induces fear in and misery for citizens (Lea, 2003; Keriga, 2009). It undermines people's material wellbeing, compromises human dignity and has been a cause of public outcry in many nations. The Kenya Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (1997) identified crime as one of the key causes of poverty. Similarly, the Kenya Economic Recovery Strategy for Employment (2003-2007) reiterates that addressing the problem of the rising crime rate is a fundamental prerequisite for economic growth in Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2006). Suffering endured by victims does not end when offenders leave the scene of crime, but may continue long after the incident is over and when the justice process has been forgotten. Crime leaves deep economic, emotional and psychological scars on its victims (Siegel, 2002).

Crime is classified into two broad categories world over: serious (felony) crimes and (misdemeanour) minor crimes (Wincup, Wahidin, Hayward & Hale, 2005). However, crimes differ in type and the manner in which they are committed. Assault and robbery, for instance, are classified under one category, yet they are different types of crime. Assault is

a complete attempt by a person or persons to physically harm, injure or inflict grievous harm on another person or persons, while robbery is a vicious crime which takes place in the presence of the victim to obtain property of value by use of force or threat of force (Reckless, 1973). According to Siegel (2002: 217), the broad categories are subdivided into: person-to-person violent crimes, person-to-person property crimes, public order crimes, and white collar crimes. Each of these categories of crime evokes different punishments, such as probation, fine, incarceration or caution from legitimate law enforcement agencies (Siegel, 2002; Wincup *et al.*, 2005).

Despite these punishments, men and women the world over have continued to commit crime at an increasing rate (Jones, 2006). The type and pattern of crime committed by men and women are largely influenced by gender socialization and role expectations in the society (Steffensmeier & Allan, 2000). Many societies expect men to commit major crimes, while women are not expected to commit any crime and if they do, it is expected to be minor (Flavia, 2003). Patriarchal societies socialise men into behavioural characteristics associated with crime, such as aggression, and being rough. Conversely, many cultures socialize women to qualities such as passivity, being homemakers, caregivers, nurturers, and taking second place after men, which cannot thrive in the criminal world (Clifford, 1974; Oakley, 1981). Women are therefore not expected to commit crime which in its very nature belongs to the public domain of men (Jones, 2006). Owing to this norm, many traditional societies considered women criminals as abnormal and pathological, requiring treatment (Lombroso & Ferrero, 1895). This notion has persisted and seems to influence researchers into perceiving crime as a man's

activity (Flavia, 2003). Pollak (1950) and later Steffensmeier (1993) state that women commit minor crimes such as shoplifting, domestic theft, theft by prostitution, abortion and perjury.

Most of the research efforts to understand crime have focused on male crime (Heidensohn, 1980) and the bulk of literature on crime depicts crime as largely a man's activity (Heidensohn, 1996; Steffensmeier & Allan 1996; Walker, 2003; Jones, 2006). The findings from previous researches generalized that women are more of victims than offenders. A United Nations survey found that men were convicted for violent crime while women were usually convicted of less serious offences (Jones, 2006). Similarly, Steffensmeier (1993) held that women representation has been greatest in minor property crimes. Researchers who have mentioned women offenders have treated women's crime as rare phenomenon that needs to be explained. In some of the cases, women's criminality was attributed to psychological disorder, kleptomania, madness, insanity or having a higher percentage of male hormones (Pollak, 1961; Heidensohn, 1994; Steffensmeier & Allan, 1996). Due to this reason criminologists have tended to neglect women as offenders and have only developed crime intervention policies for women as victims (Roberts, 2003). Yet, crime is a global phenomenon among both men and women (Jones, 2006).

However, other researchers (Flavia 2003; Wincup *et al.*, 2005; Jones, 2006) observe that women, like men, can engage in minor as well as major crimes. They argue that women's criminality remains invisible because of easy concealment, under-reporting,

embarrassment of male victims to report crime if the offender is a woman, and chivalry in the justice system.

Findings from previous studies imply that men's and women's criminality is not highlighted equally (Flavia, 2003; Walker, 2003). Trivialization of women's crime may be a perpetration of gender stereotypes that make women's agency 'invisible' (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2006).

Crime statistics show an increase in both men and women criminality. For instance, in England and Wales between 2001 and 2002, the number of men who were found guilty for all offences rose by 5% while that of women went up by 9 % (Wincup *et al.*, 2005). In Argentina, women contributed to 14% of violent crimes committed over a five-year period, between 1993 and 1997. The same statistics shows that of the violent crimes committed across the world in the same period, 2.1 million were by women, while 13.1 million were by men (Wincup *et al.*, 2005). In spite of this increasing trend in crime among men and women, the role of women has been understated by scholars. There is scanty research on types, patterns, and underlying motives of crime among women (Jones, 2006).

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2010) indicates that in 2009, the crime rate in Tanzania increased by 12% over the previous year, where a total of 567,288 crime-related incidents were recorded, up from 506,030 in 2008. It also showed that in Uganda rates of murder were 10.25 per 100,000 persons, robbery 6.11, aggravated assault 21.03 and burglary 16.84. The rate of larceny was 2.20, while motor vehicle theft prevalence was 5.48 per 100,000. This data, which is not gender

disaggregated, shows that in the two East African countries, crime rates have been on the increase. Similarly, in Kenya crime has been increasing at an alarming rate. In 1970, the total number of crimes reported to the police was 29,820, men accounting for 91.5 % of the offenders and women 8.5% (Muga, 1970; 1986). The number of men and women committing crime has risen over the years, such that in 2007 Kenya was ranked 78 out of the 164 countries with the highest crime incidences worldwide (The Kenya Police Statistics Abstract, 2007). The total number of offences per year for the period 2002-2004 was 42,080, 47,757 and 52,301 respectively. Crime rate increased rapidly and stood at 75, 400 in 2005, and 72,225 in 2006, dropping slightly to 63,028 in 2007, and 63,476 in 2008. Crime increased to 69,211 in 2010 and to 73,786 in 2011. The greatest crime rates reported (26%) were offences against persons; 17% stealing, 11% breaking in and burglary and 7% robbery (The Kenya Police Statistic Abstract, 2009; Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2012). These crimes were spread across the country. The Police Statistical Abstract indicates that in 2009, Nairobi had the highest (37%) robbery incidences, followed by the former Central Province (14%), Coast Province (12%), while North Eastern Province had 6% and Western Province 3%. The Kenya Police Department Statistical Abstracts (2007; 2010) indicate that in 2006, the number of women convicts increased to 36% (12,700) up from 22% the previous year. It further increased to 39% in 2009.

Statistics indicates that crime rates in some rural regions such as Central Kenya have surpassed those of urban areas. For instance, the Kenya Police Statistical Abstract (2009) indicates that in 2008, the former Central Province recorded a higher crime rate

(with 45,454 reported cases) than Nairobi Province (with 34,664). The Kenya Police Statistical Abstract (2012) showed that in 2011 Central Kenya recorded higher crime cases (44,500), followed by Rift Valley 44,276, Eastern 42,792, Nairobi 37,656, Coast 36,584, Nyanza 30,613, and Western 29,234. The abstract indicated that Kiambu County contributed to the bulk of the crime activities within the Province. In this region, women accounted for 16.86% and men 80.23% of crimes committed (The Kenya Police Statistical Abstract, 2012). This confirmed Muga's (1986) study which revealed that out of 222 violent crimes reported to the police in the Province, 208 were committed by men and 14 by women. Out of the 130 property crimes committed, men accounted for 109 and women for 21. It is therefore apparent that crimes committed by both men and women in the rural areas are increasing. This statistics underscores the need to focus attention on men's and women's criminality in rural regions. Scholars such as Kariuki (1978), Odipo (1996), Otieno (2005) and Ndikaru (2010) have skewed their studies towards men's criminality in urban areas (Thika, Nairobi and Mombasa). As such, there is scanty literature on women criminality and rural crime. So far there is no known study that has explored gender differentials of committed crimes, at least in the Kenyan context. This study, therefore, sought to address this gap by investigating gender differentials of crimes committed. It was carried out in Kiambu County of Kenya, because it had the highest number of crimes reported among the rural counties (Jones, 2003; Mawby, 2004).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Crime is a major problem and a cause of public outcry across Kenya. Crime committed by men and women in whatever form affects every sphere of the society and hampers a country's economic development. The foregoing Kenyan statistics is evidence that crime committed by either gender is increasing in both urban and rural regions. Despite the notable trend, previous researches (Kariuki, 1978; Odipo, 1998; Otieno 2005; Ndikaru 2010) focused on crime as a predominantly man's activity in urban areas, and their findings were generalised about women. Therefore, there is scant information on crime committed by women in Kenya, especially in the rural areas. This is likely to affect the overall picture of crime committed by both men and women, leading to persistence of the existing myth that men commit major crimes that require redress, while women commit minor crimes that are not worthy of notice. This means that gender disaggregated crime, its causes, motives and patterns in Kenya have not been well researched and understood. This study sought to address these gaps.

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

This study was designed to explore gender differentials of crimes committed in Kiambu County. It focuses on types, causes, patterns and motives of crimes committed by both men and women. These aspects are considered important in giving insight into the type of crimes committed by men and women in order to remove existing gender stereotypes in crimes. Gender disaggregated data is key to solving crime and developing effective reform programmes.

## **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to investigate gender differentials of crimes committed in Kiambu County.

### **1.4.1 Specific objectives:**

- a) To identify the types of crime committed by men and women between 2011 and 2012 in Kiambu County.
- b) To explore the causes of crimes in the County.
- c) To establish the gendered patterns formed in committing crime in the target County.
- d) To explore the underlying motives for men and women's engagement in crime in the County.
- e) To assess the existing strategies of curbing crime as well as suggest gender-responsive programmes that will reduce crime rate in the County.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

The study sought to answer the following questions:

- a) What are the types and causes of crime committed by men and women in Kiambu County?
- b) What are the patterns of crime among men and women in the County?
- c) What are the underlying motives for men and women's engagement in various crimes and for joining criminal gangs in the County?
- d) Which strategies can be put in place to curb crime in the County?

### **1.6 Justification and Significance of the Study**

It is important to collect gender disaggregated data and gender analytical information on types, patterns and motives of crimes committed by both men and women in order to avoid stereotypes or generalizations. Gender disaggregated data on crime can facilitate design of gender-sensitive crime intervention programmes. This is because such measures depend on whether we understand men and women and what motivates them to commit crimes.

Data collected can be useful in coming up with more gender-responsive intervention programmes for crime control. The study findings also contributed to the advancement of knowledge in the areas of gender and development studies, and criminology. Equally, the findings contribute additional data on gender differentials of crime in Kiambu County and opened areas for future research.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

The study focused on Kiambu County and particularly areas under the jurisdiction of the Kiambu and Lari police divisions. These included all the 7 police stations in Lari and Kiambu police divisions during the period of the study. Kiambu municipality, Githunguri, Karuri and Kibichoi police stations were under the jurisdiction of Kiambu Police Division, while Tigoni, Lari and Kikuyu police stations were under Lari Police Division.

The researcher carried out content analysis on police records of crimes committed between January 2011 and December 2012. This period was found appropriate because it reflected the current types of crime committed by men and women in the County.

To get patterns of crimes committed the study limited its indicators to age and gender of the offenders, age and gender of victims, season and time of the crime, weapon and method used, venue of the crime, mode of entrance, as well as inferences on relationship between victims and offenders.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

The requirements for conducting a research in Kenyan prisons are water tight. The researcher had to have a certificate of good conduct, a health insurance cover and a letter from three referees to ascertain the purpose for which the data was sought. The process of getting some of these documents, especially the certificate of good conduct, was long and tedious. The research was therefore delayed by three months while waiting for the processing of these documents.

Data collection in prisons took longer than the anticipated period because the researcher was only allowed to use research assistants who equally had a certificate of good conduct and health insurance cover. Due to financial constrain, the researcher was able to fund only one research assistance to meet the requirement. This limited the number of research assistants to only one.

The implication of a small scope is that the findings may not be used to make generalizations regarding the wider population. This means that generalizations were

limited to the population of Kiambu County. Again, some of the data collecting methods used in this study relied on self reports of involvement in crimes and this could be prone to response biases.

Some selected participants claimed to be too busy to spare time for the focus group discussions (FGDs), while others kept rescheduling appointments which they eventually never honoured. In such cases, the researcher conducted FGDs with members of community policing committee members who were present as long as they were within the FGDs lower limit, that is, 8 members (Kothari, 2004).

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.0 Introduction

This Chapter reviews relevant literature on gender differentials of committed crimes. It discusses types, causes and pattern of crimes; gender socialization and criminal behaviour; motive to commit crimes, and criminal judicial system. It also discusses the Gender Schema Theory of criminal behaviour to explain the gender differences in patterns of crime. A conceptual framework is presented to explain how the study used the gender schema theory to give insight into gender differences in crime.

#### 2.1 Types of Crime Committed by Men and Women

Crimes are classified into two: felonies (serious crimes), which attract imprisonment of more than three years, and misdemeanour (minor crimes), for which the imprisonment term does not exceed three years (Dwyer, 2001). The two groups are further divided into various crime categories depending on their nature (Wincup *et al.*, 2005). Thus, there are four major categories of crime, namely:

- a) Person-to-person violent crimes (crimes against the person). These include murder, kidnapping, manslaughter, rape, assault, robbery and stealing from a person.
- b) Person-to-person property crime which includes burglary and break-ins, larceny (petty theft), vandalism, arson, malicious damage, shoplifting, carjacking, extortion and motor vehicle theft.

- c) Public order crimes which include drug peddling, drug abuse, prostitution and allied crimes.
- d) White collar crime such as forgery, conning and crimes against the state for example bribery and corruption (Wincup *et. al.*, 2005).

Crimes are misdeeds by their very nature and are punishable by law (Dwyer, 2001). In the United States of America and Kenya, felonies are punishable by either death or rehabilitation through serving jail or prison terms.

Either gender-men and women-is technically capable of committing any type of crime. However, most people have assumed that crime is a male phenomenon and ignored crime committed by women (Steffensmeier & Allan, 1996; Wincup *et al*, 2005; Jones, 2006). United Nations' survey data (1975 and 1985, cited in Jones, 2006:309) carried out in all its member states reveals that men outnumber women with regards to being suspected, apprehended, prosecuted, convicted, and imprisoned for crime. Women are usually convicted for less serious offences than men.

In 2003, in England and Wales, 32% of men and 54% of women were convicted for theft or handling stolen goods; 22% of men and 12% women for drug offences; and 14% men and 12% women for assault (Jones, 2006). The modal age of crime perpetrators in Britain was 18 years for men and 15 years for women. This survey only highlighted the trends in crime among men and women. It did not investigate why women committed fewer crimes than men. In addition, it did not address the gender differences in crime within the region of study. However, a study of why boys commit

more crimes than girls was carried out in America's approved schools by Cowie *et al.* (1968, as cited in Jones, 2006:315). They concluded that female criminality was more likely to be involved in gender-related offences than that of boys. They also described the delinquent girls' characters as lumpish, uncouth and graceless.

According to Kenya Police records, men commit major crimes. About 85 per cent of the people that were found guilty of burglary, robbery, drug offences, criminal damage or violence against the person in 2009 were men (Kenya Police Statistics Abstract, 2009). This statistics may however not be representative of the reality because some crimes such as petty theft or theft through prostitution may not be observed, while others are observed and not reported (Kariuki, 1978; Otieno, 2005). Similarly, crime committed by women may not be reported due to leniency by the police and public or embarrassment of the victim especially if it's a man (Walker, 2003). This contributes to underestimation and trivialisation of women's criminal activities.

Researchers not only trivialize women crimes but are gender neutral. For instance Ndikaru (2010), in his study of crime differentials in metropolitan slum areas of Nairobi, Kenya, compared types of crime in four slum regions. The study established various types of crimes committed as illicit brew, robbery, burglary mugging, drugs, murder, assault, robbery with violence, pick-pocketing arson, sexual abuse, kidnapping and carjacking. In his analyses of the various types of crime committed, he established that illicit brew crime was the highest in the slums. However, Ndikaru did not show their gender-specific patterns. The study simply identified causes of crime and demographic victimization differentials. But, it did not focus on gender differences in

underlying motives to commit crime. Hence, the study did not highlight gender-responsive programmes that could be applied to prevent the menace.

## 2.2 Causes of Crime

Seeking to explain why certain individuals disobey rules, Santrock (2000) states that individual's genes and certain personality traits contribute to the possibility of committing crime among some people if brought up in an environment that nurtures it. Conversely, Siegel (2002) postulated that criminal behaviour is the product of careful thought and planning. He asserts that criminals choose crime after considering personal needs, such as money, revenge, thrill and entertainment, and situational factors: how well the target is protected and the efficiency of the police force. However, Lea and Young (1984) maintained a realist view of cause of criminal behaviour, that is crime results from relative deprivation. But they note that criminal activities are not dependent on absolute levels of deprivation or the levels in the social status of the offender. In this sense, crime can be committed by anybody in the social hierarchy, and at any time. However, Dwyer (2001) holds that criminal behaviour is learned and maintained by the rewards it brings. This implies that children who grow up watching their parents commit crimes are more likely to become criminals than those who are brought up among law-abiding parents.

Causes of crimes have been investigated and stated by various scholars: among them Ndikaru (2010), who studied *crime differentials in metropolitan slum areas*. He identified unemployment, school dropout, alcoholism and poverty as the main causes of crime in Nairobi slums. Similar findings had been recorded by Odipo (1996) in his

study of crime patterns and trend in Mombasa; and Otieno (2005) in his study of prevalence of property crime and their causes in Nairobi. None of these scholars studied gender differentials of crime or the causes of crime in Kiambu County. These are addressed by the current study.

### **2.3 Patterns in Crime among men and women**

Gender characteristics impact differences in the pattern of female and male offences. Even when the same offence is committed, there may be different patterns in the aspects related to the crimes. There may be variation, for instance, in the time of the offence: age, presence of other offenders, the relationship between offenders and victims, the offender's role in initiating and committing the offence, weapon involved (if any), the level of injury or property loss/destruction, and purpose of the offence (Steffensmeier, 1983, 1993). Flavia (2003) notes that patterns in women's relative to men's crime are more complex, and that differences between women and men offending patterns may be better understood by a gender approach. The persistence of gender segregation in the society at large differentially shapes the pattern and frequency of men and women deviance (Heidensohn, 1996).

For instance, patriarchal societies where male socialization prompts men to be more aggressive, active, individualistic and reinforce the male "breadwinner" / "family provider" role may increase pressure on men to engage in various activities to meet their obligations. Men who do not have the legal means may opt to engage in crime to fulfill their gender roles. This is not the case for women. The emphasis on female 'caring' role decreases pressure on women to act as family providers. This reduces their

possibility to commit crime. This could be true in the Kenyan context and especially in Kiambu County where majority of the inhabitants are from the Agikuyu community which is patriarchal (Wamue, 1999). In this community, women's limitation in terms of opportunities in the paid workforce, access to property, and their more extensive domestic responsibilities, may constrain the deviant patterns they could have adopted.

However, Steffensmeier (1983) and Walker (2003) argue that where women have similar opportunities for criminal behaviour in relation to men, their respective patterns appear to be broadly similar. This may be true in regions with large numbers of female-headed households (Walker, 2003). Female-headed households put pressure on the women breadwinners to provide for their families, which may result in high crime incidences. This may apply to Kiambu County where out of the total 189,706 households, 31,681 were female-headed (Kenya Bureau of Statistics, 2010). This large number of female-headed households is likely to change the crime landscape within the region. The role of women in female headed-household is likely to put pressure on them and predispose them to crime.

If women were accorded similar roles as men in the society, Heidensohn (1994) argues that they could become more involved in criminal behaviour, and that police and judiciary could start to see women differently. The likely development would be greater levels of women arrests and criminalization. This view was affirmed by Kariuki (1978) in her research on crime in Thika Town between 1968 and 1977. She established that petty theft and other minor criminal activities had increased among women. She attributed such increases to more freedom accorded to girls/women in modern times

than in the past, and increased opportunities for criminal activities that made it relatively easy for women to commit crime. Other scholars such as Odipo (1996) established that crime was steadily increasing among men in Mombasa between 1985 and 1991. According to Otieno's (2005) findings, patterns of crime against property in Nairobi between 2002-2005 varied according to months and seasons. Also, Ndikaru (2010) hand found out that young men dominated crime reports in Nairobi slums. However, the aforementioned studies were carried out in urban regions and therefore neither addressed rural crime nor investigated gender- related crimes and the motives in committing them.

#### **2.4 Gender Socialization and Motives to Commit Crimes**

Up until the turn of the century, women were primarily perceived as sexual objects and expected to remain within male-dominated perceptions such as being homemaker, compassionate, passive, care-giver and nurturer, taking second place to men (Oakley, 1981). Thus, women were not expected to commit crime and those who did were severely punished (Dwyer, 2001; Flavia, 2003; Wincup *et al.*, 2005). Criminality in men was considered a natural characteristic whereby women who were criminals were considered abnormal and diagnosed as pathological and requiring treatment (Lombroso & Ferrero, 1895). The notion was supported by Dwyer (2001) who stated that where women committed crimes, the society believed that the offence was likely precipitated by a psychological disorder such as kleptomania, or the crime was of a sexual nature. The society expected men and women to adhere to gender socialization.

Comparative studies among high school students in Toronto, Hagan, Simpson and Gillis (1987) considered whether self-reported crime rate could be linked to differences in gender socialization. The studies concluded that girls were more likely to be objects of informal and social control than boys. These studies indicated that the growth of industrialization had confined informal social control to the home, which was the domain for women. Even girls who grow up to assume a full-time career could not escape from early domestic socialization. Women/girls were far more likely to be subjected to the society's formal control mechanisms (Hagan, 2004). Girls who experienced the effect of informal control at home conformed and would tend not to commit crime. But men were under-socialized at home and thus were more likely to engage in risk-taking behaviour and get into trouble. Hagan *et al.* (1987) postulate that parental control and level of crime was not uniform across all Canadian families. Parental control was stronger in families where the father exercised more power than the mother, and where the father worked outside the home, while the mother assumed the role of housewife. In egalitarian households, where both parents exercised a similar level of power, it was unlikely that daughters would be subjected to a greater level of control than the sons. Thus, women could commit minor crimes while men committed major ones. The question is: what would happen to the societies where women seem to exercise more power than men, as in Kiambu County?

Hagan (2004) argues that patriarchal families in general exercise more control over female than male children. Girls growing up in such households perceive a greater risk of being punished. In this regard, daughters are socialized into domestication, while

sons are encouraged to prepare for their role as providers by being more adventurous and taking risks. Hagan (2004) further notes that families where there is a more balanced relationship between the parents, with the mothers assuming a similar level of power, daughters are given more freedom and are therefore more likely to engage in risk-taking activities. The trend towards egalitarianism between parents explained the convergence between men and women crime rates in North America in recent years (Hagan, 2004). Similarly, among people brought up in more patriarchal households in Oklahoma City, the women perceived much stronger threats of legal sanction than men (Blackwell, 2000). In less patriarchal homes, females perceived lower threats of embarrassment than men, which could be attributed to the greater role men played in child rearing in such homes and the consequential greater desire of sons to please their fathers. However, Blackwell (2000) notes that females reported higher perceived threats of shame in all types of households. This implied that there was a likelihood of more women criminals coming from less patriarchal households.

Girls grow up learning that they have to fulfill a caring role as wives and mothers (Heidensohn 1996). Even if they enter employment, they still have to devote a great deal of their time to domestic activities. They are also controlled by the threat of violence, not only in the home but also on the streets. This may make them stay indoors and out of harm's way. Women also feel more restricted by fear of gossip and the stigma of being a criminal. Therefore, if they have to commit crime it has to be in line with the societal role expectation of minor crimes such as public order crimes of sexual services, and illicit alcohol brewing. However, Flavia (2003) suggests that the

differences in men and women's offending rate cannot continue being attributed to the different gender-expected roles. Rather, it should be seen from the breakdown of those distinctions. She also notes that since the mid-1970s, women across the world started to allow their competitive instincts to surface and began to commit crime that used to be associated with men, such as assault and robbery. This could be attributed to women's movements which had started to become more influential since the 1960s.

Adler (1975) maintains that greater opportunities opened up for women in the business world and education would result in an increase of women committing property crimes and a reduction in violent behaviour. These were only suggestions, with no empirical research to validate them, and so far none seem to have been done especially in an African context. The current study sought to address the gap by exploring gender differentials of crimes committed in Kiambu County.

Women's risk-taking preferences differ from those of men (Steffensmeier, 1983). While men would take risks building status or gaining competitive advantage, women may take greater risks to protect loved ones or to sustain relationships (Steffensmeier and Allan, 1996). This is consistent with Jones' (2006) view that women commit crime for different reasons than men, and that each crime has its own distinctive motive. Each crime has its own distinctive thrill, and there are motivational factors underlying certain types of crime and choice of victims (Katz, 1988, cited in Siegel, 2002:74). For instance, Mushanga (1974) found out that in Uganda men killed fellow men more frequently than they killed women. But women rarely killed fellow women. They

mostly killed men. Why men and women target different victims may indicate that they murder for different motives.

Criminologists suggest that financial needs may not be the major motivating factor to commit crime. This notion is supported by Carlen (1988) who observes that poverty is not the main factor in criminality. He maintained that young females' motive for committing crime could be just to obtain excitement from the criminal activity. This study sought to explore criminals own professed motives to commit crime.

## **2.5 .0 Strategies of Curbing Crime**

The importance of a crime free society cannot be underestimated. Therefore various stakeholders, among them the governments, put various strategies to curb crime:

### **2.5.1 Criminal Justice Systems**

Criminal justice system refers to the agencies of government charged with enforcing law, adjudicating crime and correcting criminal conduct and is, therefore, an institution of social control. Since crime is dangerous and destructive behaviour, it is the job of the criminal justice system to prevent this behaviour by apprehending and punishing transgressors and deterring future occurrences. Although the society maintains other institutions such as churches, families and schools, they are designed to deal with moral, not legal, misbehaviour. Only the criminal justice system has the power to control crime and punish criminals (Siegel, 2002). Police officers are the most visible agents of the justice process. Their role includes maintaining order through patrols, responding to calls for assistance, investigating crime and identifying criminal suspects. Police at all

levels of government have traditionally been defensive towards and suspicious of the public, resistance to change and secretive in their activities (Siegel, 2002). However, in recent years, the police department has embraced the introduction of community policing, where they are required to work with citizens to prevent crime before it occurs.

Police use their discretion to decide whether a criminal activity will warrant arrest or not. There is a general feeling that the police are biased in their execution of law in regard to men and women, in that women are underrepresented in crime statistics. The question is whether this difference is due to real difference between men and women offending behaviour. Jewkes and Letherby (2006) suggest that the difference between men and women offending rate may be much smaller than the official figures. This could stem from gender socialization of individual police which results in prejudicial and stereotypical attitudes that may be in women's favour. In that, police have a tendency not to arrest women as often as men. However, Ayers, Futi, Perry, and Murray (2000) differ with the notion that police favour women criminals. They suggest that women offenders are treated harshly by the police because they are considered doubly deviant in that they have broken the law as well as broken the accepted code of femininity, resulting in more women being arrested for larceny offences. This current study sought to establish the strategies that the Kenya government had put in place to curb crime in Kiambu County.

### **2.5.2 Community Policing**

Community policing is another strategy that the Kenya government has adapted. The concept of community policing involves citizens' security patrols which identify crime incidences. It operates at the neighbourhood level in order to be more sensitive to particular concerns of the public. Members of community policing teams work at the local level in conjunction with police officers to curb crime. Community policing is a tool that has been used as a response to street gangs in the United States of America (Roberts, 2003). The approach was common in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the United States, but it was restored across the continent as a response to increasing violent crime rates in the 1980s and 1990s. In this model, law enforcers are supposed to work in partnership with the community in reducing crime. Community policing includes not only the residents of an area but also other professionals working in the community agencies.

The Kenya Government introduced the community policing strategy in 2006 as a method of combating escalating crime. The major aim of the programme was to furnish the police with information about crime and criminals, since criminals were part of the larger community and were known by the residents themselves. In Kiambu County, the community policing members are drawn from the sub-locational to locational and divisional levels. They hold security meetings once a week at the locational level and every fortnight at the divisional level where the various Officers Commanding Stations (OCSs) and the Officer Commanding Police Division (OCPD) are in attendance. Hence, this study engaged members of community policing in focus group discussions in order to gain insight into criminal behaviour in Kiambu County.

## 2.6 Theoretical Framework

This study is informed by Gender-based Schema Theory of Criminal Behaviour developed by Steffensmeier and Allan (2000). The theory borrowed heavily from gender schema theory developed in 1971 by Sandra Bem (Baron, 1994). Gender Schema Theory is a gender stereotype of what it means to be male or female in human culture. The theory describes and explains the developing content and organization of gender knowledge. Gender Schema Theory is based on a combination of aspects of social learning and cognitive-development theories of gender role acquisition to explain how this as an organizing category is used in all aspects of individuals' lives. Shandra (cited in Baron, 1994) created the Bem Sex Role Inventory to measure how well individuals fitted into their traditional gender roles by characterizing personality as masculine, feminine, androgynous, or undifferentiated. She believed that through gender-schematic processing, a person spontaneously sorts attributes and behaviours into masculine and feminine categories. An individual processes information and regulates his/her behaviour based on whatever definitions of femininity and masculinity their culture provides (Baron, 1994).

Developing the theory of criminal behaviour from Bem's Gender Schema Theory, Steffensmeier and Allan (2000) dwelt on the multidimensionality of gender knowledge, which included behaviours, roles, occupations and traits. Being female is associated with specific behaviours (gardening), specific roles (homemaker), specific occupation (teacher), and specific traits (nurturing). Being male is associated with different set of behaviours such as playing football; roles such as father; occupations such as

engineering, and traits like being aggressive (Golombok & Fivush 1995:100). A person's knowledge is organized such that simply knowing the gender label leads to clear links to these gender-related components. Therefore, individuals have a generalized readiness to organize information about the self based on cultural definitions of gender-appropriate behaviours, roles, occupations and traits.

The Gender Schema Theory points out that men and women behave according to gendered socialization by the society. Steffensmeier and Allan (2000) hold that once people learn to associate specific characteristics with their gender, they tend to behave in ways consistent with these expectations. The theory highlights the concept of gender dichotomy of public and private sphere. Public sphere is men's domain, while private or domestic sphere is women's domain. Since grave crime is in the public domain, the society expects it to be male-dominated. Women are "invisible" and domesticated in private or domestic sphere, and are not expected to commit crime. However, if they do, it is a crime that is domestic in nature. This theory emphasizes on gender organization (that is the social life that differs markedly by gender) that brings about differences in crime and shapes the patterns that do occur. There are five areas of gender organization, namely: gender norms; moral development and affiliation concerns; social control; sexuality; physical strength and aggression. The contexts of criminal behaviour are shaped by the differences in the lives of men and women in the five areas as explained below:

*Gender norm and roles in crime*

This category encompasses gender role obligations of women ascribed as daughter, wife or mother - and the presumption of women's nurturing role - together with expectations of female beauty and sexual virtue (Wood, 2001). Societal expectation of women to shoulder child-rearing responsibilities and other nurturing obligations pose constraints on female opportunities for criminal endeavours. However, wives or girlfriends of criminals may be pushed into the roles of accomplices and hence women's offences may be an extension of these gender role expectations. Gender norms esteem men's drive for autonomy, intelligence and strength, aggressiveness and being "macho" (Wood, 2001). In this sense, the dividing line between what is considered masculine and what is criminal is often thin, while the femininity stereotypes of weakness, compliance and passivity cannot cope in the criminal subculture (Steffensmeier, 1986). Women's fear of sexual victimization may tend to reduce their exposure to criminal opportunities. This is realized through avoidance of crime-prone areas, such as bars, night-time streets, and other crime-likely locations. Therefore, they may tend to commit crime at home and at day time.

*Moral development and affiliative concerns*

Compared to men, women are more likely to refrain from crime due to concern for others. This may result from gender differences in moral development and socialization towards greater empathy and sensitivity to the needs of others (Wood, 2001). This predisposition toward an "ethic of care" may restrain women from violence and other behaviours that may injure others or cause emotional hurt. Women may restrain from

using weapons when committing crime. But men are socialized more towards status-seeking behaviour and may therefore develop an amoral ethic when they feel those efforts are blocked. Using this tenet, the present study sought to establish the weapons that were used by men and women in carrying out their crimes.

### *Social control and crime*

During their formative years, girls are more closely supervised and discouraged from misbehaviour. Risk-taking behaviour is rewarded among boys but censured among girls (Myers, 1998; Wood, 2001). The ability and willingness of women to commit crime may be powerfully constrained by social control. Women therefore may tend to commit crime during the day because they are restricted to be out at night. Using this tenet, this study sought to establish time of the day and venues in which men and women committed crimes

### *Physical strength and aggression*

The physical weakness of women relative to men—whether real or perceived—puts them at a disadvantage in a criminal underworld that puts premium on physical power and violence (Steffensmeier, 1993). Muscular and physical prowesses are functional not only for committing crimes, but also for protection, contract enforcement, recruitment and management of reliable associates. Based on this tenet, women may not engage in violent crimes that require physical strength. They may also not be recruited into criminal gangs because they lack physical strength. As such, they will be expected to commit non-violent crimes. Using this tenet, this study sought to establish crimes committed by men and women and their involvement in criminal gangs.

*Sexuality and criminal activity*

Reproductive-sexual differences, coupled with the traditional "double standard", (chastity is expected among women and not men) contribute to higher male rates of sexual deviance and infidelity. The demand for illicit sex creates opportunities for women to engage in criminal gain through prostitution. This in turn may reduce the need for women to seek financial returns through serious property crimes or violent crimes (Steffensmeier, 1993). Men may feel entitled to sex and demand it through coercion, rape and defilement. Using this tenet, the study sought to establish the gender of sex offenders.

The current study adopted all the tenets of Gender Schema Theory of criminal behaviour because they include the details of each section of socialization and its impact on the socialised individual. Using the Gender Schema Theory, this study presupposes that women commit minor crimes, or crimes related to their gender role expectations, such as petty theft and theft by prostitution to enable them provide goods of consumption value. But Men are expected to produce goods for exchange value and since they are breadwinners they are more likely to commit major crimes. The theory is applied to examine patterns of crime among men and women in the local context of Kiambu County in Central Kenya. The study draws further on the theoretical concepts in the Gender Schema Theory to discern the relationship between women's 'invisibility' in patriarchal society and the nature of crime they engage in. The theory's key tenets capture all the dimensions as regards the study objectives.

Gender norms, moral development and affiliation concerns, social control, sexuality, physical strength and aggression, all bring about the differences between the lives of women and men. These aspects in turn produce varying patterns of women and men's behaviour, roles, traits and occupation that may be used to explain gender differences in crime. These five areas overlap and mutually reinforce one another and, in turn, influence gender differences in criminal opportunities, responsibility, access and crime contexts. Collectively, the above aspects of the organization of gender serve to condition and shape additional features of men and women criminals, including criminal opportunity, criminal motives and the context of crime.

The Gender Schema Theory is adequate for analysis in this study because its tenets above facilitated the pursuit to understand men and women's criminal behaviour. They were used to establish whether men and women committed gender-related crimes. The theory provides parameters for understanding how aspects of the organization of gender condition and shape features in the patterns of crime committed by men and women, their motives for engaging in crime, and how the crime can be curbed from a gender perspective. However, changes in gender relations and role may affect gender differences in the crime committed in the contemporary Kenyan society. The realization of the expanding opportunities open to women, and the desire for economic independence, may serve as an impetus towards greater involvement in criminal activities. The conceptual framework below outlines the linkage between the theory and variables in the present study:

## 2.7 Summary and Knowledge Gaps

This Chapter reviewed both theoretical and empirical literature related to gender differentials of crimes. Various studies and statistical records (Siegel, 2002; Blackwell, 2000; Walker, 2003; Flavia, 2003; Roberts, 2003; Hagan, 2004; Jones, 2006) discussed gender differentials of crimes in different dimensions and in different countries. None of the above studies discussed gender differentials of crimes committed in Kenya. Also little was discussed about Africa and Kenya (Mushanga, 1976; Kariuki, 1978; Muga, 1980; Odipo, 1996; Otieno, 2005; Kenya Police records, 2009; 2012; Ndikaru, 2010) on gender patterns and motives to commit crime. Further, only Otieno (2005) and Ndikaru (2010), among the studies cited, looked at types of crime committed in Mombasa and Nairobi respectively. However, they did not focus on gender-related crimes. The aforementioned studies were carried out in urban regions and therefore neither addressed crime in Kiambu County. Therefore, to fill the gap, this study did an analysis of gender differentials of crime committed in terms of type, causes, patterns formed and motive to commit crime. It also investigated existing strategies and made suggestions to curb crime in Kiambu County.

## 2.8 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework draws insight from the theoretical and literature review. The framework is shown in Figure 2.1 below:

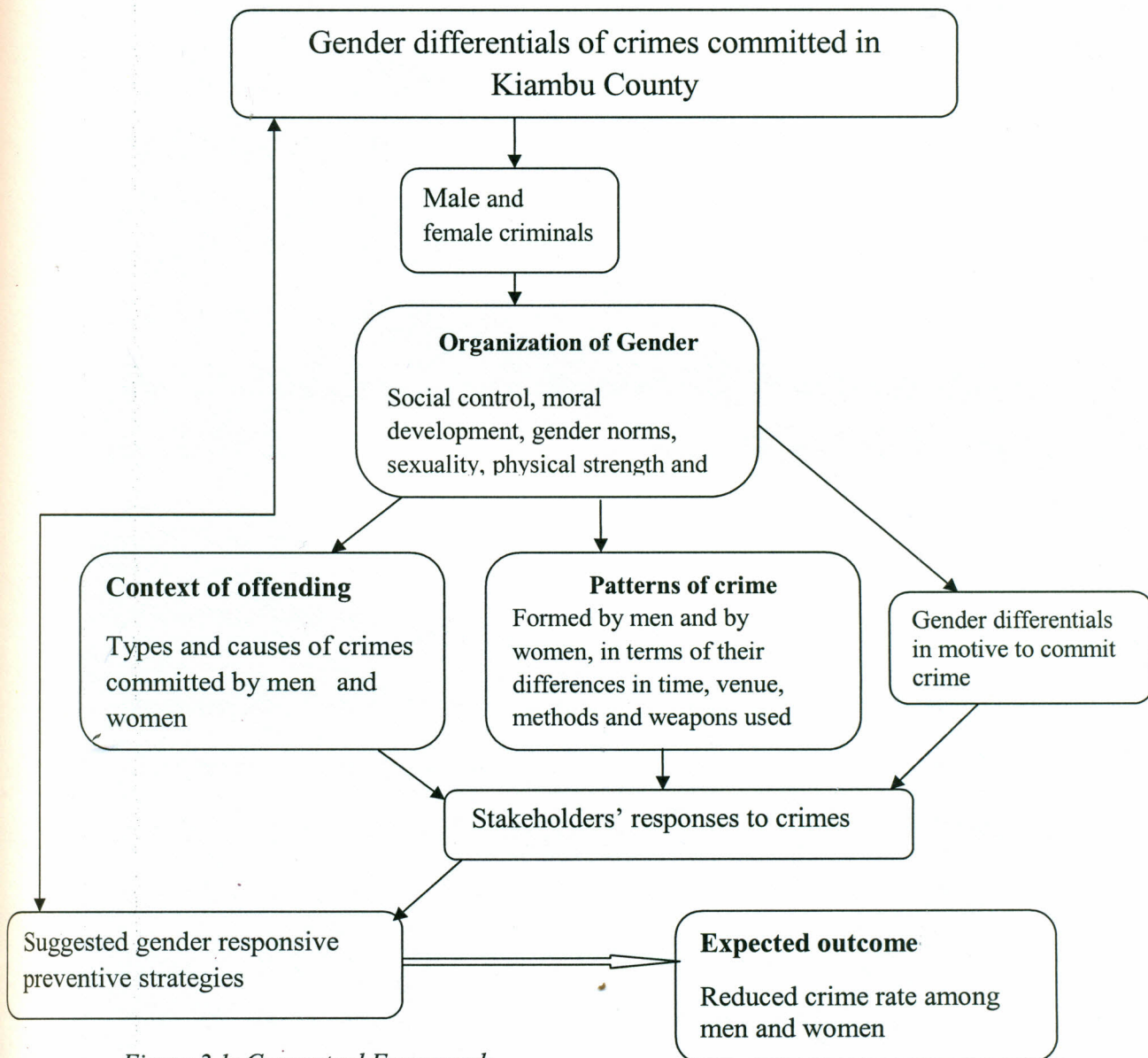


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework above shows different aspect of gender differentials of committing crimes which are influenced by individuals' gender organization. The

knowledge of types, pattern and motive of crimes committed may act as a guideline to draw a gender responsive programme to curb crimes in Kiambu County.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This Chapter presents the methodology, data collection and analysis for this study. It explains the research design, sampling procedures and strategies that were used during the fieldwork. The Chapter also describes the study population, and the development and administration of research instruments and the method of data analysis.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study draws on a case study method to collect both gender disaggregated data and gender analytical information on gender differences of crime committed in Kiambu County. Case study method was found appropriate because it provided a comprehensive study which involved a careful and complete observation of characteristics of persons, a group, a situation, a district or a community (Kothari, 2004). Therefore, it enabled the researcher to conduct an in-depth analysis and intensive investigation of gender differentials of crimes committed by men and women in Kiambu County. Grix (2004) asserts that, in case study method, efforts are made to study each and every aspect of the concerned unit in minute details and then, from the case data, generalizations and inferences are drawn. Data collected using this method can be used to provide an in-depth analysis of the characteristics of men's and women's criminal behaviour as it exists (Kombo & Tromp, 2006; Grix, 2004; Kothari, 2004). Therefore, case study method was found more consistent with the general objective of the study, which was gender differentials of crimes committed in Kiambu County. In addition, Kothari (2004)

asserts that a case study method is a qualitative approach where efforts are made to collect information on various aspects of life, which deepens one's perceptions and gives a clear insight into the issue under study. Efforts were, therefore, made to examine each aspect of crimes committed by men and women in details. These included the types and causes of crime, patterns formed and the motives to commit crimes. This method facilitated sequential use of research instruments: the questionnaire and interview guides along explanation of key aspects of the study. The respondents narrated about men and women criminals and described the differences that defined their behaviour.

### **3.2 Research Site**

The study was carried out in Kiambu County in Central Kenya. Kiambu is bordered by Nairobi City and Kajiado County to the south, Nakuru County to the west, Nyandarua County to the northwest, Murang'a to the north and Machakos County to the east as shown on the map of Kenya in Figure 3.1:



Figure 3-1: Location of Kiambu County in Kenya

Source: Survey of Kenya, 2010

Figure 3.1 Location of study sites in Kiambu County

The highlighted section of the map is the study site. The County was purposively selected because it was the only one with the highest crime rate in Kenya after the capital Nairobi (Mawby, 2004; The Kenya Police Statistics Abstracts, 2009, 2012). It was, therefore, imperative to conduct a study of rural crime in an area which experiences such high rate of crime.

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2010), Kiambu County has a total population of 1,623,282 (820,673 women and 802,609 men). It has 496,244 households out of which 39,290 are female-headed. It covers an area of 2,543.4 square kilometres (km<sup>2</sup>). The population density is 638 per square kilometres.

The County is predominantly rural, but its urban population is increasing as Nairobi is growing rapidly. The Kikuyu are the dominant tribe, and agriculture is the main economic activity. Kiambu has many coffee, tea, flower and pineapple plantations, largely owned by European farmers, and whose employment opportunities attract people from every part of Kenya and from as far as Uganda, Tanzania, Somalia and Sudan. Livestock farming is spread across the region at different scales, with some farmers practising zero grazing and others tethering their animals in the fields. Poultry farming is practised in regions nearer to Nairobi while traditional chicken are reared in most homes. Kiambu ranks as the 4<sup>th</sup> wealthiest county in Kenya. A deeper analysis indicates that it produces the richest men in Kenya but also the poorest who happen to be the majority (Kenya Economic Recovery Strategy for Employment, 2003-2007). Child labour is rampant in the area, with children let off by parents to go and work in coffee and tea plantations so as to supplement the family's food basket. With the

collapse of the coffee industry in early 1990's many coffee farmers, especially those bordering Nairobi, have uprooted the coffee bushes to give room to rental houses, with a resultant increase in poverty levels among those who had depended on casual labour in the farms.

Due to the nature of the study, the researcher preferred to use police administrative divisions (the highlighted are on the map in Figure 3.2) instead of the political administrative boundaries. At the time of the study, the County was divided into three police divisions namely Thika, Lari and Kiambu. Since the region is very extensive, out of the three, the researcher randomly selected Lari and Kiambu police divisions.

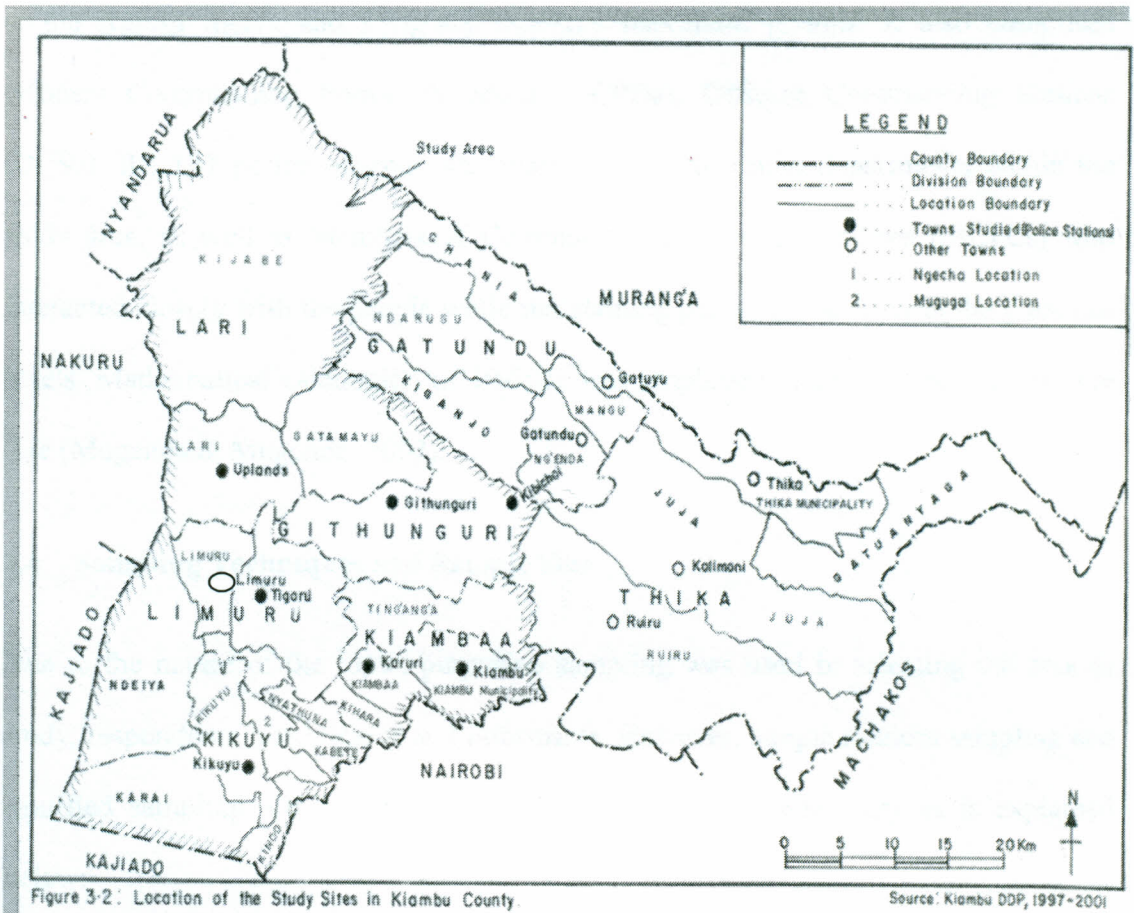


Figure 3.2 Location of study sites in Kiambu County

The selected police divisions neighbour the capital, Nairobi, and therefore have both peri-urban and rural regions (see Figure 3.2 above). The peri-urban regions are Karuri, Kiambu Municipality and Kikuyu as they border Nairobi city, while Lari, Tigoni, Githunguri and Kibicho are classified as rural because they are located rather far from Nairobi.

### 3.3 Target Population

The target population for this study included male and female convicts who had been convicted for various crimes committed within Kiambu County and were incarcerated

at the Kamiti men's and Lang'ata women's maximum prisons. It also comprised Officers Commanding Police Divisions (OCPDs), Officers Commanding Stations (OCSs), the 147 police officers who were working in crime departments within the study area, as well as Members of Community Policing Committees (MCPCs) who interacted closely with the people while maintaining peace and security at the grassroot levels. Mathematical calculation of 10-30% was employed to get the required sample size (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

#### **3.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

Due to the nature of the topic, purposive sampling was used in selecting the area of study, respondents, participants and informants. However, simple random sampling and stratified sampling were applied where it was considered necessary as is explained below:

Kiambu County was purposively selected because of its more cases of crimes reported than any other Counties of Kenya (Kenya Police Statistical Abstracts, 2009; 2012). Two police divisions (Lari and Kiambu) were randomly selected out of the three police divisions: Thika, Kiambu and Lari. The two police divisions were manageable, given the financial and time constraints.

Kiambu Police Division comprises areas covered by Kibichoi, Karuri, Githunguri and Kiambu Municipality police stations, while Lari Police Division has the region covered by Lari, Tigoni and Kikuyu police stations. In total, the region has 37 locations and 143 sub-locations. Due to the geographical diversity of the region, seven police stations

under the jurisdiction of the two police divisions were included in the study. Key informants, respondents, informants and participants were selected as follows:-

#### **3.4.1 Selection of key informants and respondents (police officers)**

Police officers were drawn from the sampled police divisions and their respective stations. The 2 Officers Commanding Police Divisions (OCPDs) in charge of the divisions (Lari and Kiambu) and the 7 Officers Commanding Stations (OCSs in charge of the seven police stations (Kibichoi, Githunguri, Karuri, Lari, Tigoni, Kiambu and Kikuyu) were included in the study as the key informants. The 2 OCPDs and the seven OCSs (six males, and one female in charge of the Kibichoi Police Station) were interviewed by the researcher herself for consistency.

The study also purposively sampled police officers working in crime departments in the divisions whose numbers were 147. From this total, the researcher randomly selected (30% of the 147) 44 respondents to fill questionnaires. In each police station, stratified random sampling was employed to ensure both gender were represented in the sample. Women police officers were underrepresented in the region of study, such that every female officer working in the crime section was requested to fill the questionnaire. The study got 3 policewomen from Kiambu, and two each from Karuri, Kibichoi, Githungiri, Lari and Tigoni police stations. However, the study did not get a woman police officer respondent from Kikuyu police station because the only one who worked in the crime department was away on leave and could not be reached. Men on the other hand were the majority. Therefore, 31 officers were randomly sampled from their stratum to attain the required respondents from this category. The study managed to get

13 female and 31 male respondents. Hence, 1/3 of the respondents in this study were women. Police officers working in crime departments tended to have vital information about crimes, criminals and their files. They were particularly knowledgeable about the issues under investigation because they regularly interacted with the criminals, victims and members of the society as they (the police) went about keeping law and order. They also apprehended interrogated and prosecuted criminals in the region. This allowed for effective coverage of the topic under study.

#### **3.4.2 Sampling of informants (Convicts)**

Inmates convicted were incarcerated in jails or prisons depending on the nature of their crimes. Jails incarcerate offenders who have been convicted for having committed misdemeanor crimes and whose jail term is less than 3 years. But prisons incarcerate persons convicted for misdemeanor and felony who have been sentenced for a period of more than three years (Jones, 2006). Since the study subjects comprised of convicts who had committed misdemeanor and felony crimes, prisons and not jails were found as an appropriate unit of study. Kamiti Command (men's maximum prison) was purposively selected because it is the only men's prison located in the study area. Since there is no women's prison in Kiambu County, the study purposively selected Langata women's maximum prison in Nairobi County. This was selected because of its proximity to Kiambu County and the fact that it incarcerates a large population of women convicted from Kiambu law courts for having committed minor and major crimes.

Convicts who had committed crimes in Kiambu County and were incarcerated in the sampled prisons were purposively selected. As per the time of this study, there were 277 male convicts in Kamiti and 206 female convicts in the Lang'ata women's maximum prison who had committed crimes in Kiambu County and had been jailed in the two prisons respectively. These convicts were purposively selected because they could give first hand information about their involvement in crime within the study area.

30% out of 277(83) men convicts from Kiambu incarcerated at the Kamiti Maximum and Medium Prisons, were selected for in-depth interviews. The male convicts were first of all stratified into 13 groups according to the type of crime they were convicted for. Seven (7) convicts were randomly selected from the stratum that had more: murder/manslaughter, car theft, robbery, assault, rape, burglary, thefts/larceny, livestock theft and drugs. Other groups did not require sampling because they were underrepresented. As such, the researcher interviewed the five (5) convicts charged with arson, three (3) with sodomy/bestiality, six (6) with fraud/forgery/impersonation, and six (6) for kidnapping.

Similar procedure was followed to select informants in Lang'ata women's prison. 30% out of 206 (62) women convicts from Kiambu incarcerated at the Lang'ata Women's Maximum Prison, were selected for in-depth interviews. Those selected were stratified into 14 groups according to the type of crime they had been convicted for. Then six (6) convicts were randomly selected from the stratum that had more convicts such as child negligence, assault, petty theft/ larceny, murder/manslaughter, kidnap, child homicide and robbery/with violence. Other strata did not require sampling because they were

underrepresented. As such, the researcher interviewed four (4) charged with arson, five (5) with drug handling, four (4) with fraud/forgery/impersonation, five (5) with car thefts, one (1) with bestiality/sodomy and a further one (1) from rape stratum.

The researcher, accompanied by the research assistant, collected data procedurally. Kamiti command was the first to be visited. The researcher worked with the welfare officers in charge of both Kamiti maximum and medium prisons. The welfare officers assisted with the records and sorting out of convicts who had committed crime in Kiambu County. Once this was done, the convicts were categorized into stratum and selected according to the type of crime they were incarcerated for. The study started with those who had committed violent crimes, that is, assaults, robbery/ with violence, rape and sexual defilement, then proceeded to prisoners who had committed property crimes such as car theft/jacking and arson. Convicts incarcerated for white collar crimes which included fraud and forgery were then interviewed. Lastly, prisoners on drugs cases were interviewed. The same procedure was repeated in the Lang'ata women's maximum prison. In every interview session, the interviewer took notes and recorded feedback using an audiotape. To present their emic perspective of the reality, local languages were used. As such, interviews were conducted in Kiswahili while others were conducted in the Gikuyu language and translated into English during transcription. Use of different languages was possible because, both the researcher and research assistant are very fluent with the three languages.

### 3.4.3 Sampling of study participants (Members of Community Policing Committees)

Although Members of Community Policing Committees (MCPCs) were purposively selected, getting them required the sampling of the locations. At the time of the research, the study site had a total of 37 locations with Githunguri and Lari having 6 locations each and the rest 5 each. A 20% sample size was drawn to determine the number of locations (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). One location within the area covered by each police station was selected through simple random sampling to ensure that each of the locations had equal chance of being selected. This was done by writing their names on pieces of papers, then folding them and randomly picking one piece from each region. The following are sampled locations:

*Table 3.1: Sampled study locations*

<b>Police stations</b>	Kibicho	Lari	Tigoni	Kikuyu	Githunguri	Karuri	Kiambu Municipality
<b>Locations</b>	Komothai	Kimende	Ngecha	Nderi	Githuguri	Kihara	Thindigwa

Participants of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were sampled from members of community policing committees (MCPCs) of the sampled locations. Since these MCPCs work closely with the OCSs and police officers working in crime departments, the study liaised with the OCS in each police station to get the contacts of the community policing chairperson within the area under his/her jurisdiction. Each region had about 20 members representing different locations. A list of names of other community policing members within the region was obtained from the chairperson.

50% of the study population in each area constituted the sample size for each location. Thus, 10 members were randomly selected. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) state that focus groups for discussions should have between 8 and 12 members.

Stratified random sampling was employed to ensure that both men and women were selected for Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). These participants were included in the study because of their involvement with security issues within the region. MCPCs assisted by collecting additional information about crime and other pertinent issues related to gender differentials in crime. Since about 5 of them managed a village, they were able to get detailed daily reports on criminal activities and complaints from various victims. Additionally, these MCPCs were born and brought up within the villages, and they knew and understood the community well and were aware of community issues-especially on gender differentials. Therefore, these participants were able to give general views and opinions on crimes committed as well as information on male and female criminality as well as security measures taken by the public and individuals.

Seven focus group discussions were conducted in the target locations. These were as follows:

- Komothai FGD which comprised three women and six men. The area chief was a member of the committee.
- Kimende FGD comprised of eight men. The chairman explained that they did not have any women in the committee because dealing with crime would be

risky for them. A male police informant had similar reservation, feeling that it was very risky for women officers to work in the crimes department. The area chief was not included in the committee.

- Ngecha FGD comprised four women and six men.
- Githunguri FGD comprised five women and six men. This was the only group whose chairperson was a woman. She also doubled up as the area chief.
- Kihara FGD had six men and two women. The chairman who was the area chief explained that the other member could not come because she was busy.
- Thindigwa FGD comprised five men and three women. Two of the selected members had left because the researcher arrived 20 minutes late. In fact, she found the others leaving but she apologized and explained the cause of the delay, thus managed to convince them to hold the discussion. The chief was included in the committee.
- Nderi FGD had four women and seven men. Here, the chief and his assistants were committee members.

The study got a total of 263 (97 women and 166 men) out of the anticipated 268 respondents, representing a 98 % response rate. Table 3.2 depicts a summary of the anticipated sample size and the actual number of the respondents by gender:

Table 3.2: Summary of sampled and actual population

Items	Total Population	Sample size	Proportion	Men respondents	Women respondents	Total number of respondents
Officers Commanding Police Divisions	2	2	100%	2	-	2
Officers Commanding Police Stations	7	7	100%	6	1	7
Police Officers	147	44	30%	31	13	44
<b>Locations</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
Members of Community Policing Committees	140	70	50%	44	21	65
Kamiti Men's Prison	277	83	30%	83	-	83
Lang'ata Women's Prison	206	62	30%		62	62
<b>Total Locations</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>20%</b>			<b>7</b>
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>263</b>

### 3.5 Methods of data collection

Different data collection methods were employed in order to interrogate the topic under investigation from different points of view. Such triangulation method was deemed necessary so as to help validate observations and information. The methods of data collection are discussed below:

#### 3.5.1 Content Analysis

Gender disaggregated data was collected through content analysis of police crime records from daily Occurrence Book (OB) between January 2011 and December 2012 in Kiambu and Lari Police Divisions. Criminal record analysis charts (Appendix 1, page

281) facilitated analysis of documented criminal activity. Tallying charts (Appendix 2, page 282) were used to get the monthly summary of male and female crimes. This gave information on the types and patterns of crime committed within the period of study. The researcher with the help of the research assistant obtained information on the type of crime, the police station under which crime was reported, village where crime was committed, gender and age of the offender and that of victims, date, time of the day, weapons used, venue of crime, tribe, and the relationship between victims and offenders. 3917 crime entries had been made.

### **3.5.2 Survey method**

Self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from police officers in charge of crime. The instrument was found appropriate for the respondents because they were literate. They could understand the questions and write the responses by themselves. The questionnaire was semi-structured with both open and close-ended questions (Appendix- 3, page 283). Asking questions of this nature was practical because answers to certain questions were better measured through an open-ended format which gave respondents room clarification, while answers to other questions were better measured through the closed-ended format. The copies of the questionnaire were taken to police stations by the researcher. After introduction, the OCS referred the researcher to the officer in charge of criminal department (OCD) who in turn provided a list of officers working under him/her for sampling. Once the respondents were identified, a blank questionnaire, a self-addressed envelope and a note requesting the respondent to kindly answer the questions were enclosed in an envelope. Also enclosed, were instructions

regarding when and where to place the filled in questionnaire. The sealed envelopes addressed to the police officer respondents were placed in their respective pigeon holes at the respective police station. A total of 44 (13 women and 31 men) police officers filled in the questionnaire.

### **3.5.3 Key informant interviews**

Key informants are people believed to be knowledgeable on the topic under investigation. An Interview Schedule was used to collect data from 2 OCPDs and 7 OCSs. An Interview Schedule facilitates collection of detailed and reliable information. The interview schedule comprised of open-ended questions (Appendix-3, page 283) to enable the respondents to give detailed information, views, attitudes and opinions on gender differentials of crime. It was designed to yield qualitative data on the issues raised in the problem statement, such as crimes committed, motives of men and women to commit crime and intervention strategies. It allowed for further questioning and probing in order to seek clarification on items that were not clear. They elicited information on current types and patterns of crime committed by men and women within the region. Interviews for the OCPDs and OCSs were conducted by the researcher personally to enhance consistency.

### **3.5.4 In-depth interviews**

In-depth interview schedule was administered to 83 men and 62 women convicts. This method was used to get the emic perspective to help examine the underlying motives of men and women to commit crimes. Convicts gave first-hand self-report of involvement

in crime. Having a background in counselling psychology, the researcher used various evocative skills, such as developing good rapport with the prisoners and according them an unconditional positive regard. In this way, they opened up and gave personal motives that led them to commit crime. The questions were open-ended (Appendix- 5, page 290) and the informants were free to explain their opinions. It also gave room for further probing. The researcher, with the help of one research assistant, conducted interviews in the two target prisons. These were done procedurally in that the team started with Kamiti Command and then Lang'ata Women's Prison.

### **3.5.5 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**

Focus group discussions were used to collect information from members of community policing committee (MCPC). Focus Group Discussions guide with open-ended questions was developed based on the issues that had arisen during the content analysis phase and which required further clarification and explanations. FGDs guide (Appendix- 4, page 287) was used to collect data from the seven groups of MCPCs. A group of 8 to 10 members was manageable and allowed the participants to express their general views and personal opinions (Grix, 2004).

To make FGDs a success, the researcher made appointments with the participants through earlier visits and telephone calls. The Community Policing Chairperson was requested to assemble the selected participants on an agreed day for the focus group discussions. The researcher and the research assistant carried out the discussions from the selected locations on agreed days. The discussions took one-and-a-half to two hours

to achieve effective responses. In total team took seven working days to complete collecting information from the FGDs.

The FDGs guide was read in English, then the questions translated into the Gikuyu language to cater for respondents who could not understand English. The discussions were held in Gikuyu so that members could find it easy to express themselves and contribute their opinions on the subject under discussion freely. A note-taker was present in all the sessions. Every FGD session was recorded on an audiotape. The recorded audiotapes were then transcribed and translated into English for further analysis.

### **3.6 Piloting of Research Instruments**

Pre-testing was done three months prior to the actual study. Pre-testing assisted in assessing how suitable the questionnaire was in eliciting the required responses and whether there was clarity in the wording of the items. It also checked the consistency of the responses and the types of responses to be expected from the instruments. Pre-testing tested the validity and reliability of the instruments. It enabled the researcher to familiarize herself with the administration of the instruments as well as estimated time it would take to complete one instrument. The findings from the pilot study were used to make adjustments to the questionnaire, such as reconstructing some questions so that they could elicit the right responses while removing those that were unnecessary. To achieve these purposes, pre-testing of research instruments was carried out twice at an interval of two weeks in four police patrol posts: (two - Ngegu and Rueno - in the peri-urban region and two - Kiamaiko and Kagwe - in the rural region of Kiambu County).

In each police patrol post, two police officers (a woman and a man) filled out the questionnaire during the initial visit. After two weeks, the same respondents were requested to undertake a similar exercise. These informants were not part of the sampling frame.

### **3.7 Validity and Reliability**

According to Grix (2004), validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it is purported to measure. Content validity of the instruments was judged through the triangulation method of data collection which elicited similar responses from different respondents. To ensure internal validity was increased, the study used random sampling technique for respondents from the selected homogenous groups. External validity was enhanced by selecting a large sample, which made it more representative. Comparisons of the findings with other previous studies in the literature review were made.

Reliability refers to the accuracy and consistency of information obtained in a study. The term is mostly associated with the methods used to measure research variables. The reliability of the instruments was tested during piloting stage. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) an instrument is reliable to the extent it measures whatever it is measuring consistently. Reliable instruments are stable in whatever they measure and yield comparable scores upon repeated administration.

The investigator tested the reliability of the instruments by using test-retest method. That is, the instruments were administered to the respondents twice with an interval of

two weeks. Cronbach's Alpha Co-efficient(C's Alpha) was computed from the data collected during the pilot study to confirm the reliability of the scale used. C's Alpha is a model of internal consistency based on the average inter-item correlation (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The reliability analysis procedure calculates measures of scale and provides information about the relationships between individual items in the scale (Grix, 2004).

Reliability analysis was used to determine the extent to which the items in questionnaire were related to each other and the overall index of repetitiveness or interval consistency for each of the scales was also calculated. Results of C's Alpha coefficient computed from the data collected during the pilot study of the two administration of instruments are shown in Table 3.3:

*Table 3.3: Reliability Test Result*

Instrument	Cronbach's alpha co-efficient	
	First administration	Second administration
Type of crimes committed by men and women	.876	.915
Causes of crimes in Kiambu County	.788	.809
Gender motives to commit various crimes	.764	.782
Strategies put in place to curb crime	.961	.982
Reasons why strategies put in place are not effective	.766	.811
Suggestions for gender responsive strategies to curb crime	.756	.794

Table 3.3 shows that alpha co-efficient of the scale was 75-98% reliable and the co-efficient of the first administration was highly correlated with co-efficient on the second administration. Thus, the instruments had good test-retest reliability and therefore were considered reliable.

### **3.8 Data Quality Assurance and Control**

Sample surveys are affected by the sampling design and random effects, and non-sampling error. The former is easy to measure and is usually controlled by the appropriate sampling design. The latter is problematic to measure. However, with proper quality control procedures, it is possible to alleviate the problem. To ensure quality control, a one-day briefing of the research assistant was done. In the morning, he was shown how to elicit required information from the occurrence book of crime records. In the afternoon, he practised gathering data from the police records. Once the researcher was certain of his competence, we commenced actual content analysis. Additionally, 20% verification was done to ensure that accurate data was collected. Interviews for OCSs and OCPDs were done by the researcher to ensure consistency. Further, a one-day debriefing of the research assistant was conducted. This enabled him to familiarize himself with the instrument and the voice recorder. Mock interviews were carried out to ensure he had mastered all the questions and the necessary probes.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

After the fieldwork, the tally tables and the questionnaires were cross-checked and edited for internal consistency and for any missing information. After all the issues were

addressed, data collected through content analysis from police crime records and questionnaires was entered into MS-Excel by two data entry clerks. This yielded two sets of data that were then cross-checked and all inconsistencies resolved. For further scrutiny and analysis, data was then transferred into the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 17.0. First, exploratory data analysis was done to check on frequency distributions. For gender differentials, types and patterns, cross tabulations were done to derive analyses in the context of gender and other patterns. Only those cross tabulations that contributed to the analyses of the research questions were retained. The results were presented in frequency tables, percentages, pie charts and bar graphs to summarize and organize data as well as draw some conclusions.

Qualitative data from police interviews and in-depth interviews from the prisoners was organized to reduce it to a more manageable and intelligible set of observations. The data was categorized and coded. The emerging patterns were presented thematically according to research objectives. The recorded audiotapes for both inmates' interviews and FGDs were transcribed and translated into English for further analysis.

In analyzing the data, the field notes were expanded after each session and a general summary of the proceedings of the interviews and FGDs was done. This provided a basic reference to the main topics and/or issues that were discussed. By using the field notes' summaries, a data coding guide was developed based on the main themes. The coding guide was used for the transcripts. The transcripts were written verbatim, then organized according to the coded themes. Afterwards, the coded verbatim statements were cross-referenced with the quantitative information. Verbatim statements that best

explained and added more information to the quantitative data were selected for citation as voices.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

In conducting research it is important that ethical considerations be given due attention (Bachman & Schutt, 2003). Grix (2004) contends that in any piece of research in the social sciences, ethical considerations are necessary in conducting and reporting the research in respect of democracy, respect for truth and respect for persons. After the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Kenyatta University granted the fieldwork permission, the researcher obtained a research authorization permit from the National Council for Science and Technology. A copy of research authorization was presented to the office of Police Commissioner and Commissioner of Prisons where permission was obtained to access criminal records and police officers as well as to gain access to inmates at the Kamiti command and Lang'ata prisons. In addition, police officers and MCPCs were also informed of the proposed research project. This ensured proper coordination and it reduced suspicion. Responsibility to the participants and informants included voluntary participation and informed consent prior to participation. Only those who gave consent were interviewed. To ensure that the respondents were not prejudiced, simple language and statements were used to describe the aims of the research and its procedures.

Accountability to the profession included accuracy in analysis, presentations and reporting the study findings. Anonymity and confidentiality of respondents' responses

were observed. The results are reported in Chapter Four of this study, followed in Chapter Five by conclusions and recommendations drawn from the findings.

In conclusion, data was collected for the period extending from July to December 2012. The study employed the triangulation data collection method which included content analysis of crime records at the police divisions, survey method where questionnaire were filled in by police officers in crime departments, key informant interviews were carried out with OCPDs and OCSs, and in-depth interviews for inmates incarcerated in Langata Women's and Kamiti Men Maximum Prisons.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4. 0. Introduction**

This Chapter presents the study findings and discussion arising from the objectives stated in Chapter One. Quantitative data collected from police crime records is analyzed according to types of crime committed and gender patterns formed. The analyzed data is presented in percentages and charts. Verbatim reports and case observations are used to illustrate quantitative data. Qualitative data is analyzed and presented thematically. The Chapter begins with presentation of data on demographic characteristics of suspect offenders (as per police records) and the study participants.

#### **4.1.0 Convicts' Demographic Characteristics and Gender Analysis of Reported Crime**

The section begins with presentation of data on demographic characteristics of sampled convicts and that of the offenders from police records.

#### **4.1.1 Demographic data of sampled convicts**

Out of the 277 men and 206 women convicted for having committed crime in Kiambu County, 83 men convicts were sampled from Kamiti Command and 62 women from Lang'ata Women's Maximum Prisons. As described in Chapter Three the men and women convicts were stratified into 13 and 14 groups respectively according to the type of crimes they had committed. Some crime types were overrepresented and required further sampling. In this regard, seven (7) male and six (6) female convicts were

randomly selected from the stratum that had more convicts. Other crimes were under-represented. Hence, all the available convicts in such categories were interviewed.

#### **4.1.2 Informants' Gender**

Out of the 145 convicts interviewed, 57% were men while 43% were women. This was due to the fact that there were more men than women incarcerated in prisons. Initial findings of this study indicate gender-related patterns of crime conviction. For instance, none of the men convicts from Kiambu County who participated in this study had been incarcerated for child negligence and child homicide, while women had not been incarcerated for burglary and livestock stock theft. These findings indicate gender bias and society's stereotype in patterns of conviction for crime. It also shows how patriarchy has influenced the penal system where only women and not men are incarcerated for relegating their perceived nurturing roles.

#### **4.1.3 Informants' Age**

Most of the women convict informants (61.2%) and men (46.9%) respondents were 18-30 years of age. Slightly over a quarter (25.9%) of men and 21% of women were between 31-40 years of age. 9.7% of women and 18.5% of men were between 41-50 years. Only 1.6% of women and 3.7% of the men convicts were above 51 years. This shows that the possibility of men and women's engagement in crime in the study area tended to decrease with advancement in age.

#### **4.1. 4 Marital Status**

A general analyses on convict informants' marital status revealed that over a half of them (51.4%) were single, 30.9% were married, 10.6% were divorced and 7.0% were widowed. However, analysis of marital status by gender revealed that majority of the women convict informants were single (58.1%) followed by those that were divorced (16.1%). Similarly, most of the men convict informants were single (45.7%) and married (42%). This indicated that most convicts were single. The findings suggest that married persons spend less time in situations that might lead to crime or in the company of friends who might encourage them to commit crime. This view is supported by Manning and Lamb (2003), who postulate that marriage helps reduce crime because it increases self-control and people tend to think about how their spouses might react. Therefore, people are less likely to be involved in crime when they are married than when they are single.

#### **4.1. 5 Occupation before Incarceration**

Analyses of occupation of convict informants before incarceration showed that majority of them (83.8% of women, and 76.6% of men) worked in the informal sector. Only 1.6% of women and 9.9% men were employed in the formal sector as policemen, teachers, and judiciary officials among others. Most convicts worked in the informal sector. Some persons working in the informal sector had insecure sources of livelihood which disposed them to commit crime in order to subsidise their income. They also had time for underworld dealings because they didn't operate on strict time schedules.

#### **4.1.6 Convicts' Informant Educational Level**

Of the 63 women convict informants, 29% had only completed primary school education and 24.2% had dropped out of secondary school. 27.2% of the men convict informants had attained primary level education and those that had dropped out of primary or secondary school were 17.3% and 12.3% respectively. More women (3.2%) than men (1.2%) had no formal education. All the informant convicts who had university level education (7.4%) were men. Only men's reported incidence of crime tended to reduce with higher levels of education.

#### **4. 2.0 Characteristics of offenders from the police crime record files**

The police crime records reviewed captured age, tribe and gender of the offenders, as well as the time and date of the offence. However, unlike in prisons, police records did not capture data on education attainment, employment and marital status of the suspects. In some cases gender of the offender was erroneously captured as 'man' even when the crime was committed by a woman. In this study, cross-checking the offenders' first names established their gender since the names were distinct for men and women in the study area. In other cases, neither the gender nor name of offender were indicated. This implied that police officers either did not pay enough attention to capturing accurate disaggregated data according to gender, or that they still assumed that crime was a man's activity. The latter was the case as supported by Flavia (2003) who posited that police officers erroneously indicated crime as having been committed by 'men', even when it was clearly committed by women, which could be attributed to their gender socialization in that women were not expected to commit crime.

#### 4. 2.1 Age and Gender of the Offenders

The gender and age of offenders were analyzed from the data in police crime records as shown in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1: Age by gender of the offender

Age of offenders	frequency	percentage	Gender of offender			
			female	%	male	%
not specified	927	23.7				
<10	3	0.1	0	0	3	100
11-15	45	1.1	4	9	40	89.0
16-20	319	8.1	40	12.5	273	85.6
21-25	674	17.2	73	10.8	592	87.8
26- 30	754	19.2	77	10.2	670	89.0
31-35	407	10.4	43	10.6	357	87.7
36-40	313	8	44	14.1	276	88.2
41-45	168	4.3	16	9.5	151	90.0
46-50	129	3.3	14	10.9	113	87.6
> 51	178	4.5	21	11.8	156	87.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>3917</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>2631</b>	<b>67.2</b>

The data indicates that most criminal offenders for both men and women were aged between 26 -30 years. The study also found out that unlike girls, boys below 10 years committed crime. Crime increased with age for either gender until the age of between 26-30 years. Afterwards crime seemed to decrease with age up to age 50, only to pick again after 51 years. The study noted that although crime was predominantly young persons' activity, older men and women (above 51 years) too committed crime at a

relatively high rate. This was contrary to previous studies by Odipo (1996), Otieno (2005) and Ndikaru (2010) who established that crime was predominantly a young man's activity. The difference could be attributed to the fact that urban population comprised of mostly young people who had migrated from rural areas. Rural population comprised of people of all age groups, mainly because majority of the inhabitants were indigenous people living on their ancestral land. It was also an indication that older persons could be facing some socio-economic challenges like feeding grandchildren, which could be the case in Kiambu County where proximity to the City of Nairobi made young people to leave their children with parents as they searched for greener pastures locally and abroad. These factors may have contributed to crime among older persons within the county.

Having established convicts' and offenders' profiles, the study went further to analyze gender disaggregated data on types of crimes committed by men and women that were collected from the police crime records. The analyses are presented in the section below:

#### **4.3.0 Objective One: Types of crime committed by men and women between 2011 and 2012 in Kiambu County**

This study set out to identify the types of crime committed by men and women in Kiambu County between 2011 and 2012. Types of crimes recorded in crime occurrence books (OB) in Lari and Kiambu police divisions were collected and 3917 eligible entries analyzed. From the entries, 72.6% of the offenders were men, while 8.8 % were women as shown in Table 4.2:

Table 4.2: Types of Crime committed, by gender in Kiambu County between 2011 and 2012

	Types of Crimes	Frequency	%	Freq of men	% within crime	Freq of women	% within crime
	unspecified gender of offenders	729	18.6%				
1	Assault	793	20.2	633	79.8%	147	18.5%
2	Theft/petty theft/theft of livestock	732	18.7	603	82.4%	69	9.4%
3	Drugs	512	13.1	463	88.9 %	21	4.5%
4	Burglary	340	8.7	278	81.7%	13	3.8%
5	Robbery/ with violence	330	8.4	135	40.9%	3	0.91%
6	Vandalism	189	4.8	161	85.2%	20	11.0%
7	Rape	167	4.3	149	89.2%	1	0.6%
8	Murder/manslaughter	161	4.1	36	22.4%	4	2.5%
9	Suicide	99	2.5	57	57.7%	19	19.2%
10	Forgery	92	2.3	75	81.5%	15	16.3%
11	Fraud/false pretense/impersonation	87	2.2	67	77%	17	19.5%
12	Mob injustice	75	1.9	75	100%	0	0%
13	Carjacking/car theft	51	1.3	20	39.2%	2	4%
14	Natural/sudden death	38	1	30	78.9%	6	11.8%
15	Malicious damage to property	37	0.9	30	81.1%	4	10.8%
16	Child homicide	28	0.7	6	21.4%	7	25%
17	Kidnapping	10	0.3	5	50%	3	30%
18	Public nuisance	10	0.3	10	100%	0	0%
19	Arson	9	0.2	5	55.6%	2	22.2%
20	Sodomy/bestiality/incest	6	0.2	5	83.3%	1	16.7%
21	Abortion	4	0.1	0	0%	4	100%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3917</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2843</b>	<b>72.6%</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>8.8%</b>

The Table shows that 21 different types of crime were committed by men and women in Kiambu County between 2011 and 2012. Both men and women were recorded to have committed all types of crime but at different rates. This was contrary to the Gender Schema Theory of Criminal Behaviour that women were not expected to commit crimes. But if they did then they engaged in minor crime. This study revealed that both gender committed all types of crime. 18.6% (729) of the offenders in the OB were of unspecified gender. The crime records at the police stations did not consider gender disaggregated crime data accurately. This depicted erroneous information which

perpetuated common assumptions and stereotypes that crime was a men's domain per se while women contributed less to crime (Otieno, 2005). This study revealed that presence of fewer women crimes in police records could not be taken to mean that women's role in prevalence of crime could be inferred from their low recorded frequencies. Most respondents in this study reiterated that society tended to be lenient on women offenders who engaged in "petty offences" and that women offenders were mostly only cautioned and pardoned.

Table 4.2 shows that the most frequent types of crime were assault followed by petty theft/ theft of livestock, drugs trafficking and abuse, burglary, robbery, vandalism, rape and murder. These findings differed with those of a victimization study done in Mombasa by Odipo (1996) which established burglary as the leading type of crime (30%), followed closely by assault (26.5%), pick-pocketing (13.5%) and robbery (13%). The high prevalence of assault cases in Kiambu County, unlike in Mombasa, suggested that most people in Kiambu County settled scores physically in cases of interpersonal conflict than was the case in Mombasa. Alternatively, people in Kiambu County were keener to report assault cases than those in Mombasa. The difference between the two counties were attributed to Kiambu County experiencing rapid change in social and gender relations, leading to tension and frustration that could lead to heightened assault levels among its community members. This was unlike Mombasa County where social-cultural and gender relations were changing gradually. The study sought to get further insight into gender differences of the type of crimes committed by men and women in different regions.

### 4.3.1 Distribution of crime by gender per police station areas

The results of data analysis of crime by gender per police stations are depicted in Table 4.3 and Table 4.4:

Table 4.3: Type of crime committed by women per police station

Type of crime committed by women	Police Station						
	Githunguri police station	Karuri police station	Kiambu police station	Kibichoi police station	Kikuyu police station	Lari police station	Tigoni police station
Not stated	5	1	1	0	1	1	0
Abortion	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Arson	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Assault	33	10	29	2	27	14	28
Burglary	3	2	2	0	0	1	5
Car Jacking/car theft	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Child homicide	2	0	1	1	2	0	1
Drugs	3	4	5	1	9	0	3
Forgery	0	1	5	0	5	2	1
Fraud/False pretense/impersonation	0	1	7	0	3	2	4
Kidnapping	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Malicious damage to proper	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Murder/manslaughter	0	2	1	0	0	1	0
Rape	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Robbery with violence	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
Sodomy/bestiality/incest	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Suicide	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Natural/sudden death	0	0	1	1	0	4	0
Theft/Petty theft/theft of livestock	7	1	20	0	21	6	16
Vandalism	2	2	4	3	6	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Percentages</b>	<b>10.9%</b>	<b>6.14%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>6.14%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>9.2%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>

Table 4.4: Type of crimes committed by men per police station

Type of crimes committed by men	Police Station						
	Githunguri police station	Karuri police station	Kiambu police station	Kibicho police station	Kikuyu police station	Lari police station	Tigoni police station
Not stated	22	16	8	3	15	16	13
Arson	1	1	1	0	0	2	0
Assault	112	90	105	43	104	76	93
Burglary	45	45	64	5	45	28	46
Car Jacking/car theft	5	4	2	0	4	1	4
Child homicide	1	0	1	0	2	2	0
Drugs	67	75	108	7	133	36	47
Forgery	8	4	30	2	19	4	8
Fraud/False pretense/impersonation	5	4	26	1	17	9	7
Kidnapping	2	0	1	0	0	1	0
Malicious damage to proper	2	0	3	0	9	7	9
Mob injustice	3	3	4	0	2	3	1
Murder/manslaughter	5	6	11	1	8	2	3
Public nuisance	2	0	0	0	7	1	0
Rape	29	26	20	6	23	20	29
Robbery with violence	12	20	22	5	28	24	24
Sodomy/bestiality/incest	1	1	2	0	0	1	0
Suicide	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Natural/sudden death	3	4	6	1	2	11	3
Theft/Petty theft/theft of livestock	110	71	108	19	121	48	136
Vandalism	33	16	34	15	23	24	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>563</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>444</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>89.1%</b>	<b>93.9%</b>	<b>88.1%</b>	<b>93.9%</b>	<b>87.5%</b>	<b>90.8%</b>	<b>87.5%</b>

The Tables indicate that, generally, men committed more crimes than women in all regions of the study area. The crime rate for men was 89.1% against 10.9% for women in Githunguri. In Karuri, it was 93.9% for men compared to 6.14% for women, while for Kiambu it was 88.1% men and 11.9% women. Kikuyu and Tigoni had the leading crime rate among women (12.5%) reported in the period of study. Regions with high crime rate had more women committing crime, while those with fewer crimes also had a lower rate of female crimes. The difference in crime rate between men and women

could be attributed to the social gender role. While women were busy with multiple roles and could not have the opportunity to commit various crimes, men had a lot of freedom and opportunities to do whatever they wanted including committing crime. According to the Gender Schema Theory discussed in Chapter Two, gender norms esteem men's drive for autonomy such that they did not get social sanctions that would deter them from committing crime. Thus, men committed more crime than women because they had the opportunity which women lacked.

Respondents attributed the lower rate of women crimes in some areas, such as Kibichoi, to remoteness and the fact that people here had larger farms than other areas. Women in such areas would be busy on the farms and thus had limited opportunity to commit crimes. Other informants indicated that women's lower representation in crime in some areas was due to the fact that they still adhered to the gender-specific behaviour expected of them, and that should women commit crimes it was expected to be consistent with their gender roles. This view is in line with women-related crimes such as abortion, child homicide and drugs abuse reported in Kibichoi region as shown in Table 4.3 on page 62. This is further consistent with the hypothesis in Gender Schema Theory of criminal behaviour that if women commit crime, then it is 'domestic' in nature.

When asked what could contribute to lower cases of women crime in the area served by Karuri Police Station, despite its peri-urban location, the participants expressed disbelief. They could not understand how this was so, yet Karuri was reputed for many and serious crimes committed by women especially in villages such as Kawaida,

homes whether they had a job or not. Some of the women and their daughters were therefore forced to engage in other income generating activities like commercial sex while their sons were tempted to engage in crime.

The study participants asserted that women in need of money tended to engage in gender appropriate activities that they had been exposed to. Such responses implied that the community did not consider prostitution as a criminal offence. Regarding this view, respondents maintained that parents encourage their daughters to engage in prostitution rather than crime to support their family financially.

Respondents asserted that girls familiarized themselves with prostitution in the local bars and hotels in the evenings even before they completed school. They practised prostitution and at times drugged (*put muchele*) men into unconsciousness in order to steal money from them. Respondents further observed that other women plied Koinange Street in Nairobi at night only to come back very early in the morning, in time for school. They added that upon completing Form Four, these girls graduated from local prostitution to high class call-girls for the 'big' men in Nairobi while others headed to Mombasa to attract tourists. The girls who were left behind lured the local wealthy men and stripped them off their riches.

The forementioned suggest that women committing prostitution and allied crimes were not reported. This perhaps accounted for the lower women crime rate recorded in the Karuri region. Women's engagement in commercial sex rather than other crime was consistent with the proposition in the Gender Schema Theory that the demand for illicit sex creates economics and shapes crime opportunities for women. This in turn may

reduce the need for them to seek financial returns through serious property or violent crimes (Steffensmeier & Allan 2000) and contribute to the difference in male and female crime prevalence within the County.

Table 4.3 on page 65, indicates that abortion incidences were reported in the rural police stations of Tigoni, Kibichoi, Lari and Kikuyu (located in the peri-urban region). However, Kikuyu has some areas like Nachu, Karai, and Ndeiya which are very remote. Such areas could also have limited access to reproductive health services. This accounts for the prevalence of abortion crimes within the region. In the peri-urban regions girls may have power to and control over their reproduction because of easy accessibility to reproductive health services. Study participants in the peri-urban areas maintained that in spite of girls indulging in sex, especially with old rich men, it was very rare for them to drop out of school because of pregnancy.

Githunguri had higher assault rates among men and women than other stations. This could be attributed to stress and frustrations due to rapid change in gender relations.

While no child homicide was reported to have occurred within the region under the jurisdiction of Karuri police station, the area under Kikuyu police station had higher child homicide incidences (committed by men and women) than in other police stations. In Karuri, respondents said that women aborted once they realized that they were expecting a boy child. One male participant observed: *'in fact, many children born to the single mothers are girls; boys are flashed out before they are born'*. Proximity of the Karuri region to major hospitals that offered reproductive health services including scanning for sex of the forthcoming baby such that the unwanted sex is aborted.

The data in this study indicates that mob- injustice is a gender specific crime against men criminals only, despite the fact that women could commit similar crimes. Mob- injustice was notably higher in Githunguri and Kiambu police stations' reports than those in other stations. Respondents attributed higher robbery incidences by both men and women within the region under Kikuyu police station to long distant merchants travelling at night along the highway (Great North Road) from Mombasa to various national and international destinations. These long distant merchants travel by public or private means, ferrying valuable goods and money that predispose them to carjacking and robbery incidences, like for instance in the forested section of the road around the Uplands - Kinale area.

Reported rape incidences were higher in areas under Githunguri and Tigoni police stations. Although rape is considered a man's crime against women victims (Wincup. *et al.*, 2005), this study established that women also committed rape as shown in Table 4.3 on page 65. Women were on record for having sexually molested boys in the Githunguri region. Respondents attributed higher rape cases in Githunguri and Tigoni to the extensive tea plantations with many male casual workers who had immigrated from different parts of the country, leaving their families behind. Majority of these farm workers raped small girls at home or in the plantations. In one instance, a man had visited a woman friend at around 3 pm, but found only her 10 year-old girl at home. The man requested if the girl could rush to tell her mother that she had a visitor waiting for her in the house. The girl obliged and went to call the mother who worked in the nearby bar as an attendant. Unknown to the girl, the man had quietly followed her, and when

they reached a bushy part along the path, he dragged the poor girl into the bush and defiled her.

Unlike findings of urban crimes where theft comprised pick pocketing and shoplifting (Otieno, 2005), this study found out that thefts in Kiambu County involved livestock and food crops. The difference in items stolen could be attributed to the fact that there was little agricultural activity in urban regions. Nevertheless, various agricultural activities were carried out in Kiambu County. Livestock theft in the study area was prevalent in regions which practised 'zero grazing' of pedigree/cross-breed cattle. Crop theft was more in areas with intensive cultivation of indigenous food crops such as arrow roots, sweet potatoes, banana, yams and cassava, mainly along the flood plains within the County.

There were no carjacking incidents in Kibichoi region. Its residents did not possess the kind of cars preferred by robbers. Convict informants incarcerated for carjacking indicated that they would not prefer the old Chevloret pick-ups, Nissan and Toyota cars that were mostly found in Kibichoi area. They stated that they preferred Toyota Harriers, Hilux, Rav 4, NZE and Premio G and X which had a large market both in Kenya and in the neighbouring countries of Uganda and Tanzania. This was affirmed by a male convict informant who claimed to have carjacked more than a thousand cars. He said that he would never allow a posh car to escape him, but made sure that he carjacked and immediately drove it across the Kenyan borders where there was a large market.

Kiambu and Kikuyu Police Stations registered higher cases of forgery by women. But men committed forgery as recorded in all the stations, with slightly higher incidences in Kiambu Police Station. Regarding fraudulent deals, Tables 4.3 and 4.4 on pages 65 and 66 indicate that more female and male fraudsters were recorded in Kiambu and Kikuyu respectively, than the rest of the regions. Siegel (2003), postulates that fraud and forgery offenders have relatively higher education than the rest of the criminals. This can be inferred in the case of Kiambu and Kikuyu areas where the population generally has higher levels of education attainment (MoE, 2009) than other regions, which registered low incidences of forgery and fraud.

For the purpose of this study, alcohol related cases were grouped under drugs. The nature of these crimes of willing buyer and willing seller notion made them be regarded as victimless crimes (Wincup *et al.*, 2005). This study reveals that drug offences and abuse are predominantly a peri-urban phenomenon, with rural regions reporting fewer drug incidences. Tables 4.3 and 4.4 on pages 65 and 66 show that drug crimes were concentrated in peri-urban regions where Kikuyu Police Station had the bulk of men and women drug related offenders, followed by Kiambu Municipality, then Karuri. According to police informants, sudden deaths mainly resulted from drinking illicit alcohol. The analysis in Tables 4.3 and 4.4 reveals that Lari Police Station accounted for the bulk of sudden death incidences reported among men and women. An almost equal number of women and men engaged in drinking illicit brews in Lari region.

### 4.3.2 Categorization of Crime Types by Gender of Offenders

Using the Kenya Penal Code, Chapter 63, published by the National Council for Law Reporting (2009) classification of crimes, the 21 types of crimes that emerged from content analysis of police records were clustered into four categories, namely: Person-to-person violent crimes (crimes against the person), person-to-person property crimes, public order crimes and white collar crimes. To get the specific crimes committed by men and women in each category, an analysis of them within each category was cross-tabulated by gender of offenders as shown in Table 4.5:

Tables 4.5: Categories of Crime by Gender of Offender

Type of crime	frequency	percent	women	%within crime type	men	%within crime type
unspecified gender	729	18.6%				
<b>PERSON TO PERSON VIOLENT CRIMES</b>	<b>frequency</b>	<b>percent</b>	<b>women</b>	<b>% within the crime</b>	<b>men</b>	<b>%</b>
Assault	793	20.2	144	18.2	627	76.1
Robbery/with violence	330	8.4	3	0.9	137	41.5
Rape	167	4.3	1	0.6	154	92.2
Murder/manslaughter	161	4.1	4	2.5	36	22.4
Suicide	99	2.5	2	2	4	4
Mob injustice	75	1.9	0	0	16	21.3
Child homicide	28	0.7	7	25	6	21
Kidnapping	10	0.3	1	10	4	40
Sodomy/bestiality/incest	6	0.2	1	2	5	83.3
Abortion	4	0.1	3	75	0	0
<b>Total for Violent Crimes</b>	<b>1673</b>	<b>42.7%</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>989</b>	<b>59.10%</b>
<b>PERSON TO PERSON PROPERTY CRIMES</b>	<b>frequency</b>	<b>percent</b>	<b>women</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>men</b>	<b>%</b>
Theft/Petty theft/theft of livestock	732	18.7	71	9.7	618	84.4
Burglary	340	8.7	13	3.8	279	82.1
Vandalism	189	4.8	21	11.1	164	86.8
Car Jacking/car theft	51	1.3	2	3.9	20	39.2
Malicious damage to property	37	0.9	2	5.4	30	81.1
Arson	9	0.2	2	22.2	5	55.6
<b>Total For Property Crimes</b>	<b>1358</b>	<b>34.6%</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>8.20%</b>	<b>1116</b>	<b>82.20%</b>
<b>PUBLIC ORDER CRIMES</b>	<b>frequency</b>	<b>percent</b>	<b>Women offender</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Men offender</b>	<b>%</b>
Drugs	512	13.1	25	4.9	474	92.6
Public nuisance	10	0.3	0	0	10	100%
Natural/sudden death	38	1	6	15.8	30	79%
<b>Total for Public Order Crimes</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>5.50%</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>91.80%</b>
<b>white collar crimes</b>	<b>frequency</b>	<b>percent</b>	<b>women</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>men</b>	<b>%</b>
Forgery	92	2.3	14	15.2	77	83.7
Fraud/False pretence/impersonation	87	2.2	17	19.5	69	79.3
<b>Total for White Collar Crimes</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>17.30%</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>81.60%</b>

No woman was reported to have been killed in mob-injustice reactions. Male participation escapes final police records, yet they were known to assist women to carry out abortions. Study participants confirmed that sometimes men colluded with women to carry out an abortion through coercion, encouragement and even giving them money to pay for such services. A female participant explained:

Majority of abortions are carried out by single women who have relationships with married men. These men may not be ready to take up added responsibilities or fear the implication that may arise in their marriages in case the wives get to learn of their infidelity and the subsequent children. To avoid such complications, men may fund their partners to carry out an abortion.

Men who participate in abortion commit felony, and they and their female counterparts alike should also be convicted in a court of law according to the penal code of Kenya (2009). However, this does not happen because women may not report their male accomplices. Moreover, police officers did not seem bothered to establish the culprits who may have participated in the crime.

Female offending rate was higher (17.3%) in white collar crimes than in other crimes, while male had higher offending rate in public order crimes (91.8%). More female in white collar crimes than any other could be attributed to the fact that these crimes were considered less risky because they did not involve use of lethal weapons or force (Jones, 2006).

This study shows that public nuisance is a gender-specific crime that is dominated by men. Such cases were recorded to have occurred in only three police stations: Kikuyu, Lari and Githunguri. This study contends that women too commit public order crimes. They engage in abuses and affray. However, society may justify public nuisance by

women as indicative of their nature and thus people do not consider reporting them to law enforcers. The society seems to excuse women for being moody and for their inability to control emotions; as such, their nuisance may go unreported (Guijt & Shah, 1998).

#### 4.4.0 Objective Two: Perspectives on Causes of Crime in Kiambu County

This study set out to identify the causes of crime committed by men and women in Kiambu County. We asked our respondents (that is, OCPDs, OCSs, police officers, members of community policing, men and women convicts) to identify the factors that led men and women to commit crime in the County. The goal of this enquiry was to establish respondents' awareness of any gender differences in causes of crime. Data from the key- informants is corroborated by analyses of results from interviews with selected convicts, participants in FGDs and responses from the questionnaires filled in by police officers. Police responses are presented in Table 4.6:

*Table 4.6: Police responses on causes of crimes in Kiambu County*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Police responses on Causes</b>	Male(31)	%	Female(13)	%
	Proximity to Nairobi	2	6.5	0	0
What factors contribute to men and women crimes in Kiambu?	High population density	3	9.7	1	7.7
	Inherited gene, blood ties and clan labelling	6	19.3	4	30.8
	Neglecting boy child and poor role model	8	26	2	15.4
	Lack of education and unemployment	4	13	1	7.7
	Existence of illegal sects	3	9.6	0	0
	Problems arising from inheritance of land and property	4	13	5	38.5
	Drug abuse	1	3	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100</b>

16.1% of the policemen and 7.7% of policewomen said that proximity to Nairobi and high population density influenced the incidence of diverse crime in Kiambu County. They said that Kiambu's cosmopolitan multiracial nature with its diverse economic activities contributed to crime. Some residents are landowners practising commercial and subsistence farming. Others are employed as casual labourers in plantations and factories. Others are employed in Nairobi but rent houses in Kiambu County where houses are relatively cheaper and spacious. This ethnic and economic diversity in Kiambu County contributes to criminal activity. For instance, police informants emphasized that unlike other rural Counties, people in Kiambu County depended on cash economy. Therefore, people without adequate sources of financial income were more likely to turn to crime as a means for survival. They contended that migrant job seekers who failed to secure either formal or informal employment could turn to commit crime within the county or in the neighbouring Nairobi County.

13% of policemen and 7.7% of policewomen respondents stated that low education achievement and unemployment contributed to crimes in the study area. In addition, the study participants asserted that majority of parents in Kiambu County were illiterate and, therefore, did not see the need to encourage their children, especially boys, to get education. Lack of motivation for education among boys was manifested by cases of more boys than girls dropping out of primary schools within the County (MoE, 2009). Respondents attributed the higher school retention rate among girls to parents' encouragement with the intention of preparing their daughters for a bright future. Boys dropped out of school to engage in small scale business, while others engaged in crime.

Over a quarter (26%) of policemen and 15.4% of policewomen respondents stated that parents' neglect of the boy child and poor role models contributed to male criminality. This view was affirmed by inmates and police informants who maintained that men contributed to the bulk of crimes committed within the County due to poverty that resulted from parental neglect during their formative years. They observed that neglect of the boy child by the community contributed to their early indulgence in crime. A policeman informant observed:

In this county, boys are expected to fend for themselves soon after initiation into manhood at about 14 years of age. At this tender age, boys are not adequately equipped with skills to enable them live comfortably on their own, nor are they ready for the job market. To fend for themselves, the young men are forced to venture into touting at bus terminals, join illegal groups like *Mungiki* and turn to crime. The illegal groups provide them with a sense of belonging as well as illegal means of making money, such as extortion. A young boy left to fend for himself can be frustrated. Those who are unable to cope with the frustrations seek consolation in drugs, alcohol and /or commit suicide.

The above excerpt implies that boys in Kiambu County were expected to fend for themselves yet they had not been bequeathed with skills or means of production to do so. Parental neglect compelled them to learn indulgence in crime for survival. However, although affecting their community, participants of the FGDs did not mention neglect of the boy child as a cause of crime, implying that they were not aware of the situation or they just ignored the fact and thought it not important. Several respondents maintained that parents and the society did not provide good role models for their children. They held that society exalted the rich regardless of where they got their wealth from, while the poor were undermined. Some informants observed that several wealthy individuals in the study area were illiterate and most of them got their riches through dubious and

illegal dealings. They regretted that parents would give the uneducated rich people as examples that their children should emulate. The study participants confirmed that parents actually quoted names of rich illiterate men telling their children that “even so-and-so *ndathire cukuru na niwe ukombagira Kenya mbecha*” (“so- and -so never went to school and yet, he is the one who lends Kenya money”). This gave the children and the youth the impression that it was not important to aspire to formal education. Boys dropped out of school to try their fortune like the illiterate wealthy men. The study participants contended that while parents and the rest of the community members put premium on wealth, they had very low regard for formal education. Hence, they did not encourage their children to go to school. If a child dropped out of school, parents encouraged the child by saying ‘*ikara ti thuruari onanie ndiathomire*’ (‘you can drop out, education is not ‘pants’ (important), even me I am not educated’). Without formal education, these children engaged in economic activities that did not require formal skills, including crime.

Some study participants maintained that parents applauded their delinquent children because they contributed to their livelihood, while they disregarded those that were not able to find means. A woman participant reported that parents taunted non-supportive children by asking why they could not be like their ‘hard working’ brothers/sisters. Such parents cherished the maxim: *bururi ukwenda mbia hiu yahitia kamba ikaria nganangu* (society requires a spirited/ fleet-footed/ frisky rat, if it fails to eat the rope it feeds on the leather loop). FGDs participants argued that some parents, especially single mothers, encouraged their children into crime.

There were 35,675 female-headed households in 2001 and according to 2009 population census, the figure had increased to 38,995 female-headed households (Kenya Population Census, 2009). Criminologists have tended to agree that single motherhood and informal social controls were variables that were the most powerful predictors of deviant behaviour in any given society (Anderson, 2002).

Participants stated that some parents asked their sons why they had resigned themselves to poverty by being docile rather than do what other men did for a living. They asserted that parents whose children heeded their call, prayed and blessed them to continue committing crimes successfully and to attain economic prosperity. This was affirmed by a woman participant aged 41 years:

...a male criminal repented and started professing Christ. In his testimony in church, he urged parents to discourage children against evil. He said before he met Christ, he was a criminal because his mother encouraged him to commit crimes. He stated that his mother appreciated whatever he took home, yet; she knew it had been stolen. She would even urge him to continue stealing. He further added that any time he went home with stolen goods the mother would sprinkle saliva on her chest and bless him by saying '*may the good Lord bless the work of your hands*'. He narrated how he and three others had successfully robbed a women's group that had met to consolidate money in a neighbouring church compound at gun point. They managed to take off with Ksh 200,000 cash. As usual, he took some money to his mother a few hours after the incident. He was surprised to see the mother take the money and perform her usual ritual of asking God to bless the work of his hands. Yet, he was sure that the mother had heard of the incident.

This showed that parents indeed pushed their children into crime.

About a fifth (19.3%) of policemen and 30.8% of policewomen indicated that genes, blood ties and clan labelling contributed to criminal activity within the study area. They claimed that criminal activities ran in family hereditary lines.

Respondents quoted instances where, in some families, parents, their sons as well as grandsons had criminal records. The notion was affirmed by study participants who asserted that most of the crimes in the region were carried out by members of specific families. They said that incidences of crime were concentrated in some regions, particularly Kianjongu, Ngecha, Ikinu, Ngegu, Gachie, Kanunga, Kamuchege, Kihara, Ruaka, Njiku and Kinoo where members of particular families terrorized the community. They stated that these families did not commit crime because of poverty but due to perceived hereditary genes. Eysenck and Gudjonsson (1989) similarly argued that the interaction of personality, which was genetically determined produced antisocial behaviour.

Blood relatives and labelling featured in discourses on crime. Many of the police interviewed asserted that kinship influenced criminal behaviour in Kiambu County. They maintained that this influence contributed to concealment of actual crime issues since relatives protected their criminal kin. They argued that a criminal was a father, grandparent, a child, a nephew, an uncle or a grandchild in the community. They further maintained that the kinship factor made it difficult to collect information about crime. Such that criminals committed crimes knowing that they would be protected and buffered by their relatives, who could never 'sell' one of their own to the police.

According to some respondents, labelling contributed to incidence of crime in Kiambu County. People may tend to live up to the label assigned to them by others (Myers, 1998). The police who participated in this study maintained that the society had labelled

some communities or members of certain families and clans as criminals. The labelled clans lived up to this expectation by committing crime.

Interestingly, sayings such as *kwa mbari ya kihara uria utari muici ni murogi* (one who is not a criminal in Kihara's clan is a witch) reinforced the criminal labels in the study area. Members of Kihara's clan in Gachie village had lived up to the criminal stereotype, and this attracted media attention during the fieldwork.

Conversely, some people who participated in this study asserted that criminal tendencies in Kiambu County could be attributed to the colonial past, where oppressed Africans destroyed and/or stole items belonging to white men. This tendency supposedly heightened during the struggle for independence, and robbery and destruction of the whiteman's property persisted after attaining independence. However, crime in contemporary society is now directed at the wealthy citizens. Study participants added that criminal behaviour thrives due to socio-economic and class differences in the local Kiambu population.

Land squabbles featured in responses about the causes of crimes like murder, assaults, arson, malicious damage, burglary, prostitution, rape and forgery in Kiambu County. Respondents and key informants attributed land problems to traditions that restricted men from distributing their property to their children while they were still alive. Offspring could have access, but they did not have control of land and therefore their resources were limited. The study participants maintained that with little land resources under their control, young people could embark on committing crime as a means of livelihood.

Respondents observed that mass media contributed to acceleration of crime, and that the internet had brought about new and more complex crimes. The police who participated in this study concurred with this as they maintained that media contributed to crime rate in the region. They argued that when the print and electronic media reported that criminals committed crime successfully, such reports motivated potential criminals. In fact, criminal events that were rare in real life were sometimes committed soon after similar events were telecasted (Cook *et al.*, 1983; Wilson, 1983). Conversely, Surette (2002) holds that most of the individuals who copied media crimes had prior criminal record or history of violence and crime. This implied that mass media was more likely to shape criminal behaviour qualitatively rather than quantitatively.

Participants, respondents and informants stated that availability of illegal firearms also contributed to incidences of crimes in Kiambu County. Instability in Eastern Africa had resulted in illegal acquisition of firearms and other weapons in Kenya from war torn countries such as Somali and South Sudan (Munguti, 2011). This increased cases of organized gun crimes in Kenya. A male participant, for instance, observed that in the past thieves in Kiambu County used small arms or weapons such as sticks, *rungus* and machetes, but they now came with guns, making resistance by victims or neighbours futile or fatal. Affirming this view a male participant, aged 56 years, opined:

These criminals come during the day and some even give notice of their intended visits, and there is nothing anyone can do. Even if the victims cry for help, no one is ready to risk going to assist. We walk to console the victim once we are sure that the criminals have left.

Such responses reflected the level of insecurity as armed criminals acted with impunity within the County (Munguti, 2011).

From the foregoing, the respondents gave gender neutral causes of crime in Kiambu County. From the findings of this study, it was apparent that Kiambu County may have had unique causes of crimes different from those of urban areas. Odipo(1996), Otieno, (2005) and Ndikaru (2010) seem to have concluded that urban crimes were caused by poverty, unemployment, migration of youth from upcountry, and drugs. It was also clear that crime was not necessarily gender-specific although men were reflected in crime records more than women. The society still associated criminality with masculinity, a view that was consistent with the Gender Schema Theory of Criminal Behaviour (Bardsley, 1987). The society still presumed that women were domesticated as sexual objects and expected them to remain in culturally constructed domain such as homemaker, care-giver and nurturer; taking second place after men (Oakley, 1981).

#### **4.5.0 Objectives Three and Four: Gender Differences in Patterns and Motives of Crime**

This section analyzes the third and fourth objectives. The third objective of this study was to establish gender patterns of crime, and the fourth was to establish gender-associated motives in criminal activity. To achieve the third objective, the study cross-tabulated data collected from police records on type of crime by different indicators such as age and gender of the offenders, age and gender of victims, season and time of the crime, weapon and method used, venue of the crime, mode of entrance, as well as inferences on relationship between victims and offenders. Time was clustered as morning between 3AM and 11AM; day time, 12 Noon -5PM; evening, 6PM to around 8PM and night, 9PM to 2AM. The years under study (2011 and 2012) were divided into

four quarters of three months each; January-March, April-June, July-September and October – December. The discussion of the patterns was arranged according to the different categories of crime as identified: person -to- person violent crime, person-to-person property crime, public order crime and white collar crime. Responses from respondents, informant interviews and FGD participants are discussed together with the quantitative analysis. At the end of crime characterizations, the fourth objective of data collected from convicts on gender related motives to commit the crimes are discussed. Verbatim narrations have been used to vivify the findings.

#### **4.5.1 Gender patterns of person -to- person violent crime**

Person-to-person violent crime includes life terminating crimes such as murder, manslaughter, suicide, child homicide and mob-injustice. They also include life threatening acts such as robbery/ with violence, assault and kidnapping; and sexual crimes such as rape, sodomy, incest and bestiality.

##### **4.5.1.1 Gender patterns formed in murder**

The data from police crime records indicate that about a quarter (23.1 %) of 161 people who committed murder were men compared to 3.8% for women. The 3.8% incidences should not be taken to mean that women murdered at that rate, but as an indication that women within Kiambu County did commit murder at times.

Data analysis on gender of victims and offenders in murder is depicted by Figure 4.1:



Figure 4.1: Gender of murder offenders and victims.

Figure 4.1 reveals that both men and women committed murder against either gender. The analysis showed that men comprised more of the bulk of murder victims and offenders than women. These findings are consistent with a previous study done by Odipo (1996) which established that men dominated as victims as well as perpetrators. Benekos (1985) had had similar findings that women as victims were fewer than men. He maintained that majority of murders being committed by men was a sign that violence was a key part of patriarchal society, and further stated that the knowledge in women that they were vulnerable could lead them to take action to protect themselves (Benekos, 1995). This could involve acting as subservient as possible or removing themselves from a potentially dangerous situation.

From the above data, it is clear that men kill fellow men more (66.7%) than women. But women kill fellow women at higher rate of 46% compared to 25% perpetrated against men. The findings of this study that women comprised few murder offenders and

victims differed considerably with Mushanga's (1974) findings in a study done on crime in Uganda which concluded that women comprised majority of murder victims, but concurred with Odipo's (1996) findings which established that men kill fellow men more than women. However, contrary to these findings, Muga's (1980) established that women kill more men than fellow women. Muga's findings were affirmed by Benekos (1995) who suggested that it was very likely that women killed at a higher rate, but the general leniency towards women by the male-dominated legal profession could be attributed to the fewer murders recorded.

This study endeavoured to find out if respondents were aware that women did commit felony crimes such as murder. Participants maintained that women killed almost at an equal rate as that of men, with a large percentage of them killing their husbands. Although their response was consistent with Mugo (1980), it contradicted the above data analysis from police records which showed that women killed fellow women more than they killed men, apart from the region under jurisdiction of Karuri police station as seen in earlier sections above. However, participants insisted that women killed more men only that they managed to conceal these killings. In this regard, convicted informants contended that women killed men through hiring male criminals to murder on their behalf. In this way, it was rare for law enforcers and members of the public to suspect that it was a woman behind the killing. Regarding this opinion, a male convict explained:

*Atumia mahuthiraga anake kuraga athuri ao nigetha meherie githuki mucii matigirwo indo. Maita maingi ni mukomborwo unyitagwo na akohuo ti muragani* (Women hire young men to eliminate their husbands in order to remove the 'stump' from the home and be left as sole property owners. More often than not, it is the hired man who gets convicted).

Such responses implied that men were convicted for killing on behalf of women because they never told on their clients, leaving the police without the slightest clue that it was a woman who was behind the murder.

We wanted to establish whether women were motivated to kill their husbands to inherit property. As such, when we went to Lang'ata Womens' Prison we asked those incarcerated for murder why women eliminated their husbands. Their responses differed and shed a different light from the opinions expressed by participants and male convicts. These female informants explained that Kiambu men were normally very hostile to their wives while they could do anything for their *Jangilis/ atumia a bara* (prostitutes/ street women). They asserted that men who had mistresses could be killed if they misused family property on other women. Yet, it may have been the wife who had worked so hard to accumulate the property. They further added that it was this bitterness of seeing another woman coming to reap from her sweat, coupled with mistreatment by her partner that drove many wives to eliminate their husbands.

Going by the above response, one could dismiss the general perception and conclude that women did not eliminate their husbands because of property *per se*, but because of their husband's tendency to arrogantly deny access and control over family property to those who had worked very hard to amass it. However, not all female informants shared this opinion. Two of them contended that it was the concubines and not the legal wives who eliminated the men. As a female informant aged 52 years observed:

Men are often killed by their *Jangilis* (prostitutes) after their use is over, that is after they have transferred all the property to her name. The *Jangilis* eliminate the man for fear he might change his mind once the love for her is over.

This notion was affirmed by FGD participants who contended that men were normally eliminated by their concubines and mistresses. They said that such women were normally much younger than the man and their intention was to acquire wealth and status. Since such women were not emotionally attached, they could easily eliminate the man in case he wanted to withdraw his gifts.

Regarding the rate of female murder offenders, police informants voiced their suspicion that women murdered men at a higher rate than they did to fellow women in Kiambu County. Asked why they didn't convict these women for murder, they said that women committed such crime in such a way that it was difficult to gather evidence against them. Their view was affirmed by participants who maintained that one could only suspect the woman, but could lack any evidence. They contended that some women were heard boasting to their friends that their husbands were dead, but maintained that this was neither evidence that they had killed their husbands nor was it enough justification to warrant arrest.

The finding of this study that women are murder offenders is contrary to moral and affiliation concern of the Gender Schema Theory of criminal behaviour which states that female predisposition toward an "ethic of care" may restrain women from violence and other behaviour that may injure others or cause emotional hurt. According to the theory, women are expected to commit minor crimes related to their gender role expectations such as petty theft and theft by prostitution, while men are expected to

commit major crimes. It is also contrary to Odipo's (1996) findings that there were no women convicted for murder/ manslaughter in Shimo-La-Tewa Prison which he attributed to the fact that women were seen as a source of life. He commented that women were culturally not prone to killing somebody or even getting involved in serious crimes (Odipo, 1996:120). Women killing either gender could be attributed to social-cultural changes where women worked hard to acquire material wealth believing they were in monogamous marriage. Yet, men though in monogamous marriages, secretly practised polygamy and used the family finances to support these women. Such double standard practices bred frustration, jealousy and bitterness that could lead women to commit murder. Therefore, the finding of this study shows that it was stereotype to think that women only committed minor crimes.

Cross-tabulation of data for age and gender of murder offenders, collected from police crime records, was done. The distribution is shown in Figure 4.2:

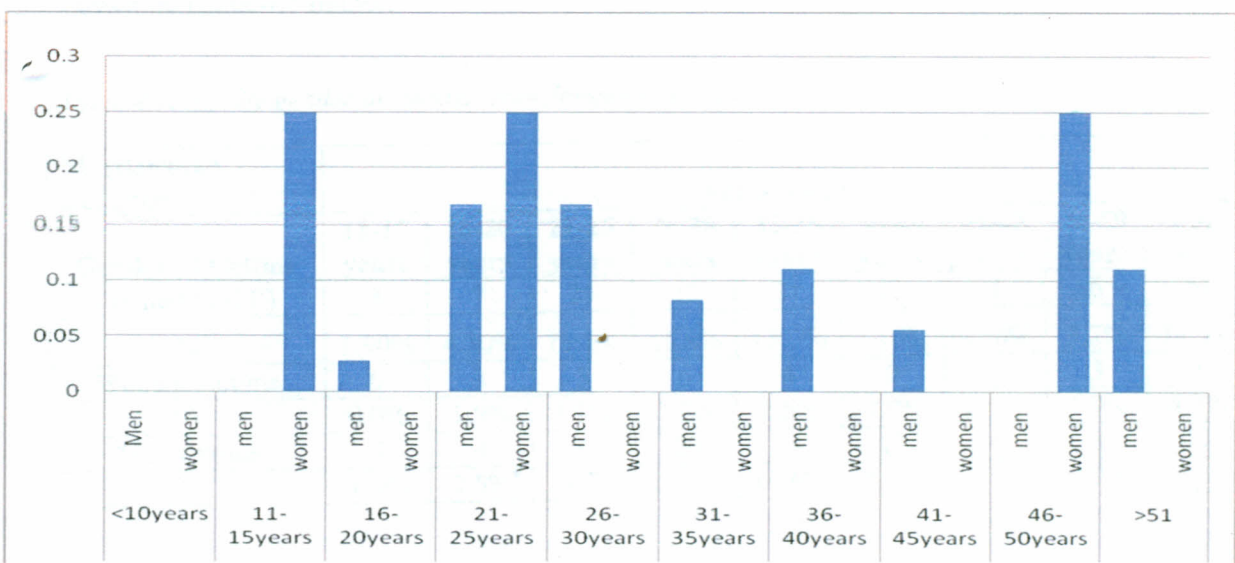


Figure 4.2: Age and gender of murder offenders

Figure 4.2 shows that most murder offenders were men aged 21 to over 51 years. The youngest women murder offenders were in the age bracket between 11 and 15 years and men between 16 and 20 years. Older men (over 51 years) murdered at a rate of 11.1%. The difference between minimum age of men and women murder offenders could be attributed to the different methods and weapons used by either gender in committing the crime. Women, unlike men, tended not to have murder tendencies beyond 50 years, suggesting that they were better able to deal with life challenges.

The fact that older men committed murder in Kiambu County was contrary to findings elsewhere. Adwani (1978) stated that murder criminals were usually young men, between the ages of 20-30 years. Similarly, Kariuki (1978) found out that the majority of crime in Thika was committed by men between 20-35 years of age. Odipo (1996) also found out that murder was mainly committed by young men in Mombasa.

This study sought to establish the age of murder victims by gender, and the results are shown in Table 4.7 below:

*Table 4.7: Age by gender of murder/ manslaughter victims*

Murder/man slaughter	Age of victims								
	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	31-35 years	36-40 years	41-45 years	46-50 years	>51 years
Frequency (N')	3	7	25	27	21	13	4	6	24
%	1.90%	4.30%	15.5%	16.8%	13.0%	8.10%	2.50%	3.7%	14.9%
Women victims	0	3	3	6	4	0	0	3	7
%	0.0%	1.9%	1.9%	3.7%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	4.3%
Men victims	3	4	22	20	17	13	4	3	17
%	1.9%	2.5%	13.7%	12.4%	10.6%	8.1%	2.5%	1.9%	10.6%

A larger percentage (45.3%) of murder victims fell between 21-35 years. Men accounted for the bulk of victims (46.9%) compared to women (44.8%). Older people, especially women over 51 years of age, were the major victims of murder. Conversely, Dywer (2003), Seigel, (2002) and Odipo (1996) found out that, although old people registered the highest fear of being victimized, they were the least affected. Some respondents argued that much of the wealth was in the hands of the older population who owned and controlled both movable and immovable property and denied their children control and/or access. In such instances, elderly persons could be killed to enable the younger generation inherit property. Moreover, older persons could be murdered in instances where they fell victim of other crimes such as robbery, burglary or assault. The absence of murder victims below 10 years of age did not mean that they did not fall victim. Rather, murder of victims below ten years was considered child homicide and is discussed in a later section.

Data analysis from the police records revealed that (28%) of murders occurred at night, 14.3% in the morning and 12.4% in the evening. The time of the day when most murders occurred was important in giving a deeper understanding of men's and women's offending patterns. Analysis revealed gender differences in that while men committed murder any time of the day, with most (25%) committing in the evening, women committed murder at night (50%) and 50% in the morning. The difference could be explained by the choice of victims targeted by men and women. For instance, data analysis on the relationship between victims and offenders discussed below indicates that women most likely targeted people they knew. This was supported by Schwartz (2008) who suggested that victims of women are likely to be either an intimate male or

a child. Men committed murder any time of the day because their targeted victims included strangers. Benekos (1995) noted that when homicide involved strangers, the victim and the offenders were men.

Gender of the offenders was cross-tabulated by the seasons that the murders were committed. Results are presented in Figure 4.3:

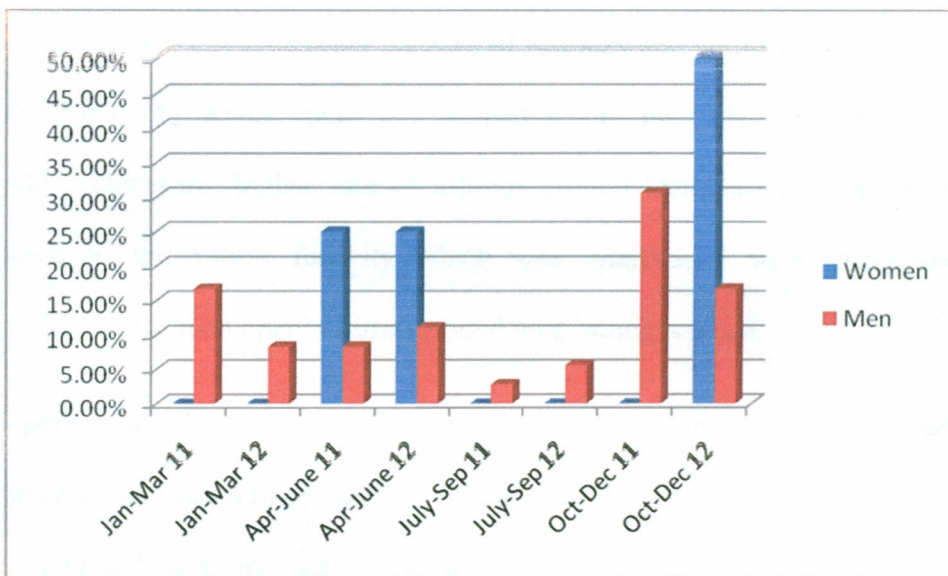


Figure 4.3: gender of murder offenders by seasons of offence

Results in Figure 4.3 indicate that 50% of women committed murder between April-June and another 50% between October and December of 2012. But, men committed murder across the year, with the highest rate (30.6 %) between October and December 2011, which reduced to 16.7 % in 2012. Men committed less murder between the months of July-September. Most murders occurred in the last quarter of the year (between October and December). Women murdered in mid and the last quarter of the year, while men's rate was lower between July and September but higher between October and December. These findings are not consistent with Kariuki's (1978) in her

study of crime in Thika District, which indicated that most of murders (54.16%) occurred between the months of February and May with no women offenders. Police informants in this study reported that women were likely to commit murder between April and June since this was the time when girls who had completed school the previous year tended to have relationships with married men. Their wives could kill either of them to protect their families from intruders. They further added that female sex workers could kill each other because of jealousy and competition for the available wealthy men. Or, wives could kill women whom they claimed had 'stolen' their husbands. Therefore, higher rate of killings around October to December could be attributed to the yearly festivity which was intertwined with merrymaking and immorality where men openly flirted around with young women.

From police records, this study sought to establish weapons and method used by men and women in committing murder. These two indicators, although different, are intertwined and therefore inseparable, in that the weapon used automatically gives an idea of the method used. For instance, one may make inferences that there was shooting if a gun was used in a particular crime. That being the case then, method and weapon used would be discussed together.

To get gender patterns, data from police records of murder offenders was cross-tabulated by weapon and method used. Results indicate that these were gender specific: knife and machetes were used by 50% of women and 19.4% of men. Gender difference could result from the fact that stabbing did not require much physical strength because a sharp knife could penetrate human flesh with less effort, and enable women to kill their

victims with ease. A total of 16.7% of men used crude and blunt weapons, while 5.6% of men strangled their victims. Consistent with the gender organization of physical strength and aggression, women were not represented in reports on murder involving hitting and strangling because the two methods require a lot of courage and physical strength. 50% of women murdered their victims by poisoning them. Use of poison as a murder weapon did not require strength and made it possible for women and even young girls between 11 and 15 years of age to murder compared to their male counterparts who, according to the police records, did not commit murder.

Offenders were inclined to use weapons and murder methods in accordance with perceived gender behaviour. Women were socialized to be physically weak, passive, and without courage. They tended to kill using subtle methods such as poison or hiring men. But men tended to kill using aggressive methods because they had been socialized as physically strong, to be aggressive and risk takers (Golombok & Fivush, 1994).

Cross-tabulation of type of crime by venue and gender of murder offender was done.

Results are depicted in Figure 4.4:

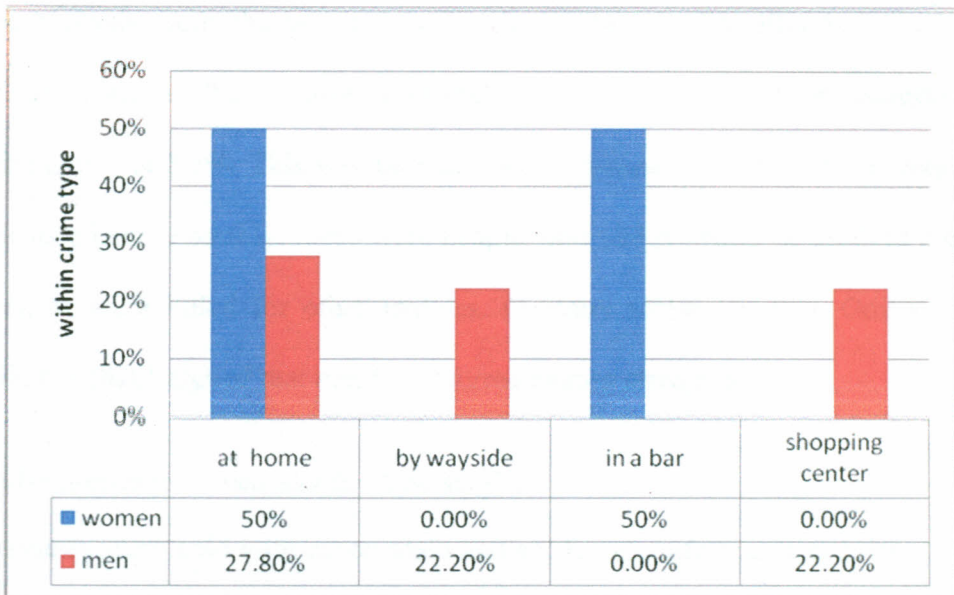


Figure 4.4: Venue of Murder by Gender of Offender

Most murders took place at home. Women murdered their victims in two venues, home and in bars. Women who participated in this study confirmed that murders involving female offenders took place in bars. They also asserted that *atumia a bara* (street women) killed their victims by drugging them or by grievously assaulting them with beer bottles which led to death. They added that ‘street women’ could kill by stabbing a woman who had “snatched her partner” in the bar. Data from police records indicated that men typically murdered their victims on roadsides and at shopping centres. Also, men mostly murder their victims outside the gates to their compounds. A male participant, 55 years old, said:

Here, most murders take place outside the gate as the victims waited to be opened for to get into their compounds. For instance, in all the deaths that occurred the previous month, the victims were waylaid outside their gate. Lets enumerate them; the man that was killed in Banana; a couple that was killed in Wangigi; the young man who was killed on the eve of his wedding as he escorted his fiancée, all were killed outside their gate as they waited to be let into the compounds.

Data analysis from the police records shows that murder offenders were husbands (1.6%), relatives (0.5%), parents (1.1%), sibling (2.7%) and sons/ daughters against their parents at 2.7%. This was an indication that some murder victims were related to their assailants. Possibly, these were people who had conflicts or grudges against each other, or were killed for other motives. Contrary to this finding, Odipo (1996) and Ndikaru (2010) argued that murder occurred among strangers.

*Gender motives to commit Murder /Manslaughter*

Interviews were held with seven male and six female informants convicted for murder or manslaughter. The informants reported their motives for the crime, which were compared with FGDs and other respondents' perspectives of the motives. 67 % of the six women had each killed a woman, while the rest (33%) had victimized men. The female convicts said that they committed the crime because they were bitter and hurt by the women's' love affairs with their husbands. Husbands' betrayal and mistreatment made wives bitter and frustrated. This contributed to their inclination to commit murder to preempt misery. Most murder convicts interviewed maintained that while some sought refuge in religion and prayers, others sought revenge by eliminating the person they associated with their problems.

Some women murdered their husbands' mistresses because the mistress had provoked them. One female convict aged 33 years, for instance, reported:

My husband's mistress lived a few metres from my house. Any time I walked past her house, she ridiculed me. I would pray for perseverance but, I was down hearted and dejected.... The woman thought that my silence was a weakness and kept on escalating her taunting; I would feel very bitter and humiliated. It became too much and I felt I could not take it anymore.

One day as I was passing by, she provoked me. I got enraged and beat her up so badly that she died.

Another female convict aged 28 years narrated a similar incidence:

His mistress came to my house carrying a child on her back to ridicule me that she had had the child with my husband. There was water meant for preparation of *ugali* (maize meal) boiling on the fire. I angrily grabbed the boiling water and poured it on them. Unfortunately, both she and the baby died from the burn injuries they sustained. Unfortunately, African culture is bad; you never disparage the dead even when s/he was on the wrong. The living one is blamed by all. This is what happened to me, all the witnesses who were not even present at the scene said how good the lady was and that I was the one who had attacked her. The judge went by what he heard from the witnesses and I was incarcerated in spite of the high level of provocation.

A mistress could provoke a married woman in different ways. Another woman convict aged 23 years who participated in this study said:

I stabbed his mistress in the chest several times. This woman had a habit of calling me using my husband's mobile phone any time they were together. She would tell me where they were and what they were doing and that she was the one to decide what time she would release him to come to me. One evening she called and told me they were in a certain bar drinking and of course it was my husband who was paying for the drinks. This provoked and enraged me. You cannot imagine what I felt because this man has abdicated his family obligations and left the entire family burden on me... I had spent that day washing clothes for people so that I could raise my son's school fees because he had been sent away from school the previous fortnight. Instead of my husband paying the fees, I was left to struggle while he was using his money on his *Jangili* (prostitute). I felt I had had enough of ridicules, taunts and humiliation from this woman. I took a knife and ran to the bar, where I found them seated and drinking beer together. I felt mad and stabbed her several times on the chest asking, *Nugu ino ugutura unyariraga nginya ri?* (You monkey, for how long are you going to make me miserable?).

Female murder convicts projected their frustrations to other women relating with their husbands, rather than the husbands who had betrayed them. The above data suggests that women perceived their wayward husbands as weak and passive actors whom other

women easily misled into extra marital love affairs. The perception that women use their feminine attributes and sexual prowess to confuse men has persisted in most communities since medieval times (Holland, 2006). Due to such perceptions, women kill or assault their husbands' mistresses or concubines in order to protect and bring their "vulnerable" husbands back home.

This observation is consistent with the Gender Schema Theory of criminal behaviour, which portrays women as being willing to take greater risks to protect loved ones or to sustain relationships. However, not all women murdered fellow women for having affairs with their men. Some said that they sometimes committed such crime accidentally according to female convict:

Mine was an affray. My friend and I had a quarrel that culminated in a fight. .., some by-standers intervened and we were separated. Each of us went our different ways to our houses. I don't know what happened to her; maybe she had sustained internal injuries, because she was found dead the next morning, so people said I had murdered her.

Statistics from Lang'ata Women's Prison revealed that 65% of the women incarcerated had murdered their own husbands or partners. The finding is supported by Schartz and Steffensmeier (2007) who suggested that women did not murder male strangers but their husbands or partners. The responses in this study, from women imprisoned for murdering men are discussed below:

25% of women incarcerated for murder said they eliminated their husbands to safeguard family land and property from being misused by other women. These informants asserted that men utilized family property for their selfish gain without thinking about the future. They further added that women killed men because these in Kiambu County

were secretly disposing family property and spending this money on mistresses/prostitutes, rather than uplifting the family's welfare. A female convict, 41 years old remarked:

Sometimes one is forced to eliminate these senseless and selfish men, who only think of themselves. They easily give in to their mistresses' demands. These women normally confuse men to transfer their family property to her name or sell it so that she is 'kept' well. To please their women, the men transfer or sell the property without caring whether their wives and children contributed towards earning it. As such, women eliminate their partners if they realize he has such tendencies.

Her view was affirmed by another female convict who explained:

These men are funny; my husband owned nothing when I married him. We started with nothing, but each of us worked hard to lift our economic status. After we were blessed with wealth, my husband started mistreating and humiliating me in front of our children. He made sure my children and I had no access or control to his wealth. Unfortunately, I learnt he had a chain of mistresses whom he was renting houses for, and he was in the process of transferring to one of them a house we had put up together. I reasoned at that rate the man would give away all our property and leave us (*her and children*) destitute. Already we were struggling while he enjoyed the money alone with his women. Also my friend had shared with me that her husband had given out their petrol station to a *maraya* (prostitute), and that the prostitute had later chased the man away after milking all he had, only to return to her empty handed. I did not want such a thing to happen to me.

Men were tempted to sell family property leaving nothing for the children. Although women could have access to the property, they did not usually have control over land which was registered in the names of the men. As such, a woman could not make decisions on whatever their husbands did with it. A female convict interviewed, for instance, remarked:

If women try to stop them [men from selling land], they arrogantly tell their wives that it is their land which they have inherited from their fathers. *Wee nimuki* (she is an outsider) who should not at any time dream of dictating what he should do with his land. Once these men sell the land, the money is used to get mistresses, concubines and prostitutes but not to support the

family. This not only hurts but also makes the wife and children very bitter to the extent that they collaborate to kill the man.

Change in gender relations causes tension, anxiety and fatal consequences. This often happened to women who expected a husband to provide for the family but instead he turned out to be irresponsible and unreasonable. Women in such situations could get frustrated to a point of eliminating their husbands. Women incarcerated for murder/manslaughter confessed that they killed men who returned home drunk and soiled while they had contributed nothing apart from trouble. These men looked pathetic, disgusting and cut a detestable sight such that, if they provoked their wives beyond limit, one could hit them to death at the spur of the moment. They concluded that such men were better dead than be alive to disorient the whole family.

Repressed emotions such as anger, bitterness and hurt were cited by a female incarcerated for murder/manslaughter as reasons for crime. She explained that she never intended to kill the man, but he had accidentally died when she hit him with an object in self- defence during domestic quarrels. Some men could push their wives to the limit through battering and humiliated them every day for no apparent reason, as illustrated by a 38 years-old female convict:

The man was battering and humiliating me every day for no apparent reason. He had a chain of mistresses, so he also used to mistreat and harass me to ensure I don't ask him of his infidelity. This day he beat me up and in self- defence I took a stool and hit him. He collapsed and died.

Women's repressed emotions could make them kill especially when pushed to a corner. Such tendencies had been noted by Oyekanmi (2000) who postulated that women who killed their husbands in Kenya did so in response to a violent attack.

*Men's motives to commit murder*

The study also examined motives of men convicted for murder. Out of the seven convicts, 5 had victimized fellow men and 2 had killed women. The data indicated that the motives for murder among male informants (29%) included crime of passion. In this sense, the male convicts interviewed stated that they had murdered because their victims were having love affairs with their wives, mistresses, or concubines. Love triangles and competition for love often resulted in jealousy which led to the desire among men to kill their rivals. A male convict (police constable aged 32 years) for instance reported:

My boss always allocated me night duties. He made sure the allocated section was very sensitive and involving, that it required my presence throughout the night. This meant unlike others, I would not get any brief moment to rush home. I could not understand because all the other officers kept on being rotated but not me. I requested him if I could be rotated as well. However, no matter how much I requested to be allocated another shift like everybody else, it fell on deaf ears. This went on for a long time but I was hoping that I could be transferred from the station. All the while I was doing my investigation as to why my boss would treat me the way he did. After some time I learnt he was doing so to enable him access my house at night and to have sex with my beautiful wife. I was very disturbed and felt devastated and betrayed. I could not bear the humiliation; I eliminated him.

14.3% of male convicts interviewed said they murdered because of land disputes and family wrangles. According to them, land in Kiambu County was scarce and expensive and this made it an emotive issue. Family members, therefore, fought and killed each other over land. As aforementioned, Kikuyu custom did not allow parents to apportion their property when they were still living (Kameri-Mbote, 2002), yet, most of them did not write wills. This could cause siblings to fight over how the property would be

shared. This conflict could aggravate and cause tension and murder incidences when contending parties perceived unfairness.

Some had been convicted for allegedly murdering their fathers. These convicts said they killed their fathers because of their being stingy and for mistreating their families. As pointed out in some FGDs, the participants said that men expected children to offer free labour, curtailing their independence, and limiting their access and control over land. The data revealed that fathers too murdered their sons, especially if they threatened or attempted to block them from disposing their land. The convicts maintained that fathers were able to dispose land secretly because upon land demarcation which privatized ancestral land, it provided title deeds in the names of male household heads. Upon the death of the original title holder, the land would be distributed to sons. However, unlike their fathers who never sold land, sons sold the ancestral land without informing their wives and children. In this regard, fathers would be inclined to kill their sons for fear that they would place caution on their land and block sale.

29 % of male incarcerated for murder said they killed because they had been hired by clients. They maintained that they were hired by other people to kill and therefore considered it as a 'job like any other', as one of the convicts interviewed put it:

We were hired by our clients to eliminate a person of their choice. The victim could be a business competitor, business rival, a political opponent, a threat or hindrance to promotion and/or marriage, a relative, a wife or a husband. We were often hired by women, because they do not have the courage and strength to kill. Thus women hire men to accomplish the job for them. Politicians, business competitors/ associates amongst other clients also hire us to eliminate their competitors or enemies.

Motive to kill competitors concur with Gender Schema Theory of criminal behaviour, where in moral development men are socialized towards status-seeking, and seem to eliminate whoever blocks their effort to acquire property or ascend to power. The convicts revealed that hired murderers used different methods to kill in order to avoid any suspicion of foul play. For example, they threw hand grenades onto a moving victim's vehicle so that it appeared like an accident. In other cases, a speeding lorry would overtake the victim's car then breaks suddenly. The victim's car would plunge into the rear of the lorry, ensuring his instant death. Other people would hire women to lure the victim to a designated location where he would be killed by the hired man. Alternatively, the hired woman would kill the victim if he or she appeared vulnerable and unlikely to mount a spirited fight. Other victims would be ambushed and killed outside their gates while waiting for them to be opened. In some of the murder cases victims would be killed and nothing would be taken from them. This constituted well planned and executed murders.

Some murders were executed to conceal a criminal offence and to avoid apprehension during a robbery or carjacking incident. Convicts explained that victims of other crimes were murdered when they resisted and refused to cooperate with the criminals, or when a criminal thought that they could positively identify him. Some convicts said that they killed to reduce chances of possible identification and to eliminate a witness who could give evidence against them. They said that sodomy and rape victims were sometimes murdered to conceal the offenders' identity and to avoid being arrested.

Other male convicts said that they were compelled to murder a person who had *kurugia* (refused to share the loot with them). They explained that such a member was eliminated if, for instance, a gang carried out a crime successfully and one of them who was entrusted to carry the money/goods, did not share as expected, or when the others suspected he was playing tricks against them, as a male convict aged 49 years put it:

*Mundu tungiruta wira nake aturugie, hatiri kwaririria, kiu ni gikuo straight ndangiria tumwiroriere* (We cannot work hard together and a person imagines he will benefit alone, that calls for his immediate death, he cannot eat while we watch).

Criminals who collaborated in any illegal dealings such as drug trafficking, robbery, conman-ship among others were supposed to share whatever they got amicably. Some convicts explained that there existed an unwritten rule that after a successful criminal act, if some offenders got arrested, those who were lucky to escape apprehension would share the goods and forward the share of those behind bars to their respective families. In instances where the un-apprehended offenders refused to adhere to the rule and kept all the loot, they risked being killed by those behind bars, as a male convict aged 56 years, explained:

Such an act has no compromise; we all have risked our lives and deserve our share. He cannot imagine that his children can eat while ours languish in poverty, yet we are behind bars.

The above surprisingly indicated that a prisoner could commit a crime against a person outside the prison. The convicts contended that prison was an institution where criminals not only gained new knowledge which enhanced criminal skills, but also learned new methods and complex crimes which made them '*crime wizards*'. They perfected their crimes in and out of prison as some of them asserted.

They said that they bribed prison warders to bring them *Taje/ Nagos* (phones), *mbana*, (Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) cards) and other *marufukus* (illegal items) such as oil and electric heaters. They maintained that mobile phones were brought in prison by senior officers because they were not searched at the entrance like their junior colleagues. They noted that sale of phones in prison was a lucrative business. The convicts alleged that prison officers could sneak in prison mobile phones and sell them for as much as 4 times the original price. For instance, a phone that cost Ksh 2000 would be sold for Ksh 8000 to the inmates which they then used to communicate with and commit crime against people outside the prison. They engaged in mobile telephone fraud, for example, posing as Safaricom network agents to con victims. The criminals trapped many victims into the false hope of getting gifts from the local mobile telephone networks. They also said that in-prison crimes were many and varied. But they were trying to see that prisoners changed their behaviour, as one convict remarked:...we are working so hard to see fellow inmates get reformed. We have started a programme called “**CRIME SI POA**” if you wish to see what we are doing you can visit our web-site at [www.crimesipoa.com](http://www.crimesipoa.com). This initiative indicated that prisoners had an agency with regard to their own rehabilitation. In spite of their restricted freedom, their minds were creative.

A male maintained that men rarely murdered female strangers unless while committing other crimes such as robbery and burglary. He asserted that moneyed wives didn't value their husbands especially if he earned less than they, which according to him could be very frustrating and could compel one to eliminate the wife.

His responses showed that power struggles between men and women within the family setup, resulting from postmodern economic shifts, had affected men and women differently which seemed to favour women.

Other convicts said that men tended to murder wives and relatives. They killed their wives because they felt rejected or sidelined by their family especially during 'empty nests' and sunset years when children had left home. During these times wives and children were never emotionally attached to their fathers/ husbands because men rarely spent quality time with the family. This emotional gap rarely filled up even when the men retired and returned home. A male convict narrated how his friend got very frustrated when he relocated from town to his rural home upon retirement. The man realized that his wife seemed not to pay attention to him. She went about her business as if he did not exist. He had complained, hoping that she would change, but the lady continued with her busy schedules, always engaging herself in women groups and church activities. The man turned violent because of loneliness and frustration since his wife could not reduce other activities to attend to him. To avoid being battered, the woman visited their children abroad and had never returned. He further observed:

Women who are not lucky enough to have somewhere to run to, risk being murdered. Men can kill their partners for having love affairs. Most men cannot face the humiliation of a wife's infidelity and unfaithfulness. Such men can eliminate their women, to make sure they are never seen with someone else.

Male convicts also stated that some girls who inherited land and property risked being killed by their male siblings. Men could murder their own sisters and their children to

ensure that they did not inherit land and property from their parents. This was affirmed by a male convict (aged 47 years) who stated:

...some parents had several rental houses. Since their daughters were more responsible than their drunkard and irresponsible sons, the father entrusted supervision of his businesses to his daughters. Upon their father's demise, the mother decided to let the girls continue with their responsibility and also to collect house rents and manage other family businesses. Their brothers felt undermined because according to the culture, their mother should have delegated such duties to her sons...they were very bitter and enraged by this action. They feared that their sisters would inherit the rental houses, which is not acceptable in Kikuyu traditions. The brothers decided to hire a gang to murder their sisters. The gang arrived in the evening as their mother and her daughters were having supper. They knocked, and the mother welcomed the gang thinking that they were visitors. The criminals drew a gun and killed all the three girls but left their mother. Unfortunately, the mother died from shock a month later.... before she died she had made sure that the sons were sentenced; in fact, they are here with us in Kamiti[prison], block G.

Benekos (1995) postulates that men or women kill in order to exercise power over others. From the foregoing, men's motives to kill women revolve around social-cultural gender construction, gender role expectations and change in gender and power relations between men and women in families.

#### 4.5.1.2 Gender Patterns in Child Homicide

Murder and child homicide are different types of crime because the latter involves victims of below 10 years of age. Data analysis of the police crime records on gender of child homicide victims in Kiambu County revealed that over half (57.1%) were boys compared to girls (21.4%). Figure 4.5 below shows the gender of child homicide perpetrators and victims:



*Figure 4.5: Child homicide perpetrators' and victims' Gender*

Men killed boys and girls at an equal rate of 50%, compared to 57.1% women who killed boys but did not kill any girl child. This was contrary to South Africa where mothers killed only girls (South African Medical Research Council, 2012). Hence there were differences in gender preference in the two regions. Men could kill children to conceal rape or sodomy and avoid apprehension. Some respondents confirmed that remains of some four boys and two girls who had been either sodomized or raped were collected from different venues of the study area in the year 2011. The respondents stated that sodomy was on the increase but boys did not report their ordeals because they had been socialized to be strong and to take issues like men. Hence, they preferred to keep silent about their ordeals rather than be seen as if they were weak and 'girlish'.

Female perpetrators of child homicide range from 11 years and extended to 40 years of age. Unlike women, men's minimum age of committing child homicide was 21 years, and just as in women they extended to 40 years. Most of the female offenders (42.9%)

were within 16-20 years. These gender differences could be attributed to gender role socialization that gave girls greater opportunities to interact with children than their boy counterparts. Unlike boys, girls, like their mothers, are socialized to be carers and nurturers of their young siblings, relatives and employers. This, coupled with the fact that girls at about 11 years are capable of bearing children, ensures that they have a child at their disposal whom they can kill at will. Beyond 41 years of age, women can take care of their reproductive health and only get children whom they are ready to take care of. Women beyond 45 years may have reached their menopause and are unlikely to bear a child or have the need to eliminate one. Girls below 10 years of age are too young to have a baby or to be entrusted with one. Men above 21 years, who kill children, do so due to marital conflicts or probably after raping / sodomizing them to conceal and rid evidence against them. Men beyond 40 years of age were not recorded to have committed child homicide. However, the pattern that has emerged was that child homicide is a young person's crime committed by young women of child bearing age and young men.

Data analysis further showed that the time that majority of child homicide cases (64.3 %) occurred was not indicated. This could be attributed to the fact that dead children are found dumped by the road side or in other venues. However, unlike in murder cases where of grown-ups most (28 %) were killed at night, slightly above a quarter of children (28.6%) were killed in the evening, 3.6% in the morning and a further 3.6% at night. Interestingly, available data indicated that women committed child homicide in the evenings while men committed this in the evenings and at night. Killing in the evening gave offenders ample time to conceal the crime under the cover of darkness.

The data reveals that women offenders committed child homicides during the second half of the year (July-December) at a rate of 14.3% for both years. Majority (57%) of the 2011 homicide cases were committed between October and December. 33.3% of homicides were recorded to have been committed by men in 2011, between July and September, and 16.7% between October and December. In 2012, crimes were staggered: 16.7% between January and March, another 16.7% between April and June and the last 16.7% between October and December. Data analysis revealed that women used no weapon in child homicide while 16.7% of men used knives/machetes. 16.7% of the male perpetrators of child homicides used crude/ blunt weapons. Female informants stated that women used buckets full of water, polythene bags, excessive salt, clothes and food to suffocate children to death. But male informants said that men used hands, stones, sticks, ropes and clothes to kill children.

Most informants said that women used buckets full of water to drown infants soon after birth. They also explained how women stuffed food in the baby's mouth to choke it. They added that women also killed by neglecting and refusing to breastfeed the child until it starved to death. But male informants explained that men could strangle children with bare hands, or would use ropes or pieces of cloth. They added that men could ruthlessly beat the child to death using stones, sticks or fists. Similarly, Guijt and Shah (1998) revealed that in Eastern India, ropes were used to strangle female infants by men who had been paid by the father to kill a girl child while their mothers watched. Men as reported in this study used aggressive methods while women used subtle but less aggressive methods to kill children.

Venues of child homicide by gender of offenders were cross-tabulated and the findings are depicted in Figure 4.6 below:

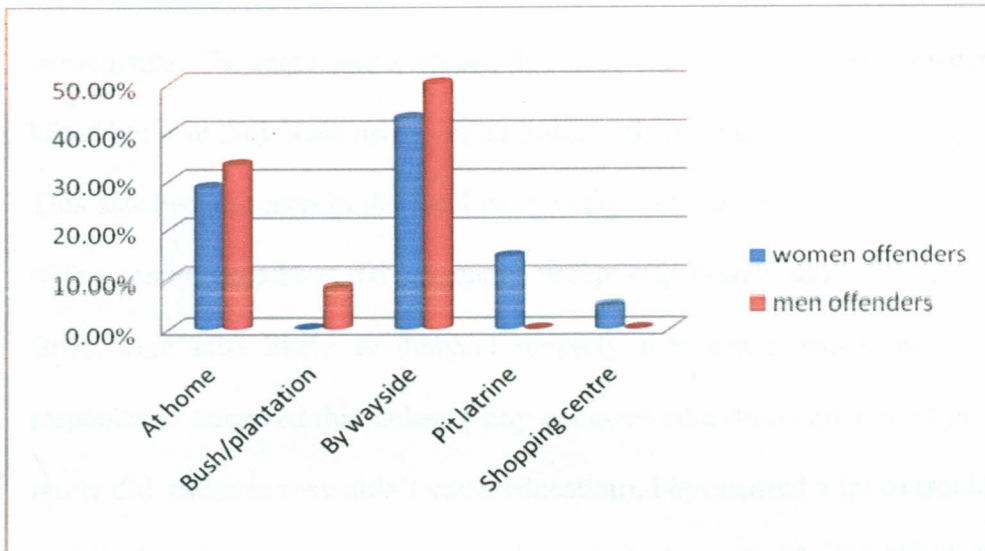


Figure 4.6: Venue of homicide

Figure 4.6 shows that women at 42.9% and men at 50% dumped their victims' bodies by the wayside. 28.6% of women and 33.3% of men killed children at home, 8% killed in the bushes /plantations. Women were responsible for 14.3% bodies of dead children found in pit latrines and for the 4% found at shopping centres. While most women murdered their victims at home, they were seen to commit most child homicides more on the wayside than home. However, it can be argued that probably these children were killed at home and later dumped on the wayside. This was possible because a dead child could easily be transported as a small bundle in a polythene bag and dumped far from where it was killed.

Relationships between victims and offenders in child homicides was analyzed from police crime records. This study has revealed that 98% of boys homicide cases involved

mothers as the perpetrators. Girls and the rest of boys were killed by their male relatives and strangers. We endeavoured to establish why boys and not girls were eliminated by their mothers in the County. This question was posed to police informants and to FGDs participants. The respondents opined that boys born to single mothers were likely to be killed because they were perceived as limiting their mothers' chances of getting suitors. This was because men in the local community were skeptical about marrying a woman with a son because boys did not readily accept step-fathers and at times even beat them. Boys were also likely to demand property inheritance when they grew up. The respondents observed that unless a boy got good education and a good job (which they rarely did, because they didn't value education), boys caused a lot of trouble. They said unlike girls, boys were not empathetic to their parents and sometimes demanded for apportion of inheritance.

The findings above indicate that there was a shift in gender preference of children in Kiambu County in favour of girls. Boys were no longer considered assets and security as it was before. Respondents said that boys were seen as burdens and a liability or menace while a girl child was considered as an investment. A female participant retorted: *kihii ni giaki, nikuria tukuria-ii, kana ni guikia ikumbi?* (What is the relevance of a boy? Can we feed on him or store him in our granaries?). The disgust was evident from 14 homeless boys aged between 8-14 years, who had been sent away from home by their mothers and were found roaming in Kwamaiko shopping centre in Githunguri. FGD participants in Komothai observed that the boys' mothers were married or 'kept' by other men who were not the boys' biological fathers. They said that the mothers

preferred to have the man to provide for her and the girls, rather than keep the boys who would 'spoil' for them, yet they could fend for themselves.

From the discussion above, there were gender differences in child homicide patterns. This study indicates that men killed both boys and girls, but women killed boys more than men did. Boys had most likely lost their social value and favour in the family and in the community at large. The society viewed boys as a burden such that the preference had shifted in favour of the girl child. As such, boys engaged in either self-destructive behaviour (drug abuse, suicide tendencies) due to frustration, helplessness and hopelessness; or engaged in crime to acquire wealth and gain acceptance by the society.

#### *Gender Motives to Commit Child Homicide*

The study sought to establish gender motives to commit child homicide, from 6 female convicts and from other respondents. No man from Kiambu County had been incarcerated for child homicide. However, respondents reported that men could kill their children due to frustrations of being unable to provide for them. Some respondents said that men could kill children due to anger or to conceal crimes such as sodomy and rape. They said that some men would also kill children, especially their step-sons.

The study findings showed that a woman killed a child if the child's biological father rejected him or her. In such a circumstance, women wished to forget the agony of rejection. Additionally, women terminated lives of children with deformities who were likely to render them too dependent. In line with her caring role, a woman could cause the death of a child accidentally. Regarding this view a female convict explained:

I had worked as a house help for five months. One day the child's uncle called me outside for a brief tte-a- tte across the fence. We became very engrossed to the extent that I forgot I had left the child inside a basin. Upon coming back I found the child had drowned to death. I got confused and very scared. I decided to put the child in his bed and run away. Unfortunately, I got apprehended and am here.

The data similarly revealed that women, rather than men, were involved in acts of abortion and concealing birth. This was bias against women because men were also known to coerce or persuade women to carry out abortions. However, because biologically women were the ones who carried out the act, they were apprehended (Nixon, 2005). Female offenders were aged between 11 and 30 years. This data indicates that abortion was committed by young single women and also illustrates that girls indulged in sexual activities at a tender age.

#### **4.5.1.3 Gender and Suicide rates**

In this study, suicide entails a person-to-person violent crime of brutal killing of oneself. The bulk of suicide incidences reported (82.9%) involved men, while 17.2% of the cases involved women. Gleitman (1991) suggests that although women were more likely to attempt suicide than men, the latter always succeeded because, unlike women, they used irreversible methods. This explained why more men than women died from suicide attempts. Data from police records indicated that suicide cases among men were concentrated in one area- Githunguri. Figure 4.7 shows the gender and age of the people who were either involved in or charged with attempted suicide:

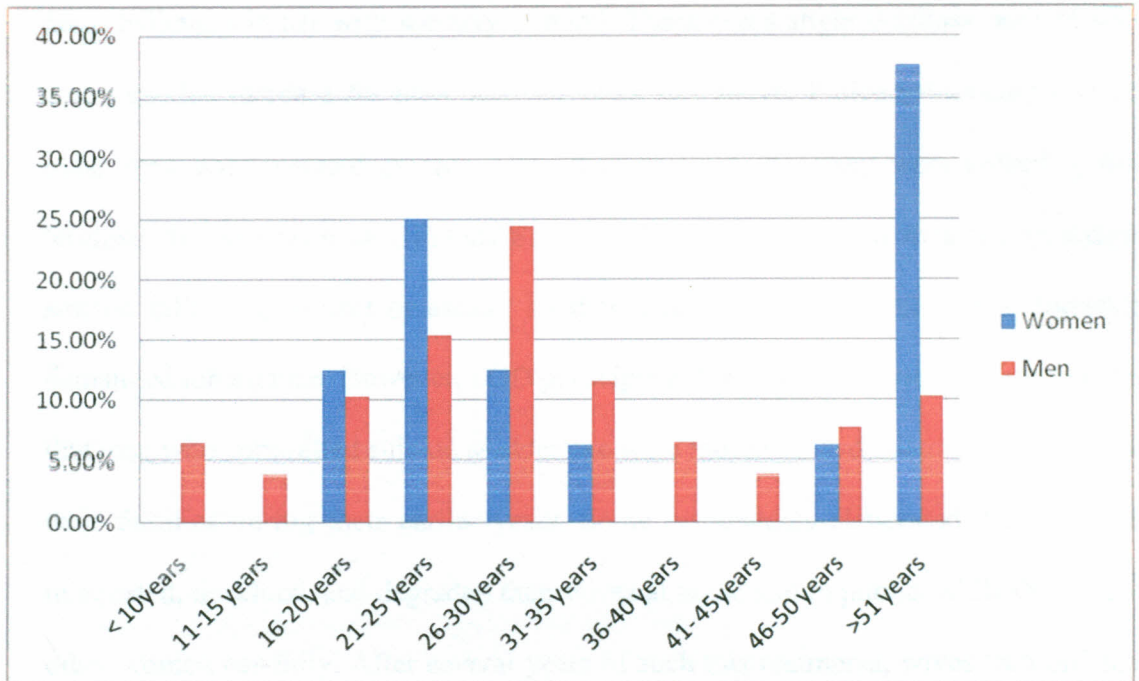


Figure 4.7: Gender and age of suicide offenders

Majority of the victims (38.4%) were young men between 21 to 30 years of age. Girls below 15 years of age did not attempt suicide, unlike boys in similar age group. Involvement of boys in suicidal activities at a tender age was attributed to the frustrations they received from being devalued and rejected by their nuclear families. Girls probably did not face the plights that predisposed boys to suicide in the study area.

In regard to this view a woman participant opined:

*Airitu riu nio maratigia* (girls are now highly regarded). Young girls (unlike boys) help their parents with household chores and even when they mature and get married, they never forget to help their parents. *No ihii handu gwichiria mateithie aciari-ri nikumanyarira mamanyariraga magitagia igai riao kwahinya* (But rather than remembering to assist their parents, boys stress them by demanding inheritance).

Although men of all ages committed suicide as Figure 4.7 shows, the rate was higher (41.3%) for those aged between 21-35 years who, by virtue of their age were not able to

face challenges in life with sobriety of mind. There was a slight decrease until 45 years and a sudden increase for men aged 46 years and above. Police informants said that older men contemplated suicide when they realized that they were suffering from terminal diseases such as HIV/AIDS. They also maintained that men would commit suicide following neglect or assault by their children especially boys who forcefully demanded inheritance. However, FGD participants had a different view. They explained that men who committed suicide at older age were those that had mistreated and ignored their families during their earlier years. Some respondents elaborated that such men mistreated, devalued, and degraded their wives at home and in public, while they treated other women candidly. After several years of such mistreatments, wives 'rub off' their husbands from their lives and move on as if they did not exist. When these men became old, they realized that they could no longer attract or get '*social butterflies*' (mistresses) especially when they became financially unstable. In such instances, they fell back to their wives who unfortunately would not have space for them. The study participants maintained that the 'comeback' men would assume they were still the heads of their household to assert power over, dominate, subjugate and control their wives. The participants in FGDs argued that such men would not succeed to assert their position because women would have been hardened and were no longer emotionally attached to their husbands. Unable to accept the change in gender relations, some men became frustrated, lonely and aggressive to the extent of committing suicide.

Young women aged 16-35 years committed suicide at a rate of 56.25%. At this age, women may not have developed enough stamina and skills to face challenging situations. Police informants said that women would also commit suicide if they

discovered that they were suffering from terminal illnesses such as HIV and AIDS. But, FGD participants maintained that young women would commit suicide if they had been rejected by their parents or boyfriends or stressed by their husbands. However, the data revealed that older women of above 46 years of age committed suicide more than those in other age brackets. The respondents held that such women did so because of being harassed, insulted, mistreated, devalued, assaulted and frustrated by their husbands and children.

Participants asserted that men in Kiambu County relished as their children disregarded and humiliated their mothers publicly or privately. In this regard a woman participant (53years) noted:

I know of a couple, who are in their late 40s or early 50s and both of them are university graduates who got education when it was valuable... Both of them are now employed and doing reasonably well financially. However, the woman married this man while he was jobless...for seventeen (17) years.... the wife ensured that the children were well taken care- of and went to school. She also struggled to put up a very nice permanent house. Hell broke loose when the man secured a prestigious job in the private sector. It is said he took over most of the family financial responsibility and also started bribing his children with money against their mother. He would threaten not to pay their school fees if they were not on his side. The man also started having affairs with women who sold vegetables, by the road side nearby. In fact he bought a *Matatu* (public transport vehicle) for one of them.

The wife is a very quiet lady, but about two years ago she approached me to request if I could talk to her university graduate son to stop mistreating her. She explained that since she had finished bringing up her children, she has decided to further her education. But the husband has been opposed to it, and has incited the children especially the son to make it difficult for her to study. The children have been told not to help their mother with the household chores which they have happily consented to. She sees that as not an issue because she is looking for a house help. The problem is with her son, because he has become very arrogant.

She continued:

Unfortunately, the lady's study room is adjacent to that of her grown-up son who could play very loud music to disturb her mother. If the mother requested him to reduce the volume, he would rudely answer her back that he is not going to reduce the volume and that she has to know the section he lives in was specifically constructed for him by his father. He would then ask *nimutumia uriko wa miaka 50 wonaga agithoma guku?* (Have you seen a 50-years old woman who is a student in this region?). He would then rush to his father's study room and ask if he is getting disturbed by the noise. The father would say 'do as it pleases you, don't be bothered by your mother's condescending, she wants people to live in her straight jacket way. Supported by the father he would never consider reducing the volume. The woman has been in agony. Many are times that she has cried and prayed outside the son's door for God to intercede and soften her son's heart so that he can at least let her study. The woman was contemplating suicide. Were it not for thorough counseling, talking and encouragement, the woman would have actually committed suicide.

The above incidence shows that women did commit suicide because of being frustrated by their children and husbands. It also reveals that men were not comfortable with an empowered woman and when all methods to degrade her failed, he could incite her own children to tame, subjugate and ensure she was put where she belonged. Concerning this view, a female participant narrated how her friend, rather than commit suicide, decided to move out of her matrimonial home to give room to her daughter who was collaborating with the father to humiliate her. She added that one day this man together with her 20 year old daughter poured soapy water on her because the girl had reported to the man that the mother had refused to wash her clothes. Later, the husband helped the girl to wash and hang the said clothes. Such humiliation could make women commit suicide especially if they didn't have supportive social networks.

Figure 4.8 shows the distribution of suicide rates by gender and season:

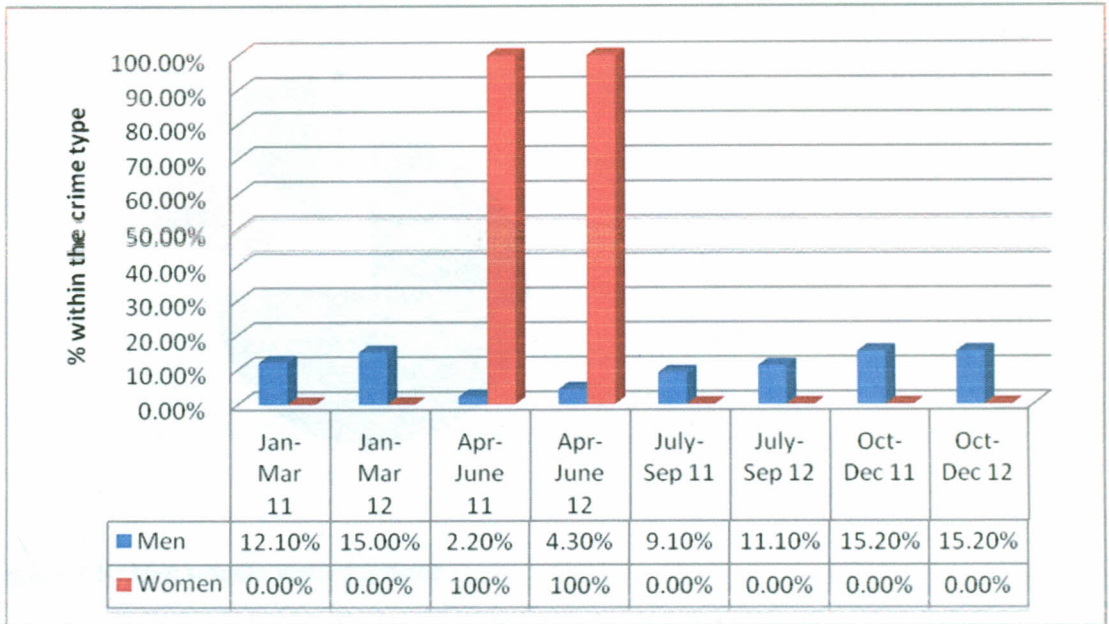


Figure 4.8: Suicide by gender and season of offence

The Figure shows that women generally committed suicide between the months of April and June. But suicide among men occurred during any time of the year. However, their suicide rate was higher between October and December than the other seasons in the two year period of the recorded data. This was not the only crime among women that was higher in the cold season than among men. This contradicts the view of the psychologist Myers (1998) that hot weather generally escalates aggression in people, which could account for higher violent crimes among men during the hot months. He contended that, world over, violent crimes and spouse abuse occurred more in hot than in cold seasons. Suicide venues gave insight into gender differences in such behaviour tendency. While 100% of women's suicide reported incidences occurred at home, men also committed in other venues beside home as depicted in Figure 4.9 below:

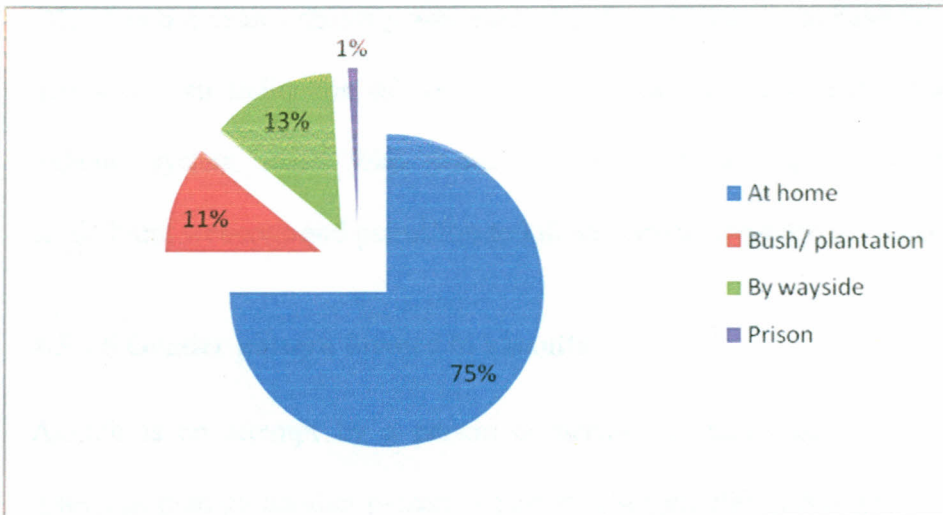


Figure 4.9: Men suicide venues Source

The Figure above reveals that men also committed suicide along waysides, roads and foot paths, bushes, coffee plantations and in prison. A critical analysis of the data revealed that there was a relationship between men's choice of suicide venues and time. All the men who had hung themselves on trees found along roadsides did so at night, when the roads were deserted. The 11% men who committed suicide right inside the plantations did so in the evenings. The difference in men and women choice of suicide venues was a clear indication that while men's activities extended to the public sphere, women restricted their activities to the domestic domain.

#### 4.5.1.4 Victims and perpetrators of Mob-injustice

The analysis revealed that only male criminals were killed by mob-injustice interventions. The data from police records showed that, in spite of committing similar crimes, women were hardly victims of these and that the majority of the victims (53.4%) were young men between 16 to 40 years of age. 4% of these were male suspects above 51 years of age. This showed that the community was lenient on women

offenders but dealt ruthlessly with men. For the community to have taken law into their hands was an indication of their dissatisfaction with how law enforcers or/and the judicial system dealt with crime suspects. Perpetrators of mob-injustice used crude/blunt weapons and petrol/fire to kill and lynch suspected criminals.

#### **4.5.1.5 Gender pattern formed in assaults**

Assault is an attempt by a person or persons to physically harm, injure or inflict grievous pain on another person or persons (Siegel, 2003). Assault is closely related to murder because the assaulted person can die as a result of the injuries which constitute either murder or manslaughter depending on the circumstances of the crime. Regions with high cases of assault also have higher homicide rates (Mushanga, 1976).

Men accounted for the majority of assaulters (79%), while only 18 % were women. The data analysis of the police records showed that most of assault victims (47.2%) were women, compared to 42.1% men. Majority of the perpetrators were men, who assaulted both men and women at a rate of 46.9 % and 43.4 % respectively. But women assaulted more women (65.3%) than they assaulted men (22.2%). Women were not expected to fight men who were perceived to be stronger and could easily subdue them. Therefore, the few men who were assaulted by women were physically weaker than them. The finding on the high representation of men in assault offences concurred with results of Adwani's (1978) and Odipo's (1996) studies. Culturally, men were socialized to be more aggressive than women, which predisposed them to perpetrating assaults. The contrary was that, many societies socialize women into femininity, domesticity and subordinate positions relative to men, characteristics that did not befit criminality

(Golombok & Fivush, 1995; Steffensmeier & Allan, 2000). This study indicates that men assaulted women more than they did to fellow men. This could be attributed to the fact that men were socialized to view wife battering as normal, culturally accepted and God given responsibility for them to discipline their wives. The fact that some women reported being assaulted by men indicated that they had not internalized such perceptions in their psyche. Others could still hold to such perceptions and not report assault incidences perpetrated by men. This view is supported by December (1999) who postulated that most of assault incidences that were perpetrated by men against women could go unreported.

This study sought to establish age and gender of assault perpetrators and the results are presented in Figure 4.10:

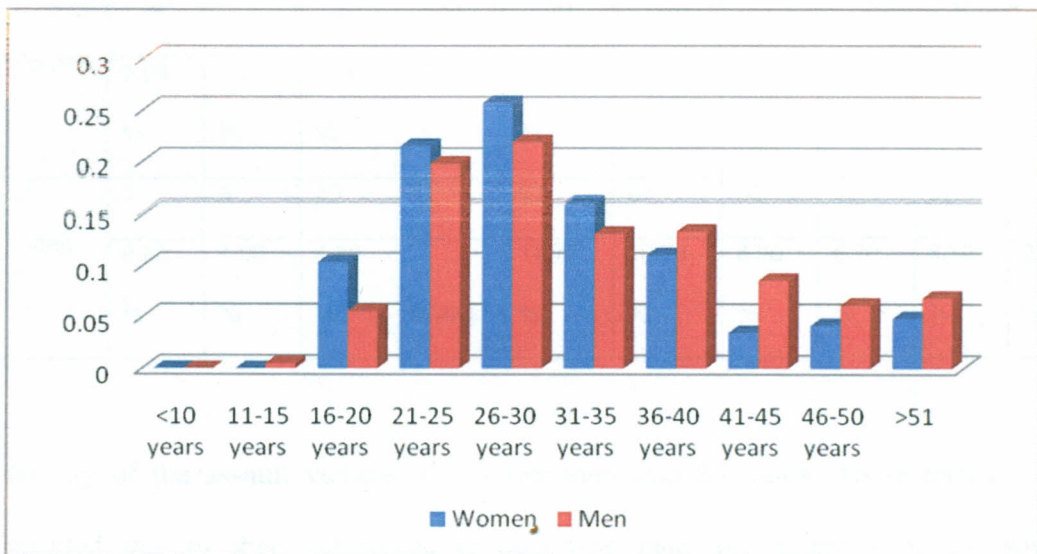


Figure 4.10: Age and gender of assault offenders

Assaulters were between 11 to over 51 years old. The majority of assault offenders for both genders were between 21- 35 years, but cases decreased up to 50 years of age and increased slightly at the older age of 51 years and above. Conversely, Kariuki (1978),

Odipo (1996) and Ndikaru (2010) established that assault was a young person's crime in some Kenyan urban areas. Odipo (1996) also found out that assault offenders tended to be concentrated in the 15-25 years age bracket. He noted that younger people were more likely to commit assault because of their youthfulness, courage and rashness.

Both men and women had a high assault rate in regions that had higher assault incidences. While the perpetrators started at over ten years of age, Table 4.8 shows that their victims (both men and women) ranged from below 10 years to above 50 years.

*Table 4.8: Age and gender of assault victims.*

<b>Gender of victim</b>	<b>&lt;10 years</b>	<b>11-15 years</b>	<b>16-20 years</b>	<b>21-25 years</b>	<b>26-30 years</b>	<b>31-35 years</b>	<b>36-40 years</b>	<b>41-45 years</b>	<b>46-50 years</b>	<b>&gt;51 years</b>
Women	4	2	13	25	30	18	7	7	9	8
	2.80%	1.40%	9.00%	17.40%	20.80%	12.50%	4.90%	4.90%	6.20%	5.60%
Men	5	6	30	61	92	67	56	42	51	141
	0.80%	1.00%	4.80%	9.70%	14.70%	10.70%	8.90%	6.70%	8.10%	22.50%

Majority of the assault victims were older men over 51 years. These men could be assaulted due to their reluctance to apportion land and property to the younger generation. Women aged 26 -30 years were victimized more than other age groups. However, women aged between 16 and 35 years formed the bulk of victims. This was the age when married women were mostly battered by their husbands (Muthoni, 2006).

Coincidentally, this age bracket formed majority of mistresses or concubines for the older married men. They were likely to be assaulted by the men's wives or assault each other as they competed for wealthy men. According to our study findings, fewer men were assaulted, especially in the age category of 20 years and below.

Data analysis showed that there was slight gender differential in the assault and the time of day it was committed. Majority of women (43.8%) and men (40.2%) committed assault in the evenings. Women committed assault at a rate of 23.6% at night compared to 21.5% in the mornings. But 27.4% of men committed assault in the mornings compared to 20.7% at night. It should be noted, therefore, that men committed more assault in the evening and morning, while women committed more in the evening and at night. In the evening, most people were at home retiring from the day's chores or in social places where they were likely to engage in arguments that could lead to assaults. It was also the time when people walked home through deserted footpaths and anyone wishing to settle scores with a passerby could hide in the bushes and ambush the unsuspecting victim.

Men's and women's assault and season were compared. Figure 4.11 shows the findings:

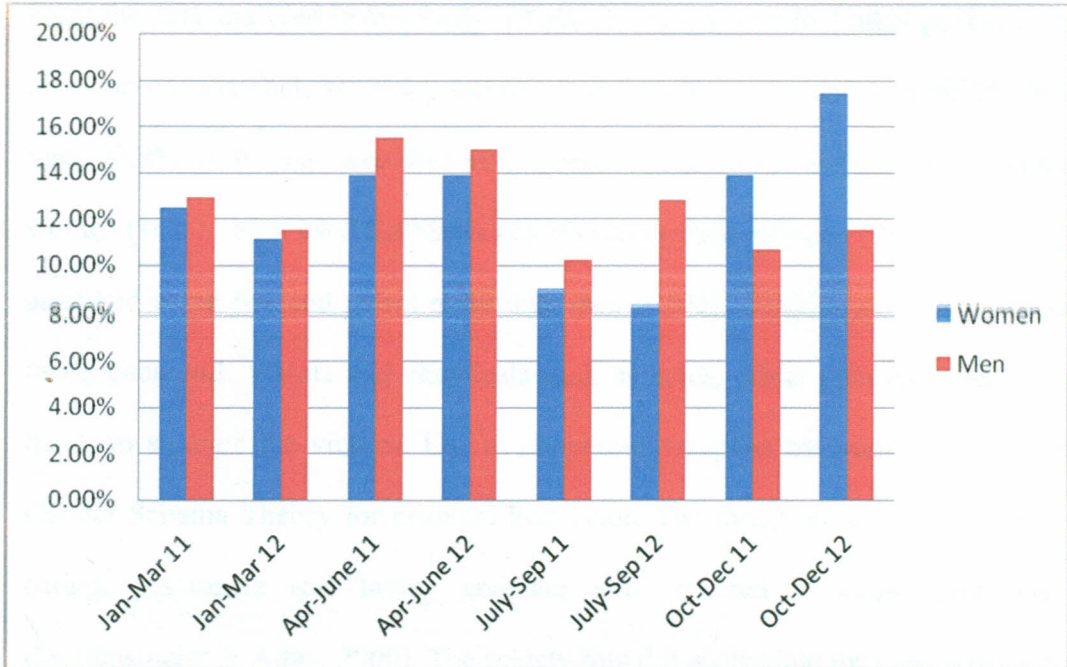


Figure 4.11: Gender of assault offenders by season

Figure 4.11 reveals that the assault rate for both men and women was higher between April and June in both years. This was a cold season when people were moody with reduced tolerance to solve conflicts soberly (Myers, 1998). Apart from April to June, women also recorded a higher assault rate between October and December in the two years (2011 and 2012). Police informants attributed the variation in patterns to the Christmas festive season when men's infidelity rate heightened: assault and murder cases also increased. Men's infidelity actions could necessitate their wives to fight off mistresses. They further added that during the Christmas season, regular commercial sex workers were joined by school leavers and other women seeking to make money. With the increased number of women in the 'streets', competition could heighten their scramble for the few moneyed men within the County. Women could resort to aggressive 'marketing' strategies including fighting physically to retain their 'catch'.

From the data analysed in this study, 29.2% of women assaulted other people with blunt or crude objects such as sticks, stones, spoons and stools compared to 25.5% of the men. 22.8% of the men assaulted other people using knives and machetes compared to women (16%). Men used fist/blows (16.3%) more than women (7.6%). Women (2.8%) assaulted using fire and petrol more than men (0.2%). Unlike men, women assaulted using guns and pistols and chemicals such as acids, while men assaulted by use of hands to strangle the victims. Use of dangerous weapons by women contradicted the Gender Schema Theory for criminal behaviour. The theory stipulates that women are caring, passionate and loving and are not expected to cause grievous harm (Steffensmeier & Allan, 2000). The society found it acceptable for men to carry and use such weapons because they were considered rough and aggressive by nature.

However, women would splash acid on a victim to protect and remove her loved one from the jaws of the 'snatcher'. The acid was normally aimed at the face to spoil the victims' 'good looks' that were perceived to tempt the boyfriend/partner. The use of a gun by women was contrary to popular belief and expectation of majority of respondents. Men did not use chemicals but strangled their victims, or used fists and blows at a higher rate than women in line with perception of their physical strength.

The data analysis from police records revealed that men and women committed assault at similar venues. More men (40.5%) than women (25%) committed assault at home. This implied that men assaulted their own relatives, such as wives and children, more than other people. But more women (31.9%) than men (25.2%) committed assaults by the wayside. There was a likelihood of women victimizing other people more than their

own relatives, husbands and children. Both men and women committed assaults in other venues where either gender frequented such as bushes or plantations, the bars, and in schools.

On the relationship between assault victims and offenders, of the 144 specified assaulters, 7.8 % were children assaulting their parents. Other perpetrators were siblings (2.8%), husbands (2.4%), parents and relatives (0.9%), grandchildren (0.6%), wives (0.3%) and former husbands, employees and boyfriends (0.1% each). Children assaulting parents and grandparents suggested substantial decrease of social sanctions and high levels of moral degradation. It was a taboo for a child to assault their parents or grandparent in African society (Kenyatta, 1938; Wambugu, Ngarariga & Kariuki, 2006). The respondents revealed that children assaulted their parents due to their demand for land and other property. The study participants maintained that children held provisional rights to land for many years, and were reluctant to invest in any development project. In some instances, parents refused children to put up any development projects. Under such circumstances, children were frustrated, and could assault their parents or kill them. Regarding this view a male participant (52 years) stated:

Men here are so hostile and mean to their wives and children, it is like taboo for a man to be seen walking with his wife or treat her well. But funny enough the same man treats prostitutes candidly, they walk together holding hands, and he can do anything including selling family land to ensure his prostitutes are well taken care of.

His opinion was confirmed by a female convict (27 years) who said:

I cannot get married to be stressed and mistreated by a stupid man because I' am his wife. I would rather be his mistress because he will be forced to treat me like a queen. Besides, I will be able to have many others alongside him, who will cater for my different needs and also treat me well. That is why single women are doing better economically than married ones in this county. Single women are economically empowered; they are the owners of flats and other property. They acquire this property with the money they get from different men who have either sold their land or are wealthy.

Unequal distribution of land, unemployment, power relations and property control could contribute to hopelessness and frustration. Under such situations and pressures children could assault their parents. Assault among siblings was also observed, with at least 2.8% recorded cases. Beside siblings assaulting each other over property upon demise of their parents, they also assaulted each other because parents had apportioned property to both gender. Respondents explained that when such happened, some sons who still held onto traditional Kikuyu customs and beliefs that girls ought not inherit property were likely to assault their female siblings and harass their children. Regarding this view a female participant maintained that sometimes a sister had no other option but to dispose of the inherited land and relocate. This shows that in spite of the New Kenyan Constitution (2010) according equal rights to sons and daughter to inherit, some residents were still holding onto the tradition that daughters could not inherit land in their native homes. They, therefore, assaulted any such beneficiaries so that they could vacate the premises.

Assault cases were reported among partners. Data analysis from the police crime records showed that 0.3% of wives assaulted husbands compared to 2.4% vice-versa. The low rates of domestic violence indicated that most of the cases were done behind

closed doors and went unreported (Muthoni, 2006). However, a male participant, 46 years old said that:

Women regardless of their education or socio- economic status must be put in their place; they must be reminded who the head is. A man who does not beat his wife is mocked and has no voice among his peers.

Men too were battered by their wives because of overdrinking illicit brew and being irresponsible. Women also battered men who stole money and property from them and misused it to maintain their drinking habits. Yet, the battering of men elicited public outcry and more media attention than that of women. Schwartz and Steffensmeier, (2007) posited that women assaulting men was a product of changing gender roles where economic pressure had been aggravated by greater responsibility for children.

#### *Gender differences in motives to commit assault*

Underlying motive for assault was sought from seven male and six female convicts incarcerated for assault. Out of the seven men, 14.3% said they were involved in incidences of assault because of drunkenness and drug abuse. Baron (1994) suggests that some people became more aggressive when they consumed alcohol. Alcohol tended to inhibit self-control and aggravated aggression whenever an argument ensued. Family disputes were mentioned by 28.6% of male convicts. The respondents said they had been provoked to anger by family members such as wife and children. They maintained they were angered by their wives' failure to cook on time, for being argumentative, for lacking respect and for joining wrong company in spite of being warned. Some of the men said that they assaulted their fathers and uncles for denying them access to land or refusal to apportion it to them. 14.3% of the men said that they had assaulted someone who had refused to pay their debt. Elaborating on the same point a male convict

explained that his employer had delayed his salary for six months. When he demanded payment, the employer sent him away. He retaliated by beating up the employer, who also fought back resulting in affray. He lamented:

The law tends to oppress the poor and favour the rich because I am the only one who got incarcerated for assault. The judge never told my employer to pay me. This man might have to pay dearly when I get out.

14.3% of male convicts said they had assaulted in revenge and to protect their ego. One of them said:

The man had humiliated me on several occasions. This time, I wanted to show him I am a man and that I am not as small as he thought. In rage I beat him up so badly that he got hospitalized.

28.6 % said they had fought because of love affairs. A male inmate noted: *'My girlfriend and I were drinking in a bar when these men came and wanted to snatch her from me, I had to fight to retain her'*.

Male convicts' responses showed that they assaulted because of poor or lack of conflict resolution skills. In addition, they were socialized to believe in their power over women.

The study established that women incarcerated for assault had done it to fellow women, and none had been convicted for assaulting men. Women's assault on fellow women was motivated by bitterness, jealousy and perceived obligation to guard and protect their families against *'intruders or spoilers'*. In this regard, 33.3% of the female assailants out of the six convicts said that they had assaulted their female victims because they had "stolen" their husbands. A female informant, 33 years old, said:

I had to beat up that woman to threaten her so that she leaves my husband alone. My husband had abandoned us for her; he was not giving my children and I any support...I beat her up to make sure she will never come near my husband again.

16.7% of female convicts stated that they fought because their victims had spread malicious gossip about them. Gossip and undermining each other were among the main reasons for affrays among women as one female convict put it:

*wanawake wanakuwa na bang'ang'a (disgusting gossip in Kiswahili slang; sheng) zenye kuudhi sana. Hizo dizo kiini cha mizozo na kupigana (Women spread very hurting, malicious and disgusting gossip about others. Such are source of conflicts and affrays).*

Another 16.7 % of female convicts had assaulted their victims for being jealous of the perpetrators' achievements and possessions. One of them, for instance, said:

The woman would always spit and say very 'obnoxious' comments about my family, my personality and everything about me. I know that she was jealous of my achievements. I was pushed to the limit. One day she made a comment that got me very annoyed and that made me beat her up so badly.

A further 16.7% of female convicts assaulted because of hatred and grudges. According to some convicts, women undermined, slighted and underrated other women in a manner that forced the other to act.

#### **4.5.1.6 Gender and violent robbery**

Robbery is a violent crime involving use of force to obtain another person's property. This entails assault, injury or actual death. Muga (1980) posits that robbery usually involves physical aggression and the application of illegitimate force. It is said to be committed by young men in the streets, parks and occasionally in homes (Seigel, 2003). Seigel (2003) stated that there were three types of robbers. First, were professional robbers who were skilled and seeking sources of livelihood. Such robbers planned and organized crime in group roles prior to committing them and sought money to support their hedonistic lifestyles (Seigel, 2003). They stole large sums of money from

commercial establishments. Secondly, opportunistic robbers stole small amounts of money when an accessible target presented itself. This group of robbers would steal from cab drivers, drunken people, the elderly and other vulnerable persons. Opportunistic robbers were often young people who did not plan their crimes. They could operate in gangs, and they did not discuss use of weapons and getaway plans or other strategies. Thirdly, the addicted robbers stole to support their drug habits. Addicts chose targets that presented minimal risk.

Data from the police crime records indicated that out of the 330 reported robbery incidences, men were the majority (99.1%) of offenders. Only 0.9 % were women and all were from the jurisdiction of Kikuyu Police Station. One robbery convict stated that women were involved in strategic planning and laying the groundwork for a robbery. He said that women played the roles of gathering relevant information, designing routes and luring victims into the robbers' traps. This showed that women were the mastermind of the crime and men were the implementers.

Figure 4.12 shows the distribution of robbery offenders by age and gender:

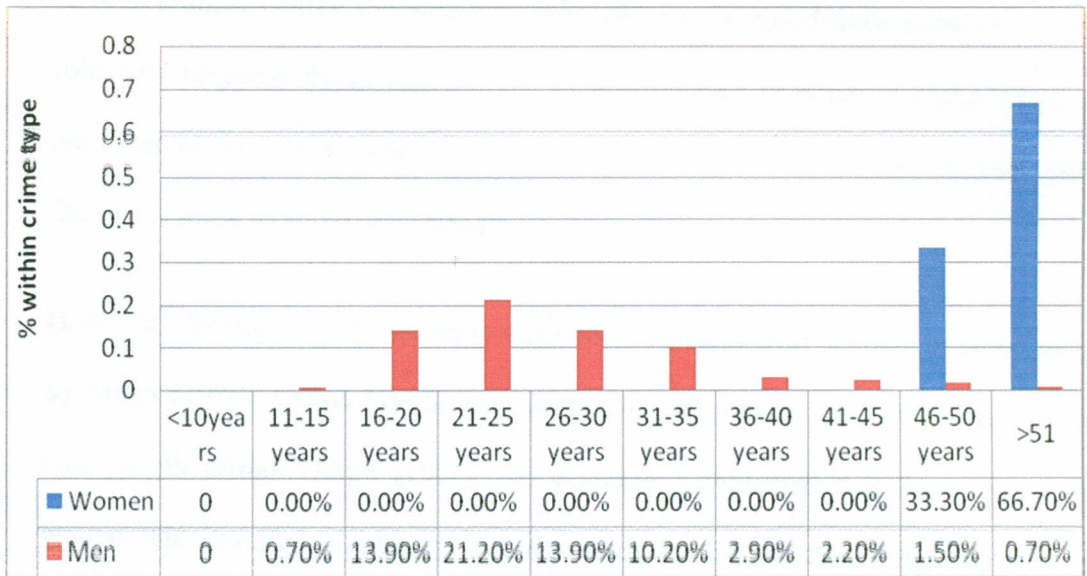


Figure 4.12: Age and gender of robbery offender

The data shows that men committed robbery from the early age of 11-15 years (0.7%), to over 51 years. Majority of offenders (70%) were young men between 16 and 35 years. After the age of 35 years, there was a steady decrease in robbery rate to 2.9% at the age bracket 36-40 years. The decrease in percentage of men involved in robbery incidences with increase in age could be attributed to the fact that robbery required alertness, courage, energy and agility, characteristics synonymous with the younger age group. At an older age, robbers will have amassed enough wealth to invest in other fields or they could recruit and train young robbers to rob for them. Unlike men, it was the older women (over 46 years) who engaged in robbery. Women robbery rate increased with age, from 33.3% for age bracket 46- 50 years to 66.7% for those over 51 years. Schwartz and Steffensmeier (2007) state that women robbing at such age suggested their economic marginalization and increase in opportunity to commit the crime. However, older women could have developed enough courage to venture into

serious crimes. Unlike the young women, older ones could have reduced reproductive roles and responsibilities which allow them to engage in crime at night. Alternatively, the older women, were more likely to be apprehended because they lacked agility and the shrewdness to avoid apprehension.

However, the findings of this study were not consistent with the data in previous studies by Muga (1980), Odipo (1996) and Ndikaru (2010) which showed that robbery was a male youth crime. Odipo (1996), for example, established that there was no single woman who featured in robbery. Yet, this study established that in the two years during research, women were also involved in robberies. Although Muga (1980) had mentioned that women were increasingly getting involved in robbery he never mentioned their ages or degree of increase.

The low representation of women in robbery incidences could be attributed to stereotypes regarding female appropriate behaviour. Conversely, a robbery convict asserted that although few women accompanied men to the scenes of robbery, they were rarely apprehended because policemen and the public did not think that women were capable of committing robbery. The notion that women often went scot free was affirmed by several male informants in Kamiti Maximum Prison. They said that men collaborated with women to commit crime but, unfortunately even if they were apprehended together, women were often freed while men were convicted. One male convict narrated:

...we were a gang of seven people; five men and two women. We committed several crimes together. The crime that landed me here had been committed by all of us. Of the seven, three were gunned down and died, one man managed to run away, I sustained a gun injury, and unable to run away,

I was apprehended. While bundled at the back of the police car, I saw the two women members of our gang mingling with the crowd and walking free. Police think that it is only men who are criminals, *na ndio maana crime haitaisha* (it's not a wonder crime will never be curbed).

Supporting the view that women sometimes escape police arrest, a male participant in a FGD narrated about a robbery incident that had taken place in Ngecha a week prior to the study. A gang of four robbers, three men and one woman, had carjacked a man. The police pursued the robbers and apprehended them near Ngecha shopping centre. According to the respondent, the police bundled the three men in the police car, leaving the woman free. The respondent said that the police slapped the woman saying *wewe mama unafanya nini na hawa njambazi, unandaganywa kwa nini? Enda nyumbani haraka!* (You woman what are you doing with these criminals, why are you being misled? Rush to your home). Female convicts who participated in the study said that sometimes the police trusted women too much, especially if the female criminals pleaded innocent while crying. A female convict said that, even if a woman criminal could be arrested, the police would ask for money or sexual favour:

*Hawa polisi wakikushika kama una hatia wanauliza kama uko na five hundred (ama kiwango kingine chochote)tumalize hii mambo?, kama uko nayo unampea na inaishia hapo. Kama huna anakuuliza, na hiyo ingine? Una biidika kusema ni sawa vile hutaki Kupelekwa mbele* (If policemen arrest a woman for a crime committed, they ask if the lady can give them five hundred shillings (or any other amount they may mention). If the lady has, they take the bribe and let the lady free. In case the lady does not have the money, the policemen ask, what about the other one (sex)? The lady is forced to consent to the sexual bribe since she does not want to be arrested).

Although the findings reveal that women commit robbery, the bribery practises mentioned above could make women criminality 'invisible' even in crimes which they had committed or acted as accomplices. It could also lead to erroneous affirmation of

Gender Schema Theory of criminal behaviour which stated that women were only capable of committing minor crimes (Flavia, 2003).

The study also investigated age and gender of those victimized by the offenders. Data analyses from the police records indicated that most of the victims of robbery (60%) were men and 25 % were women. The victims were spread across all ages from 11 years for men and 16 years for women, and extended to above 51 years. There was no difference between men's and women's age of victimization. Majority of men and women victims (12.1%) were of age bracket 26 -30, followed by those of age bracket 36-40 years at 10.9%. Those over 51 years were victimized at a rate of 8.5%, with more men than women being victimized. Younger persons being victimized more than older persons could be attributed to their frequenting outdoor activities at night which predisposed them to robbery incidences that mostly took place by the wayside.

Time when robbery was committed by either gender was sought. Data analysis from the police records revealed that 100% of women committed robbery in the evening, at a time when few (21.9%) men committed robbery. Majority (31.4%) of men robbed at night, followed by 29.2% in the morning. Going by the age of offenders discussed above, robbery was committed by older women (above 46 years) whose reproductive roles were minimal. Thus, they were likely to be available to commit robbery in the evening. Moreover, consistent with the Gender Schema Theory of criminal behaviour, women preferred to commit crime in the evening for fear of risking their own safety at night. Also, women were likely to adhere to societal expectations of their not frequenting streets at night.

Timeline when robbery was committed by gender was investigated. Results of data analysis from police records are represented in Figure 4.13:

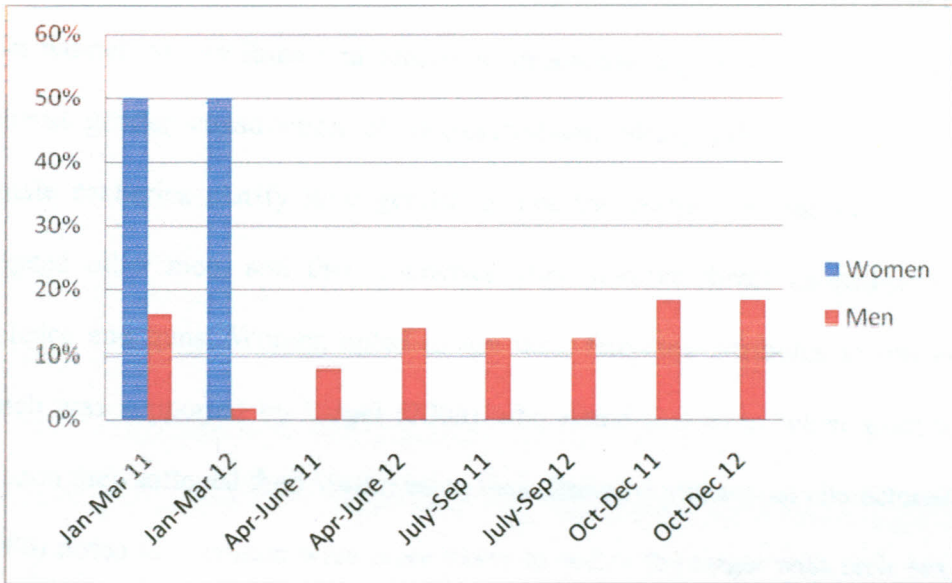


Figure 4.13: Robbery season by gender of offenders

The Figure above shows 100 % of women only committed robbery between January and March. This season seemed to have the lowest robbery rate among men. Men committed robbery across the year, with the highest crime rate being between October and December. This gender difference where women robberies occurred between January and March and most men between October and December, was attributed to the fact that women would rob to provide for their children during the lean months of January to March. But men would rob to get money for thrill and entertainment during the end of year festive season. Robbers were presented with opportunity as people tended to spend money in outdoor activities during this period.

Data from the police records showed that while women did not use weapons in robbery, 22.6% of the men used guns and pistols, 13.9% used knives and machetes, 10.9% used crude or blunt objects while 1.5% used fists. This implied that men were more likely than women to use force and threats to intimidate the victims as indicated in cross-cultural gender construction of aggressiveness. Miller (1986) noted that male and female robberies clarify how gender shapes the context of robbery. Men typically targeted other men, and their robberies often involve direct confrontation, physical violence and guns. Women opted to use their feminine attributes to rob the victims, which was supported by Siegel (2003) who noted that even when women carried a weapon they softened their victim using their feminine and sexual characteristics. Miller (1986) noted that women were more likely to soften the target with their sex than with actual violence. This is in line with Gender Schema Theory on women predisposition toward an "ethic of care" that may restrain them from violence and other behaviour that could injure others. This view concurs with Wincup *et al.*, (2005) who postulated that when women engaged in violent, major crimes, their pattern could vary to fit that of cultural gender construction. Women could therefore, refrain from using weapons when committing crimes (Steffensmeier & Allan, 2000). Hence, whereas for both men and women robbery may be triggered by similar social and cultural factors, gender construction tended to shape the actual manner in which those robberies were executed.

Data of venues showed that 100% of women and 3.3% of men committed robbery in the plantations/ bushes. Unlike men, women did not want the risk of committing robbery in public places where they could easily be found out. But men tended to commit robbery in the public sphere. Majority (53.3%) of men committed robbery by the wayside. 14%

of men committed robbery at home, 6.4 % in bars, 5.8 % at the victims' gates and 3.9% in business premises. Schools had 1.8% and hospitals 1.2%. Men also committed robbery at a rate of 0.9 % in church, 0.9 % at petrol stations and a further 0.9 % against coffee factories. Respondents revealed that robbery in coffee factories had escalated in the recent past because pulped coffee beans had large markets in Somali where they fetched good prices.

#### *Gender motives to commit Robbery/ with Violence*

Motives for robbery were sought from seven men and six women convicts. Male convicts imprisoned in Kamiti Command took pride in explaining their characteristics as skilled professionals who knew what they were doing and committed robbery as if it was a job. The seven convicts were asked what motivated them to rob. 14.3% of them said they committed the crime to get rich quickly. In this view, a male convict illustrated:

Suppose a gang of five successfully robbed 30 million from a bank. Each member earns six million in less than 10 minutes. Very few people can earn this type of money in a life time. That is why it's very enticing to rob, because robbery makes robbers rich and enable them to live extravagantly.

Sudden change in their economic status motivated 28.6% to commit robbery. A male convict narrated:

At 26 years of age, I was earning 70 thousand Kenya shillings. Then all of a sudden I was rendered jobless, with nothing to take home except for my normal one month lieu of notice pay. My wife, children and I were used to a high lifestyle; thus, we could not see how to come down and adapt to a lifestyle of struggle. Personally, I could not bring myself to see how I could start struggling to make ends meet. That is when I talked to some people I had met as clients in the office. One of my former clients offered to assist by recruiting me into their criminal gang. After three successful robberies, I got used and would get very thrilled while robbing, a feeling most of us say they felt and wished to sustain, by committing more robbery. I think apart

from the monetary gain, robbery is addictive. Once the robbers get used to it, they feel the urge to rob more and more because it brings a feeling of excitement like one is acting in a movie.

Peer pressure caused 14.3 % of convicts to commit the crime. They said they were motivated by their friends who were themselves robbers. They said they wanted to enjoy similar socio-economic status as that of their friends. They wanted to be respected and accepted among their age mates who had become economically well off through committing robbery.

Related to the above view, 14.3 % of male convicts reported that the desire to gain admiration, respect and power from the public for being wealthy was what motivated them to commit robbery. They observed that the society respected and almost worshipped people with money regardless of its origin. '*Money is power*', they said. They maintained that the society accorded the moneyed individuals dignity, honour and best seats in church. And of course one was given a decent send off when he died. As one explained:

I come from a very humble family, so I hated being poor because we were always ignored and trodden upon. Nobody respected us. This drove me to join a criminal gang that committed robbery as a gateway to lift our economic status and be accorded the respect that is the preserve of the rich.

28.6 % of the convicts reported that parents encouraged them into crime. They said the parents prayed and sometimes asked for God's protection so that their sons could not be apprehended during a robbery. A convict illustrated how his mother's constant coercion motivated him to join a criminal gang in order to fend for the family. He stated that the

coercion ended when he started taking money to his mother who never cared where it came from. Another convict also explained how his mother pushed him into crime:

After I completed school, I stayed jobless for a long time. My mother wondered what was wrong with me and kept on asking me *nikii kiuru nawe, kai utangika uria aria angi mekaga?* (What is wrong with you, cant you do what other people do for survival?). That is when I started engaging in crime.

The male convicts also observed that besides one's parents, parents-in-law could push one to commit crime by pressing for bride price. They asserted that some parents-in-law recalled their daughters if the husband was unable to pay the bride price. To retain their wives, the men were forced to commit robbery to meet their in-laws' demands.

The convicts also reported that men robbed in order to get money to entertain and sustain women (wife/girlfriend /mistresses /concubines). They asserted that if one did not have the money, women in Kiambu County abandoned them for others with money. Some convicts also mentioned that media reports on crime motivated criminals to commit robbery. A male convict explained that copy-cat robbery was carried out soon after a crime had been reported. He explained that once a robbery incident was reported, it not only gave them new ideas and clues of their next target, but also a gang was able to do a comprehensive post- mortem analysis of the execution and how best they could seal the identified gaps to avoid apprehension.

This was in tandem with the findings of Hendrick's (1977) study (as cited in Surette, 2002) that surveyed inmates at the Michigan's Marquette Prison regarding their use of television as a source of crime techniques. He reported that many prisoners took notes while watching crime shows that 9 out of 10 inmates said that they learnt new tricks and

increased their criminal expertise by watching crime programmes. In addition, Hendrick reported that 4 out of 10 inmates stated that they had attempted specific crimes they had seen on television. These findings supported those of a study, now nearly 37 years old, carried out by Heller and Polsky (1976) who interviewed 100 young male offenders between the ages of 16 and 27 and found that 22% reported trying criminal techniques they had seen on television, with only 3% reporting failure or arrest. Another 22% further disclosed that they had contemplated committing crimes they had seen on television. This showed that people imitated media figures. This notion is confirmed by a file of anecdotal reports recorded in Dwyer (2001) which indicate that criminal events that are rare in real life are sometimes committed soon after similar events are shown in entertainment or news media.

Six women convicts in Lang'ata Women's Prison were asked what motivated them to rob. 33.3% women convicted for robbery said they were motivated by the fact that they were almost guaranteed of walking away scot free. The ease with which women evaded apprehension made them have courage to be at the forefront of a crime scene. A female robber convict elaborated:

The community has not yet come to terms with the reality that women now commit crimes that were originally associated with men and that they can carry guns. It has not dawned on majority of policemen that women are now committing major crimes. They have a mentality that women are still fixated on committing crimes of loitering aimlessly. Why I am saying this? Because on several occasions, policemen had let me go scot free while they apprehended my male colleagues. It took a policewoman to identify me as one of the criminals after a robbery incident in one of the towns.

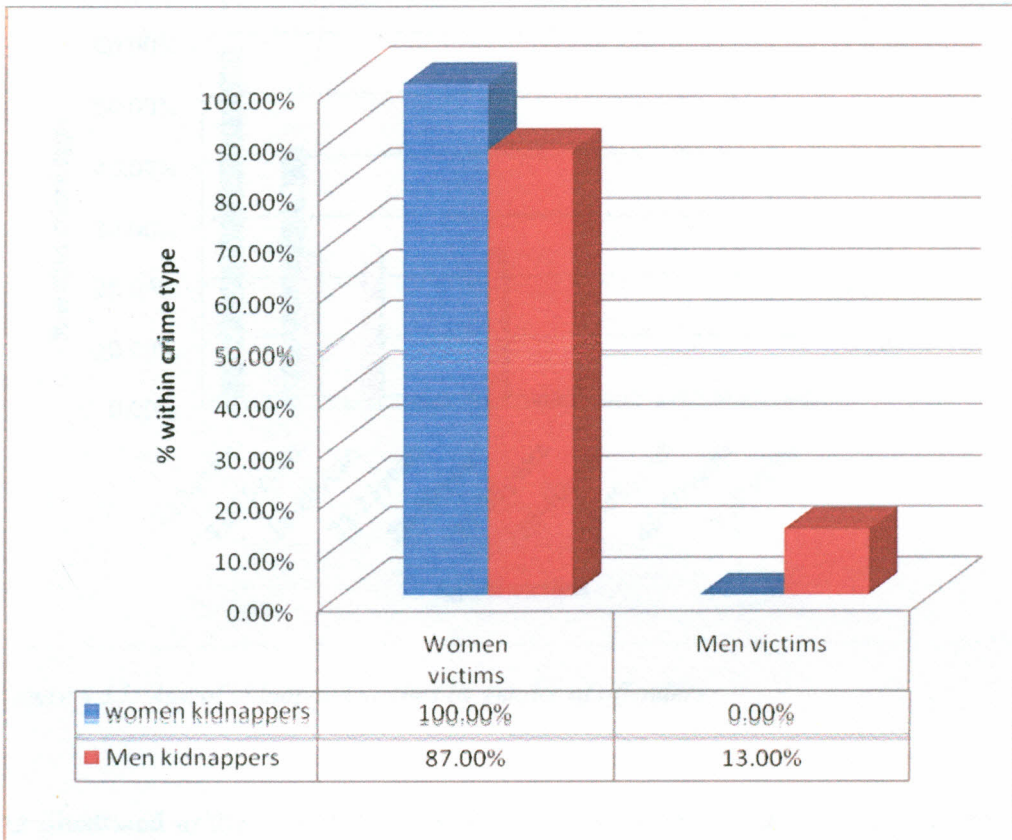
Therefore, women took advantage of the stereotype perception that crime was a man's activity. Hence, they capitalized on these to commit major crimes and with a lot of ease.

A further 33.3 % of female convicts said they were motivated to rob by the fact that they were single parents who had freedom and interacted with members of criminal gangs. Rather than rely on handouts from men, they joined criminal gangs and engaged in robbery for financial stability. Another 33.3% of female convicts reported that they committed robbery because their lovers coaxed them to assist in the crime. They said they were in bad company which abused drugs and had occasionally to rob to sustain their drug addiction habits. Siegel (2002) posits that most armed robberies were motivated by a pressing need for cash prompted by an endless quest for stimulation and thrill.

From the fore mentioned, there were gender differences that motivated men and women to commit robbery. Men were motivated by greed for quick riches, to maintain their economic status. Women were motivated by the ease with which they committed the robbery without being suspected or apprehended. As single parents, women enjoy freedom and can choose to commit crime in a gang to get money to fend for their children, take care of their aging parents and for economic independence.

#### **4.5.1.7 Kidnapping Incidences**

Kidnapping is seizing and detaining a person forcefully, often with a demand for ransom (Siegel, 2002). This study shows that out of the 10 kidnappers, 60% were men, while 40% were women. Figure 4.14 shows the gender of the kidnappers and their victims:



*Figure 4.14: Gender of kidnappers and victims*

The majority of the victims of kidnapping were women aged below 20 years. 87% of the men and all the women kidnapped female victims. Only men kidnapped men at 13%. Kidnappers preferred the gender for whom they were sure a ransom would be paid. The fact that only a handful of men were kidnapped in Kiambu County indicated gender preference in favour of women whose ransom was likely to be paid.

Kidnapping in the study area was young persons' crime committed by women in their early 20s and men between 16 to 35 years. Figure 4.15 presents the age and gender of kidnappers and their victims:

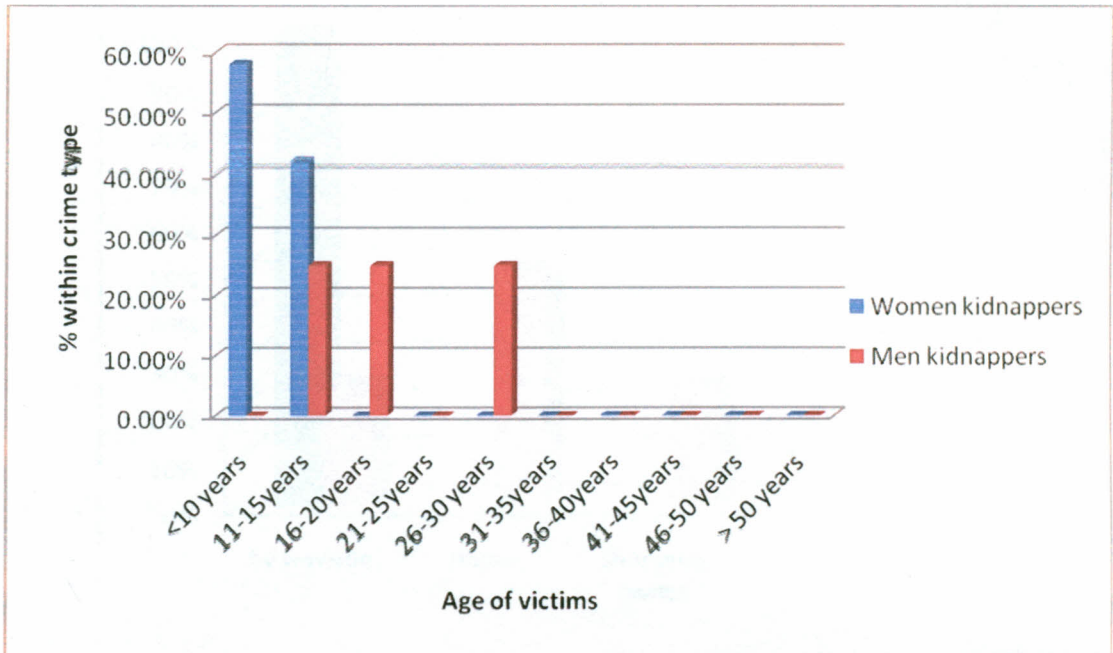
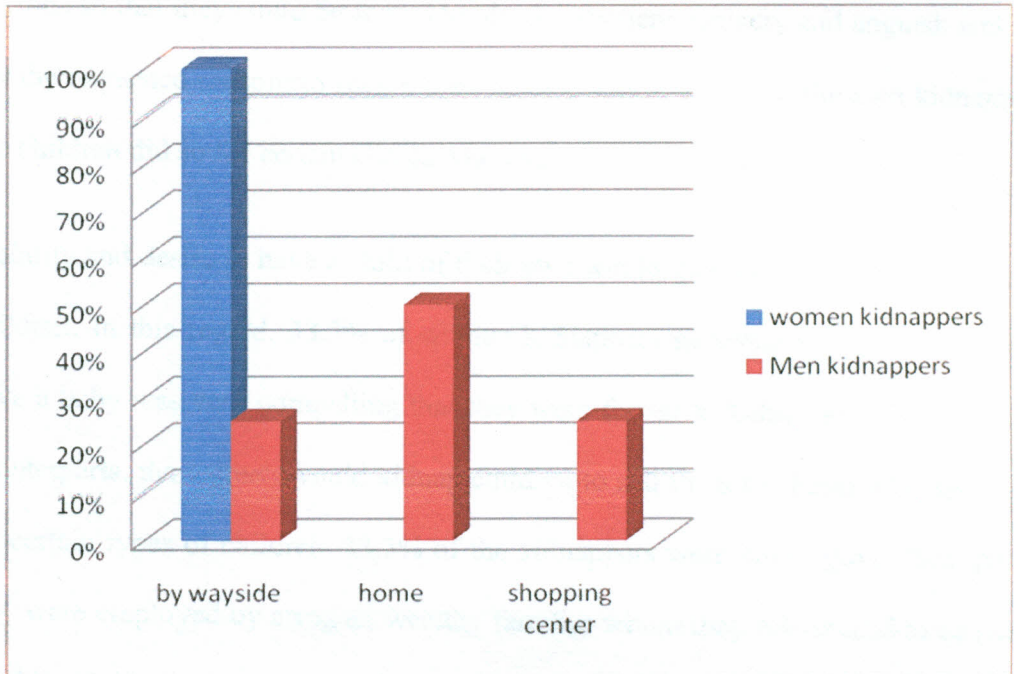


Figure 4.15: Age of kidnapped victims by gender of offenders

As illustrated in the Figure, the men kidnappers tended to target young victims ranging from ages 11 to 30 years, while women kidnapped young victims aged less than 15 years. Women targeted young girls and men targeted both men and girls. But girls were more vulnerable than boys. It also indicated that the community placed higher premium on the girl child than on boys and offenders feared kidnapping a boy whose ransom might not be paid.

Data from the police records indicated that all the women offenders kidnapped their victims in the evening, 75% of men kidnapped in the evening and 25% at night. 70% of kidnap cases occurred by the wayside, 20% at home and 10% at shopping centres. Disaggregated information on venues is shown in Figure 4.16 below:



*Figure 4.16: Kidnapping venues by gender of offenders*

The figure shows that 100% women and 25% men kidnapped by the wayside. This implied that majority of children were kidnapped by the wayside. But men kidnapped at a rate of 50%, from the victims' homes and 25% from the shopping centres. Due to the gender role of nurturing attributed to women, it was easy for them to walk along the road holding someone else's child's hand without raising any suspicion from the bystander. Men used tricks to kidnap their victims from home or shopping centres.

#### *Gender motive to kidnap*

Six male and six female convicts were interviewed. Half (50%) of the men said they had kidnapped children to force their parents into paying ransom. They had had some dealings with the children's fathers who then disappeared without giving them their share. 33.3% of the men convicts said they did so to humble the arrogant manipulative

persons so that they could be forced to plead, experience misery and anguish and to pay for the requested ransom to secure their child's return. 16.7% of the men kidnappers of the children did so for certain clients who required them for some rituals.

Inability and desire to have a child of their own would motivate some women to kidnap children. In this regard, 33.3% of women kidnappers said that sometimes the urge to have a baby was very compelling that they were forced to kidnap one. Like their male counterparts, the women would kidnap children to sell them to clients who had ordered for certain types of children. 33.3% of the kidnappers were house girls. They said that they were employed by arrogant wealthy families whom they felt needed to be taught a humbling lesson.

#### **4.5.1.8 Gender pattern in Rape offences**

Rape is considered a man's crime and women as victims (Wincup *et al.* 2005). However, analysis of data collected from police records in Kiambu County reveals that although men accounted for the majority (92.2%) of the 167 rape offenders, 0.6% of the women were also reported to have raped. Figure 4.17 depicts the gender and age of rapists in the present study:



Figure 4.17: Gender and age of rape offenders

The Figure illustrates that female rape offenders were over 51 years of age while male rapists ranged from 11 to over 51 years. It also shows that majority of the rapists were young men between ages 16 and 40 years. There was an increase in rape incidences among men over 51 years.

We sought to find out why there were increased rape incidences committed by older persons (over 51 years) within the County. The question was posed to respondents, who asserted that older men found it painful when ignored by young women because of aging.

Data analysis from police records showed that 95.5% of the men offenders raped females, while 3.2% of them raped/ sodomised males. All the female offenders sexually molested males. Child defilement was rampant within the County. Data from

police records revealed that the bulk (70.6 %) of 167 rape victims were below 15 years. All the victims of rape fell under the age of 15; 66.7% of them were below 10 years, while 33.3% were 11-15 years. Majority (70.5%) of rape victims were young girls aged below 1 year to 15 years. Vulnerability to rape decreased with increase in age, but it tended to increase for women beyond 51 years. Results in Figure 4.18 show the gender of the rapists and age of the victims:

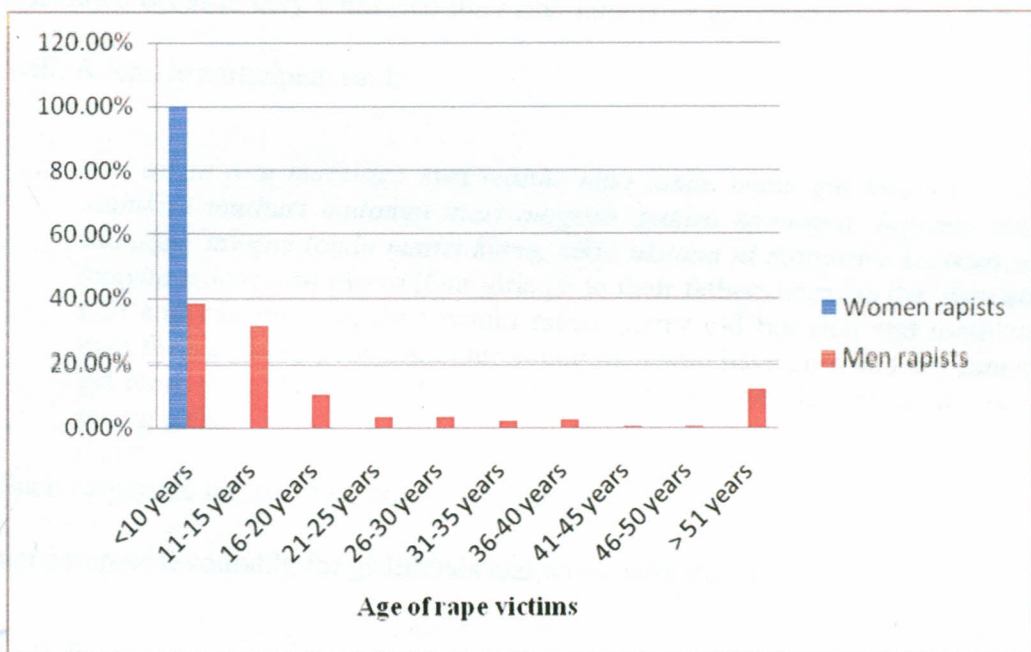


Figure 4.18: Age of rape victims by gender of offenders

Male and female rape offenders targeted young children. Women targeted children (boys) below 10 years at a 100% rate. Men targeted young girls (below 15 years) and older women (over 51 year). Children were vulnerable because they did not have the physical strength to resist coercion. Young children (most of them girls) were also likely to be intimidated through threats or given small tips/ bribes like sweets, food and clothes to keep the crime a secret. Older women were vulnerable to rape and easily accessible because they were left alone during the day when their children and

grandchildren left for work and school. There were cases of young men raping old women, with one reported case of 120 years (in Ruaka village) and another one 88 years (in Kikuyu location). Respondent interviews confirmed that cases of young men raping old women were very rampant within Kiambu County. They asserted that young men raped young girls and old women for sexual gratification because mature girls in Kiambu County were very expensive to maintain. They said that young men got frustrated because they witnessed their rich fathers or grandfathers access these girls at will. A female participant said:

*Aya airitu aitu mathiaga kuri maithe mao tondu mena gia kwoywo, kaba mahikire muthuri mutongu utari magego, gukira kamwana. Imwana ciitu itionaga mwene tondu matiri kiene, nikio ukuona ni manywire karikari na kunyita macucu na twana.* (Our girls go to their fathers because the men are rich and can provide, they would rather marry old but rich and toothless men than a young poor man. Our young men who have no resources cannot get these girls, that is why they drink illegal brew, rape old women and very young girls.

Such responses implied that boys were frustrated because with no resources they could not compete favourably for girlfriends and wives with the old rich men.

Data from police crime records revealed that half (50%) of the men committed rape in the evenings. This was the time when girls could be walking home alone along isolated paths from errands such as fetching water or firewood. The girls could also be at home alone before their busy parents returned from work late and this made them vulnerable to rapists. Women were reported to have raped in the mornings.

The analysis indicated that all the women culprits of rape and 70% of the men committed the crime at home. Men also raped victims in other venues such as the

wayside, in the bushes, coffee or tea plantations, in church premises such as toilets and within church compounds. Others raped in schools and at shopping centres as shown in

Figure 4.19:

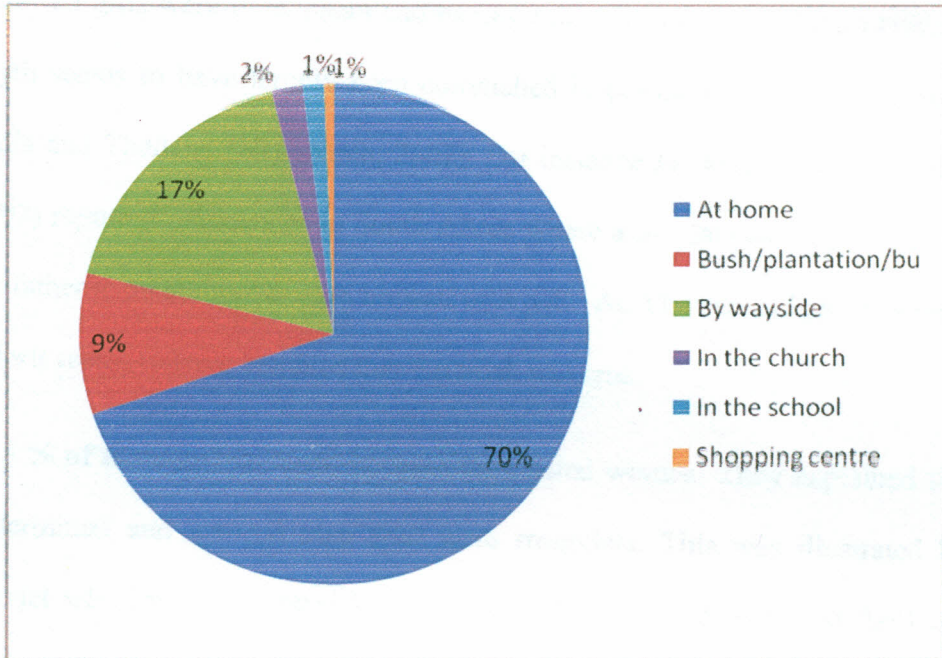


Figure 4.19: men rape venues

Concentration of rape cases in homes indicated that perpetrators of rape were more likely to have been familiar persons rather than strangers. 6.6% of rape incidences were perpetrated by distant relatives, 3% by parents and 1.2% by siblings. Grandchildren, domestic servants and husbands accounted for 1.2 % of the rape cases. These findings validate information collected from respondents who had noted that Kiambu County experienced very high cases of incest. They noted that grandparents, servants, neighbours, school mates, teachers, pastors and family friends were among the unreported perpetrators of rape.

*Gender differences in Motives of Rape*

Rape convicts said that men raped women for both sexual gratification and other motives. For instance, 14.3 % of the men convicts had raped young girls because they believed girls were pure, clean and having sex with them would cure HIV/AIDS. This myth seems to have largely been entrenched in patriarchal societies of South Africa, India and Thailand (Newmarch, 2002). For instance Jewkes, Lorna and Penn-Kekana(2002) reported incidences in South Africa where a 5- year- old boy was sodomised by his father in an attempt to cure himself of AIDS. An 11-year- old girl was raped and the culprit seems to have believed that the myth was true.

14.3 % of the convicts raped because they hated women. They explained that women undermined and ignored men who were strugglers. This was illustrated by a male convict who bitterly narrated how he admired, loved and respected the lady he later victimized. This lady happened to come from a well- to- do family and he was from a humble family. He said that he gathered courage and respectfully approached her for friendship. She told him off badly, using derogatory and demeaning language which left his ego wounded:

I felt very hurt, I knew I did not have money alright but I was not poor, deformed or ugly. From then on, I cannot tell what happened to me, because at that very moment I felt intense hatred toward women and vowed to retaliate. I encountered two other friends who detested women and we organized to humiliate them starting with the said girl. I knew her schedule very well, so my two friends and I waited for her at a bushy section where she passed. We dragged her from the path, right into the bush and raped her repeatedly. In this way, we knew that we had put her where she belonged and that she would be stigmatized throughout her life.

Wolf (1984) argued that the primary emotion reported by child molesters preceding their offence was depression while that reported by rapists was anger. Groth (1979) and Sgoi (1982) (as cited in Robert, 2003:83) who had worked for many years with convicted sex offenders in Connecticut and Massachusetts, classified rapists as motivated by either power or anger and child molesters as fixated on the regressive, with the fixated molesters as true pedophiles.

14.3 % of the respondents stated that women were raped because men held grudges and wanted to revenge. They explained that some wealthy families living alongside the poor segregate themselves and undermine their humble neighbours. They stated that such families could only be humbled by having their wives and daughters raped. As illustrated by a male convict:

We are neighbours with a family that is better off financially than most. This family is puffed up with pride; they treat everyone around as second rate citizens. They have warned their children not to interact with us. The wife is very arrogant and treats every one suspiciously and with a lot of contempt. There is a time my cousin had gone near their gate. When she found him there, she told him off and threatened to call the police. One day, they were burgled, and the police came to inspect the crime scene. When the police asked whom they suspected, their father mentioned us as his first suspects. We were arrested and after staying for two days in the police cells, we were released for lack of evidence. That is when we decided to teach them a humbling lesson by raping their daughters. I was however positively identified, convicted and incarcerated.

This case reflects socio-economic and class conflicts that may arise when opulence lives side by side with poverty. Men rape women because of power relations. For instance, 14.3% of the respondents stated that men raped just to humiliate women. They said that some women carried airs of arrogance and importance, yet they were just women. Two

of the convicts said they were framed. One of them said that they were friends with a girl but her mother was against the friendship. He continued:

She warned us to stop our relationship and threatened me with incarceration if we continued. She complained that I was disrupting her 'daughters' education and spoiling her future. When we continued she made good her threat, I was reported that I had raped the girl. She was coached on how to frame me and threatened with jail if she did not comply. They successfully made sure I am behind bars.

The convicts wished that the court could conduct thorough investigations of rape cases because many women accused men falsely in order to have them incarcerated. His plea was echoed by several other rape convicts who maintained that women had become aware that a claim of sexual harassment would easily lead to the accused man's imprisonment. One convict said that his wife had claimed that he had raped his step-daughter. She made sure he was arrested so that she could be left as sole administrator of their property. Some convicts raped due to the influence of drugs and alcohol. One of the them said:

Alcohol reduces the reasoning capacity and impairs judgment; it can make someone imagine an old woman is a young beautiful girl, or see as if a child is a mature woman. And force them into sex, only to realize the mess one has put himself into later when he sobers up.

This researcher wanted to find out what the society thought motivated men to rape women in the County. We asked FGDs participants what they thought motivated men to rape. Some said that young men of low socio-economic status encountered frustration because they could not access young women who preferred the rich old men. Such young men either befriended the very young girls who were yet to know the value of material wealth or were 'kept' by some old wealthy women. The poor young men who

could not fit in the two categories were forced to rape the weak, defenceless, helpless and vulnerable group in the community.

However, some participants felt that rampant rape in Kiambu County could be attributed to poor courtship. They claimed that men in the County did not know how to court women. They contended that Kiambu men had always treated women as sex objects and that Kikuyu men thought that the language of sex was the use of money or force. They asserted that Kiambu men were socialized in a way that those who had money bought love and sex, while those without money used force to get it. The only woman convicted for molesting a young boy said it was due to sexual urge and lust for young men.

#### **4.5.1.9 Gender Patterns in Sodomy, Incest and Bestiality**

Data from the police records indicated that sodomy, incest and bestiality occurred in Kiambu County. In this crime category, the study revealed 33.3% of the recorded crimes were against animals, 50% against females, while 16.7% were against men. Further analysis indicated that men committed bestiality, incest (against young girls) and sodomized fellow men. But, women seemed to commit incest against young boys. Figure 4.20 indicates the age and gender of the victims of incest and sodomy:

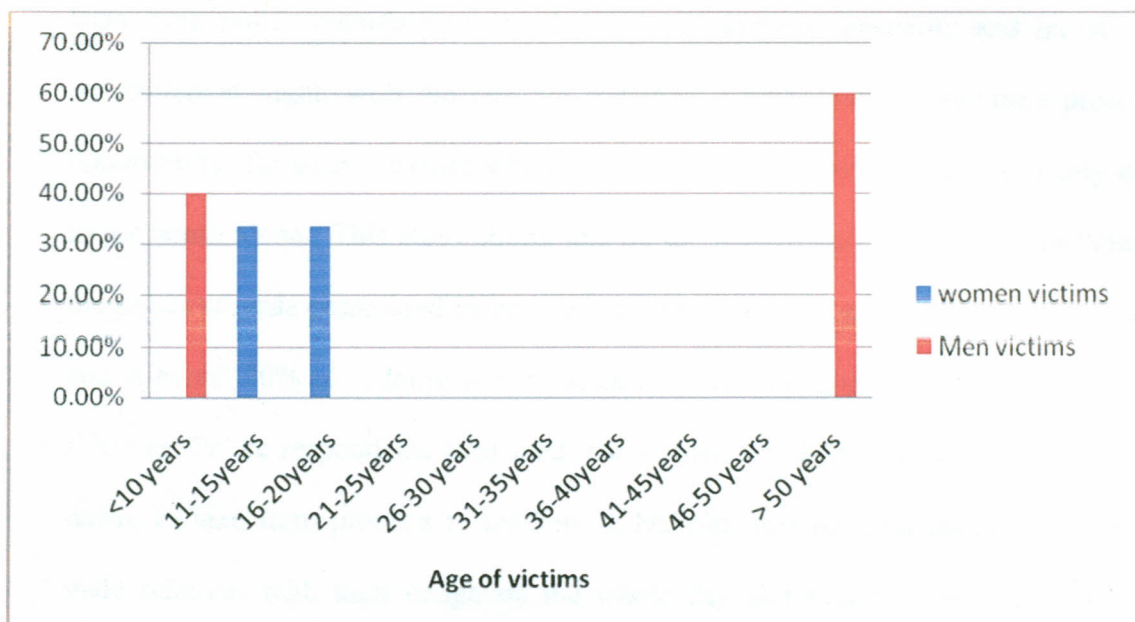


Figure 4.20: Age and gender of Incest/sodomy victims

The analysis indicated that 66.6% of the incest victims were females between 11 and 20 years of age. Adolescent girls could be vulnerable to incest perpetrated by male relatives at home. Such men could take advantage and confuse girls with attention, care and love which they so desired at their age. Also, very young boys and older men aged over 51 years were sodomized. Men and boys of such ages could be more vulnerable to sodomy and incest than other age groups because they were physically weak and could not be able to resist the perpetrators. Additionally, older men could be left alone in isolated houses after their partners died rendering them easy prey for criminals. Young boys could fall victim to sodomy in isolated paths in forests and plantations. However, respondents felt that the sodomy rate against young boys could be higher than recorded. Boys often failed to talk about their sexual harassment ordeals with parents or failed to report to the authorities, because they were socialized to handle issues like men.

Data from police records revealed that 50% of sodomy, bestiality and incest were committed at night, with the rest not specified. Conclusively, night time presented opportunities for such activities when the offenders and their victims were likely to be in the house alone. This study shows that all the women and 20% of men included in the police records committed incest/ sodomy and bestiality in business premises, bush and at home. 20% of sodomy and incest cases were among siblings and 16.7% among relatives. Police respondents explained that women left their homes very early, before dawn, to take farm produce to markets in Nairobi, leaving their husbands, sons and male relatives with their daughters the whole day and that this could contribute to prevalence of incest. Conversely, FGD participants held that Kiambu County had limited entertainment activities and social halls where youth could practise creative arts. This was likely to predispose members of the community to sexual crimes as a form of entertainment.

In addition, police respondents maintained that women shouldered the entire family financial burden. The overburdened women were too busy to monitor what went on at home. Men took advantage of their wives' absence by preying on female family members in the home. These responses indicated that there was a connection between incest and men abdicating their gender roles as breadwinners and overburdening the women.

#### *Motives for Incest/sodomy victims*

Motives for these sexual crimes were analyzed in relation to gender. A male inmate said he committed bestiality because he considered himself so ugly to be accepted by any

woman. He narrated how he got frustrated one time when he approached a prostitute who screamed because she got very scared of his physical appearance. He explained that since he was also a human being with his needs, he opted to seek sexual satisfaction elsewhere. However, a woman inmate said that she was motivated to commit incest for sexual gratification.

#### **4.5.1.0 Gender Differences in Motives for Child Negligence**

This researcher encountered women incarcerated for child negligence in Lang'ata Prison, and sampled 6 for interviews. Such cases were absent in Kamiti Prison. The study categorized child neglect crime under person-to-person violent crime because it was felt that the children's rights and emotions were violently violated. We asked the six women convicts why they had neglected their children. 16.7% had left their children locked in the house alone as they went out to hassle for a living. Being single mothers the money they earned was not enough to employ a baby sitter, they said. 33.3 % neglected their children because they were abusing drugs/alcohol. Baron (1994) argued that drugs made a person irresponsible. In this regard a female convict (who was staying with her 2- year -old child) confessed that drug addiction habits made her neglect the child. Her parents had to intervene by ensuring that she got incarcerated for child neglect and that she took her child along so that she was forced to take care of it and to change her ways.

A further 33.3% of the respondents had abandoned their children because they were harassed by their parents. One woman confessed:

My mother felt that my children and I were a burden to her; she would mistreat me because of the children and my joblessness. I got so stressed and I walked out on them, leaving her with my children....she took them to a children's home, and then reported me for child negligence.

The convicts asserted that parents sent their daughters away whenever they bore children out of wedlock. Another convict said:

When my mother chased us away, I took my belongings and went from one relative to another but no one was ready to take us in... we took refuge in the streets of Nairobi (like *chokoras*) for over a month. My children became sickly, dirty and emaciated. The misery and suffering intensified and we could not bear it any longer. Rather than wait to see my children die while I watched, I took them to my mother's doorstep and left them there. My mother arranged for them to be taken to a children's home and reported me for child negligence. I was arrested, convicted and jailed in Lang'ata.

16.7 % of convicts for child negligence left their children because their husbands had mistreated them. As one put it:

My husband often battered me. One day he beat me up so badly that I could not contain myself. I grabbed a 'sufuria' of hot water and poured it on him, but unfortunately the hot water also landed on my son who sustained serious burns... My husband rushed him to hospital and took a p3 (medical report form) that enabled him mount a case against me. He reported to the police that I had burned our son intentionally. I was arrested, convicted and sentenced to a jail term. He soon brought our son in jail to live with me.

These groups of convicts lamented that the society condemned women for child neglect while they exonerated the men from blame. This study contends that men are not only accused of child negligence in Kenya but also in other countries. For instance, Bromfield (2005) in his study of *chronic child maltreatment in an Australian Statutory child protection sample* established that although men were reported and convicted, it was most often women who were overrepresented in child negligence cases. The higher proportion of women reported for child negligence reflected the social attitude that mothers were responsible for meeting the needs of their children. The fact that no man

from Kiambu County was convicted for child negligence confirmed that society expected women to conform to their ascribed gender role expectations of nurturers and care-givers. Gender differentials in motive to commit child negligence could thus not be compared because there were no men incarcerated for child negligence, at least from Kiambu County.

#### **4.5.2.0 Patterns in Person -to- Person Property Crimes**

This section presents gender patterns that emerged after cross tabulating the various indicators with person- to- person property crimes. Crimes in this category include arson, larceny/theft, burglary, car theft or carjacking, vandalism and malicious damage of property.

##### **4.5.2.1 Gender Pattern Formed in Arson**

In arson, a person deliberately sets fire to a building belonging to another. Data collected from the police crime records indicated that men comprised 55.6% and women 22.2% of arson offenders in Kiambu County. The data revealed that men attacked fellow men at a rate of 60% compared to 20% for women, all the women targeted men. Figure 4.21 indicates the age and gender of the arsonists:

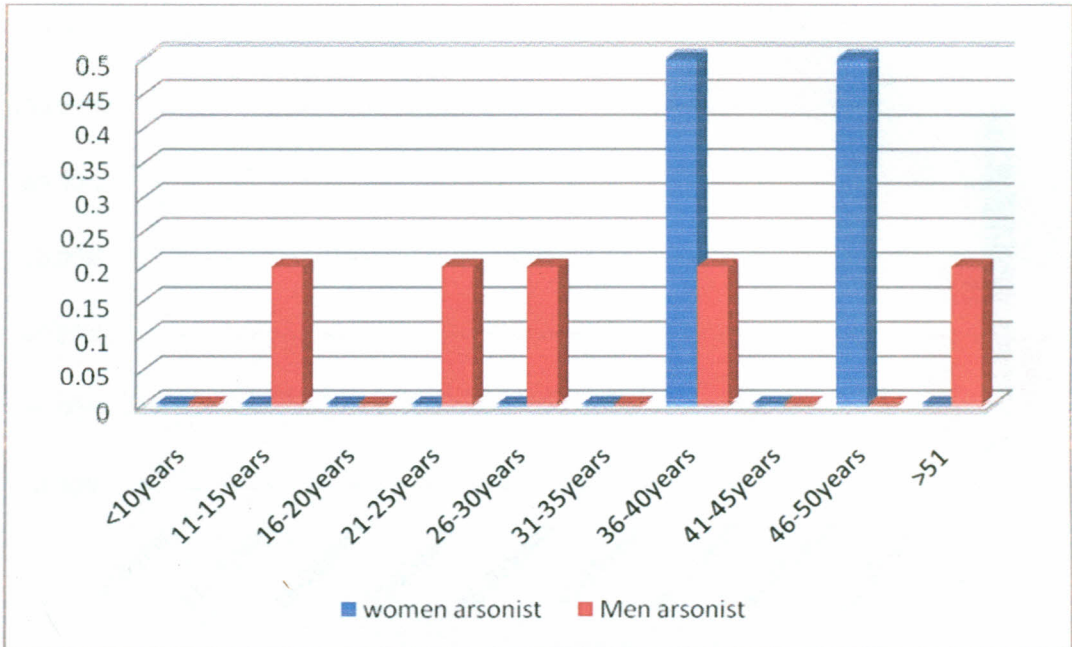


Figure 4.21: Gender and age of arson offenders

While men arsonists spread across the ages from 11 to over 51 years, women arsonists were mature, aged around 36 to 50 years, indicating that men and women commit arson for different reasons that are stated in the motive section below. However, arson victims ranged from mature to older men (36 and above years of age) and older women aged above 50 years, as shown in Figure 4.22. Younger persons could not have property that would be destroyed. It is also clear that men owned and controlled property at a younger age than women in Kiambu County. Female victims could be widows who were custodians of inherited property.

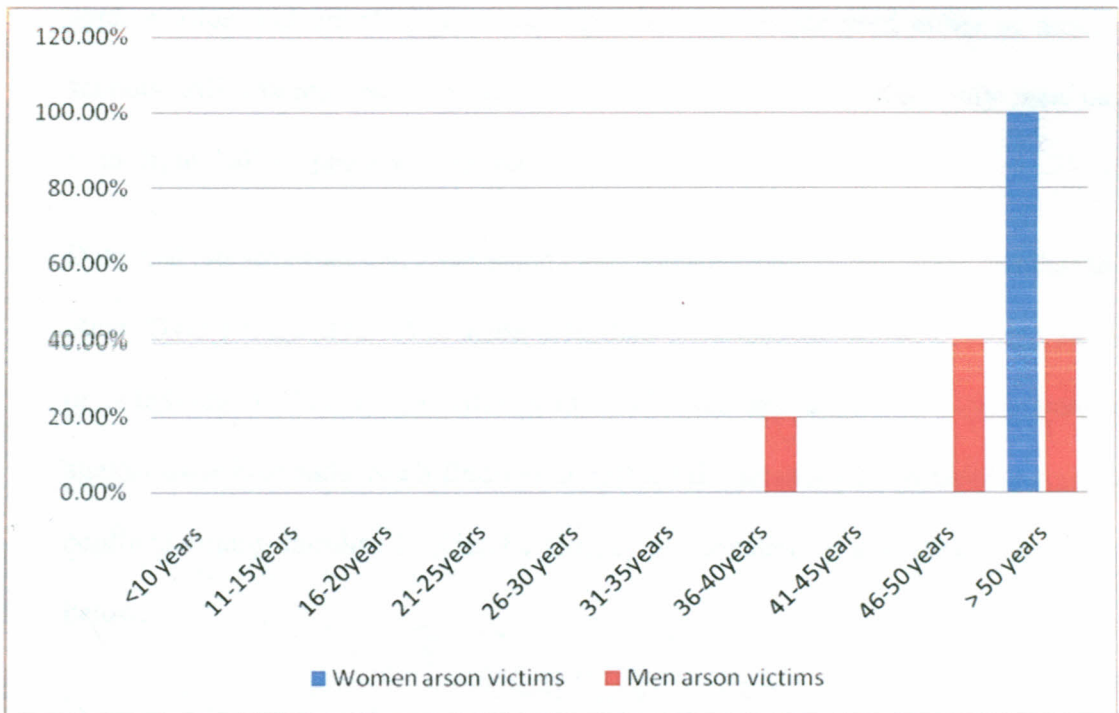


Figure 4.22: Gender and age of arson victims

Data analysis from police crime records revealed that women targeted men aged 36-40 years and 46-50 years (50% each). 80% of the men arsonists targeted older men and women victims.

While men committed arson any time of the day, with more in the morning, women committed it in the evening and at night. The difference could be attributed to gender socialization and the choice of their victims as discussed above. Consistency with norms of gender schema organization, men were aggressive and risk takers, thus committed the crime any time of the day. Women would avoid confrontations with their victims who were men. Therefore, they committed arson in the evening before their victims returned to their homes or in darkness -at night when victims were fast asleep. Crime committed at night concealed the arsonists' identities as well as avoiding

confrontation and arrest. Arson was reported to have occurred either at home or in schools. All women and 78% of men targeted homes. However, only men targeted schools, and all perpetrators used petrol and fire.

Data analysis revealed that most arson cases involved people who were familiar to each other. Over a third (33.3%) of arson offenders were victims' siblings; 11.1% were sons or daughters, 11.1% by girl friends or boyfriends and a further 11.1% were wives against their husbands. Such findings suggested the intensity of property wrangles and conflicts among families in Kiambu County as revealed by arsonists in their motives below:

#### *Gender Differences in Motives for Arson*

Four men and three women arsonists were asked what motivated them to commit arson. Men informants said they committed arson against parents, sisters and/or other relatives because of land and property related issues. 50% of male arsonists had been convicted for arson against their sisters and relatives. They had set property ablaze to forcibly evict their victims from their land or premises. They asserted that '*land borrowers*' especially sisters and relatives, once they had built a house on borrowed land, refused to move out when asked to do so. To discourage such tendencies they set the houses ablaze for easy eviction of the 'borrower' which gave way for inheritors to apportion their land. Yet, the new Kenya Constitution (2010) gives equal rights to both men and women to inherit property. Patriarchal customs governing land and property inheritance are still deeply rooted among men such that they set their sisters' houses on fire to evict them so that they don't inherit from their parents.

25% of male convicts said they committed arson because the victims had refused to vacate a business premise when requested to move to give room for renovation. A further 25% burnt their parents' houses because the parents had chased them away from home, suggesting that men set property on fire because of anger and rejection by parents.

Two women convicts said that they burnt their matrimonial homes upon separation from their husbands. They maintained that they had made financial contribution in constructing the houses, yet their husbands had sent them away with the intention of bringing in other women. One of the female convict said:

I cannot leave to my husband the house I struggled to build with my own sweat without his help, only for him to enjoy and show off to other women, nor can I wait to see other women come to enjoy in it, I will burn it down before that happens.

The women arson convicts maintained that majority of Agikuyu women especially the first wives worked very hard to construct and furnish their matrimonial houses. They contended that since these houses were constructed on the parent- in- laws' land, these parents and their sons imagined that it was their son's house and that his wife had no control over it. Unfortunately upon separation, it was the women who either moved out or were sent away together with their children, leaving behind the property. They asserted that this was made worse by the men who often re-married and brought other women into the same house, hence disregarding the first wife's years of hard work and disinheriting her and her children. Sadly, the women could encounter a vicious cycle of misery, where they were never welcomed back in their native home especially by their brothers' families. This kind of suffering and deprivation drove women to set the

houses and other property ablaze to ensure that the men and their other women did not benefit. Prins (1994) postulated that in the USA arson occurred in domestic violence cases, to hide another crime including murder and for financial gain. The differences are in the different prevailing conditions in the two regions and that property mostly insured in the USA, which may not be the case in Kiambu County.

#### **4.5.2.2 Gender Patterns in Burglary Cases**

Analysis of data collected from police crime records revealed that men comprised 82.1% of burglary offenders against 3.8% of women. More (46%) men than women (27%) comprised the burglary victims. The study revealed that burglars targeted same gender more than they targeted the opposite gender. Although women burgled both men and women, they targeted fellow women at a rate of 38.5% than those (30.8%) who targeted men. But, men targeted fellow men at a higher rate (48.7%) as compared to those (26.9%) that targeted women. Offenders targeting their gender more than the opposite indicated that they preferred victims they could easily deal with in case they were apprehended.

Table 4.9 shows the distribution by age and gender of reported burglary offenders. The age of burglary offenders ranged from 11 to above 51 years. The majority (65.5%) were young, between 16 and 35 years of age. 11 to 15 years accounted for 2.4% of the offenders. Offending rate decreased with age until 50 years at the lowest. There was an increase in offending rate to 5.7% for above 51 years.

Table 4.9: Age by gender of burglary offenders

Gender crime	age of offender	<10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	31-35 years	36-40 years	41-45 years	46-50 years	>51
Women burglars	Count	0	1	4	4	4	0	0	0	0	0
	%	0	7.7%	30.8%	30.8%	30.80%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Men burglars	Count	0	7	41	68	62	39	18	11	5	16
	%	0	2.50%	14.7%	24.4%	22.20%	14%	6.5%	3.9%	1.8%	5.7%

The data in Table 4.9 is contrary to the findings of previous studies in Mombasa and Nairobi by Odipo (1996) and Otieno (2005), which established that burglary, was a mature persons' crime and that women burglars were much older than their men counterparts. The fact that younger persons in Kiambu County burgled could be the result of the emerging phenomenon of child-headed households, where older children were taking parental responsibility after the demise of their parents due to HIV/AIDS and other causes. Since the child head was ill prepared for such responsibility, some would indulge in crime to fend for their younger siblings. However, while men continued with their criminality up to above 51 years, women stopped after the age of 30. Majority of male and female burglars were between 16-30 years old, after which men's burglary incidences decreased with age up to 50 years. Then, there was a sharp increase in burglary for men above 51 years.

The gender difference could be attributed to some socio-cultural factors that affected the lives of women and men differently. One could argue that after 30 years of age, women's agility and flexibility to gain entrance into the houses had dwindled. They also had developed alternative survival strategies due to gender role expectations, such as

hawking cooked food, vegetables, engaging in commercial sex or any other openings available to them. This would include getting married into a wealthy family or becoming a mistress to wealthy men. Alternatively, their children would have grown to a level where they were able to engage in various economic activities and were contributing to the family budget. The subsidies from children's earnings could ease the woman's financial burden, which would likely reduce her tendency to commit crime. But, men could find themselves restricted and their alternatives limited by their gender socialization which made it difficult for them to engage in jobs considered by society as feminine such as, hawking food items and doing domestic work. While women collaborated with their children to subsidize their financial needs, men rarely had anybody to collaborate with. In their old age men would not have a person to rely upon for their daily sustenance, and could burgle houses for food and to eke a living.

As Figure 4.23 indicates, unlike girls, boys as young as 11-15 years were burgled indicating that young boys unlike girls do have their own houses in the study area. In addition, older persons (over 51 years) were the majority victims of burglary. Apart from being physically weak, persons this age lived alone. They were therefore more vulnerable especially, when they left their homes unattended.

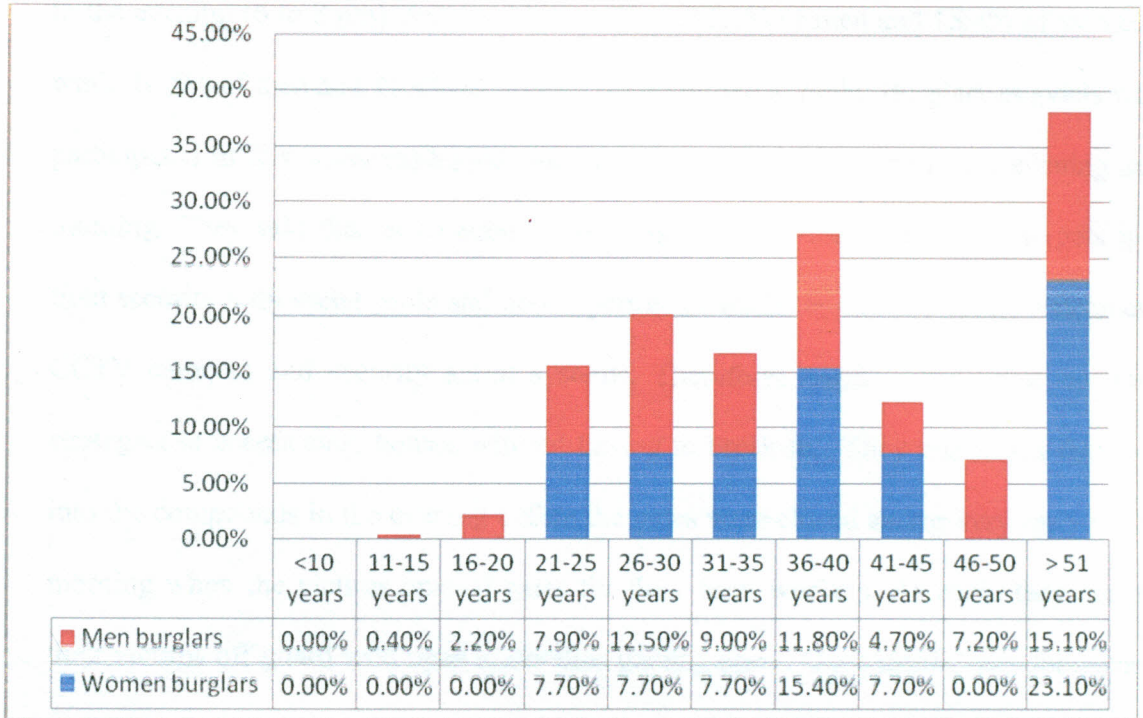


Figure 4.23: Age of burglary victims by gender offenders

The vulnerability of older people to burglary in our study significantly differs with findings from previous studies [Odipo (1996), Otieno (2005), Ndikaru (2010)], which established that older people were rarely targeted by criminals. These would result from differences in demographic composition between urban and rural population. For instance, Ndikaru (2010) in his study of *Crime Differentials in Metropolitan Slum Areas: An Analysis of the City of Nairobi Slums, Kenya* noted that majority of urban population comprised of young people who had migrated from rural areas. However, majority of Kiambu County's population comprised of indigenous groups cutting across all ages.

Data analysis on gender of offender and time did not show any differences between men and burglary patterns. However, majority of women (53.8%) and men (30.5%) burgled

in the evening (6 to 8 pm), followed by morning (25.1% of men and 15.4% of women), while 16.5% of men and 15.4% of women were burgled at night. Burglary convicts who participated in this study explained why they engaged in the crime in the evening and morning. They said that in Kiambu County, most homes that were likely targets had tight security with metal grills and doors, perimeter walls/ fences and gates, watchmen, CCTV cameras and security alarm systems. Therefore, burglars had come up with strategies to access such houses without having to break-in. They stated that they got into the compounds in the evening before the gates were closed and/or very early in the morning when the victims opened gates for their farm workers. As such, they caught their victims off guard with open doors thus gaining entry. Once inside, they threatened the unsuspecting victims with guns which deterred them from raising any alarm until the burglars had left. The timing also allowed them access to homes with heavy security which, according to burglar convicts, were difficult to access at night. Criminals were aware that police patrols were reduced in early morning and evening hours and that they were likely to walk away safely. Figure 4.24 indicates the distribution of burglary activity by gender and season:

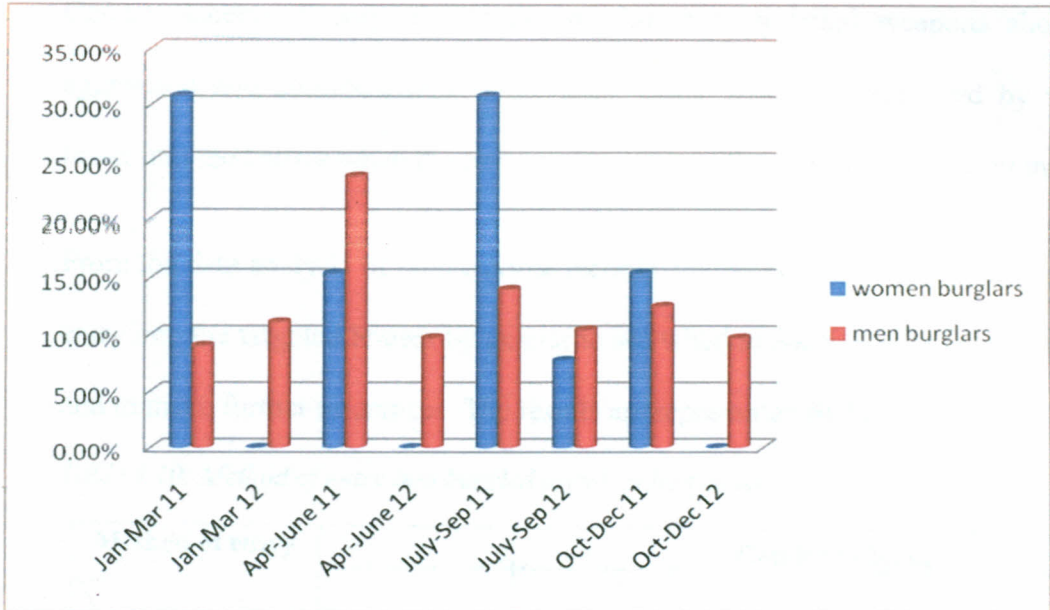


Figure 4.24: Gender of burglary offender by season of crime

The Figure shows that burglary fluctuated from one month to the other for either gender. The observable difference between men and women's offending pattern in relation to season was that while men burgled during all seasons throughout the two years, women did so every season in 2011 but skipped between January and June and October and December in 2012. This Suggested existence of hard economic times and food scarcity in 2011 than 2012 which necessitated women to burgle throughout year 2011 to fend for their children.

Data analysis from police crime records on weapons and methods revealed that burglary was associated with distinct methods. Both men (25%) and women (7.7%) used blunt weapons. Only men used knives, machetes and guns or pistols. Use of guns and knives by men implied that they burgled houses even when the owners were present. These weapons could be used to scare, immobilize and silence the victims. Consistence with

Gender Schema Theory, men's use of threats with lethal weapons showed their aggression and confrontational tendencies. Blunt weapons were used by women to break into the houses when the owners were away rather than to scare away the victims.

From the data analysis of police crime records, the researcher investigated the mode of entry into the targeted houses by gender to see whether there existed gender differences and to make further inferences. The results are represented in Table 4.10:

*Table 4.10: Method of entry into burgled premises by gender*

Method of entry		Gender Offender			
		unspecified	Women	Men	Total
Door breaking	Frequency	5	1	11	17
	%	29.4%	5.9%	64.7%	100%
Locking up security guards	Count	0	0	2	2
	%	0.	0%	100%	100%
Master keys	Frequency	0	0	5	5
	%	0.	0%	100.%	100%
Padlock cutting	Frequency	4	0	13	17
	%	23.5%	0%	76.5%	100%
Roof cutting	Frequency	0	0	6	6
	%	0%	0%	100.%	100%
Wall breaking	Frequency	0	2	4	6
	%	0%	33.3%	66.7%	100%
Window breaking	Frequency	0	3	9	12
	%	0%	35%	75.00%	100%

Both men and women gained entry into houses through door breakages, making holes on walls and breaking windows. However, men (unlike women) also used other methods, such as cutting padlocks and locking up security guards. These methods required their perceived masculine strength. In addition, men gained entry through the roof. The methods used by men and women in gaining entry into the house signified their gender socialization. Society socialized women to avoid taking risks, including

those related to heights, and to believe that they were physically weak while creativity, innovativeness and intelligence were a reserve for men (Wood, 2001).

Analysis on burglary venues revealed that 53.8% of the women and 54.1 % of the men burglarised homes, while 15.4% of women and 3.2% men burglarised bars. Only men ventured in other venues such as business premises, churches, schools, offices, factories and hospitals in that order. Women targeted venues they were familiar with (homes and bars) because their socialization restricted them (Lochner, 2004). Also, women's moral obligations (Woods, 2001) could deter them from venturing into some venues such as churches and hospitals.

This study revealed that some of the burglary offenders were familiar to their victims. 0.6% of the crime was committed by children against their parents, 0.6% by siblings, 0.3% by relatives, and a further 0.3% by employees. These findings are contrary to previous studies on crimes carried out in urban areas which established that crime was committed against strangers (Odipo, 1996; Otieno, 2005). Commission of crime by family members and relatives was therefore a phenomenon unique to rural crime in general and Kiambu County in particular where members of a community were most likely to be closely related.

#### *Gender differences in motive for Burglary and Break-ins*

Seven men convicted for burglary participated in the study. 28.6% of men burglars said they were motivated to commit the crime by the high demand and ready market for second- hand goods, especially electronic items. They observed that Kiambu residents believed that second- hand goods from the affluent households were classic and of

superior quality, yet cheap and affordable for the majority of those who could not afford to buy new ones. They revealed that they worked in collaboration with 'fences' (persons who dispose off stolen goods) who enlightened them on the type of goods that customers desired as well as placing orders for items requested. They said that 'fences' paid them immediately they delivered the requested items.

28.6% of the men said they engaged in burglary in order to acquire the property they had desired all their life. According to them, they were motivated by the desire for household items that affluent people possessed. They put in every effort including burgling to own such items. Besides satisfying their desire, burglary engaged them in 'productive activities' because they were unemployed and idle. Regarding this view, a male convict said: 'Burglary not only kept us busy, but was also a source of employment that provided us with income to support our parents, girlfriends and wives'. 14.3% of the male convicts cited peer pressure and fear of rejection as their major motive for burglary. It enabled them to be accepted by social networks which included fellow burglars. They explained that one had to blend in by carrying out the group's activities.

A further 14.3% of the male convicts said they burgled in order to teach their victims a lesson. One of the convicts said:

My victim was bragging over his achievement and whatever he possessed in the house to whoever was willing to listen. He had to be taught a lesson. We broke into his house and took away the items that he was bragging about. He was humbled to find his house had been broken into and his valuables gone...he would learn to shut up about his achievements, belittling others and making them look small and feel useless....

Like in theft, 14.3% of male convicts said they engaged in burglary to compensate themselves for money or services owed. Regarding this view a male convict narrated:

I worked for my employer for 5 months and he never paid me. When I reminded him to pay me, he arrogantly said he owed me nothing and that I should be contented with the food and accommodation he was offering me. Since I wanted to compensate myself, I organized a gang to break into his house at night; although I had worn a mask they recognized me and that is why I am here.

These responses indicated that men were aware of needs in public domain and therefore burgled to supply desired goods to the huge market, to fit in, to teach their victims a lesson as well as to compensate themselves for services not paid for by their employers.

Female convicts were asked what they thought would motivate them into burglary. They said it was to fend for their children. They explained that women could break into their neighbours' houses to steal foodstuff, clothes and electronics for personal use or for selling (in case of surplus). Some female convicts said women could break into their husbands' houses to collect their belongings, which they had left behind after separation. They maintained that although many cases would go unreported, breaking into their former husbands' houses to pick items and documents was recurrent in Kiambu County. They explained that women were forced to do so because husbands and in-laws would not allow a run-away wife to carry any item during separation. Other female convicts felt that women could burgle because they were single mothers without a livelihood and had to fend for their children after rejection by their parents and husbands.

#### 4.5.2.3 Gender Differences in Carjacking and Car theft

Analysis of data collected from police crime records revealed that majority of carjackers (96.1%) were men. Women accounted for only 3.9% of the reported cases of carjacking or car theft. 65% of the victims were men while only 10% were women. Data analysis revealed that more men (65%) carjacked fellow men compared to 10% who carjacked women. But women carjacked men and women at 50% for each. Low number of female offenders and victims of carjacking could be attributed to the fact that there were fewer women driving on the Kenyan roads in general and in Kiambu County in particular. This implied that the probability of a woman falling victim to a carjacking incidence was directly proportional to the number of women driving in the study area. During our discussions with respondents, we learnt that the community perceived driving as a man's activity such that only few women could drive. They maintained that even if women may have owned cars, they were not expected to drive.

Figure 4.25 shows the distribution of carjacking offenders by age and gender:

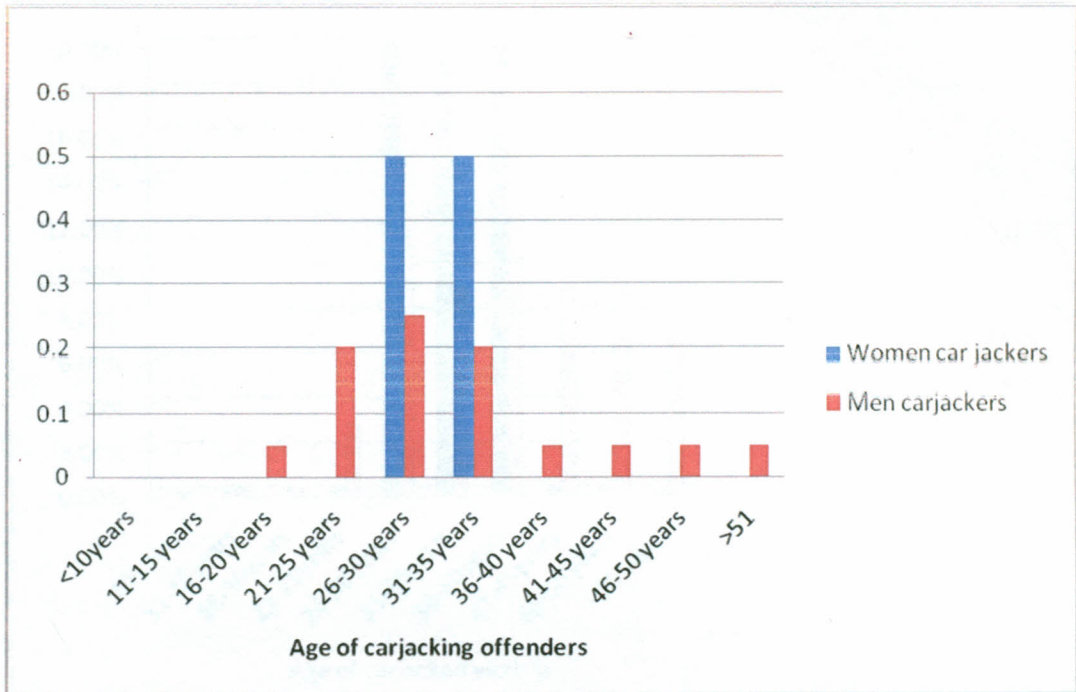


Figure 4.25: Gender and Age of Carjacking offenders

The lowest age bracket for men carjackers was 16-20 years while it was 26 to 30 years for women. These seemed to stop carjacking at the age of 35 years, while men continued into old age.

Victims of carjacking were over 18 years of age, who according to the government law could secure a driving license. Figure 4.26 further shows that male victims of carjacking were as young as 21 years of age and extended to above 50 years. Women's vulnerability to carjacking started at 26 years and extended to 40 years old. Indeed to date, according to respondents, there are still some villages where women are not allowed to drive or be seen cycling.

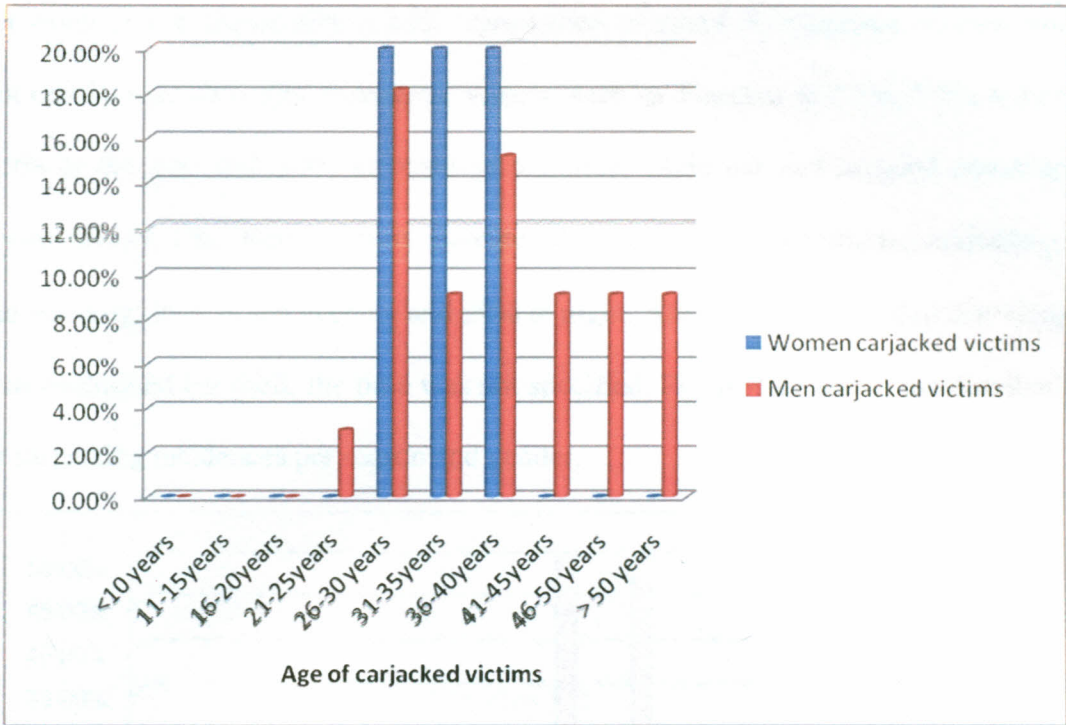


Figure 4.26: Gender and age of carjacked victims

As one male participant put it ‘our women have been protected by our culture and traditions that discourage them from driving or operate a machine, they cannot fall victim to carjacking.’ However, respondents noted that the situation was changing because younger women were apparently liberated and were driving cars within the County. They also mentioned that there had been an influx of young working women who had rented houses in the region and owned cars. This explained why carjacked women victims were aged 26 -40 years. Men as young as 18 years old or less could be seen driving their parents’ vehicles, while it was rare to see girls of similar age being entrusted with a car to drive.

The study revealed that majority of men (57%) and 50% of women carjacked by the wayside. This was followed by shopping centres (men accounting for 15.8% and 50%

for women). Consistent with gender organization of moral development, women would not consider stealing cars from some venues, such as churches at 7.8%, 5.9% at home, 3.9% at the gate and 3.9% at business premises, while bar and hospital compounds accounted for 1%. Data analysis indicated that 40% of men committed carjacking in the morning, 25% in the evening and 20% at night. Although data revealed that women also committed car theft, the time was not specified. Figure 4.27 shows the distribution of carjacking incidences per season and gender:

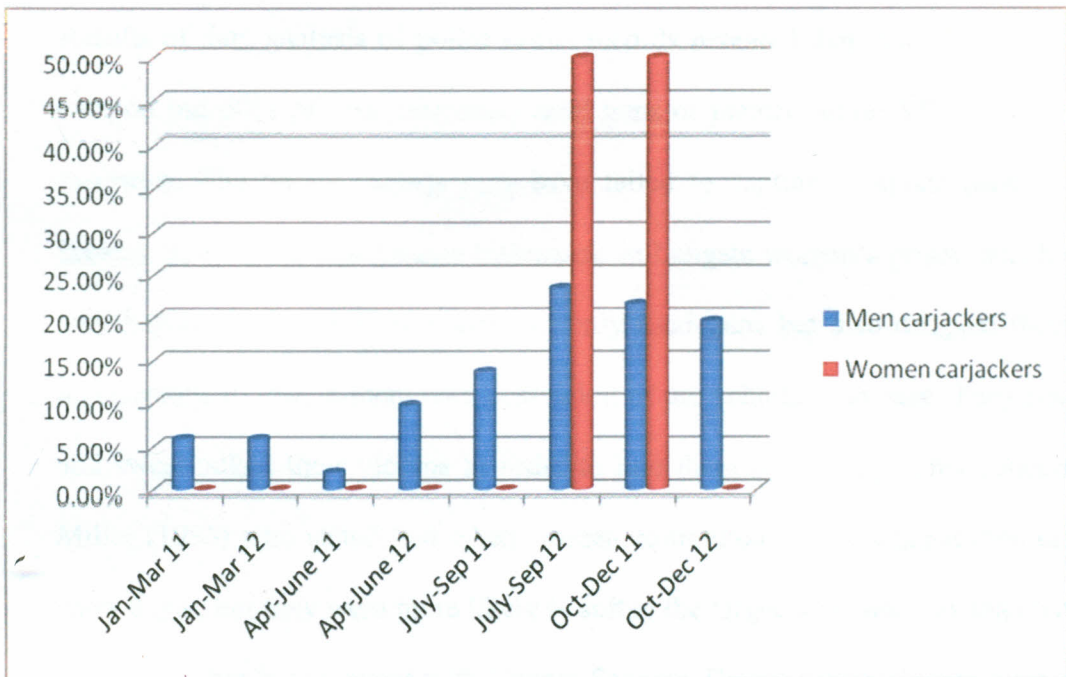


Figure 4.27: gender by seasons of car theft/ carjacking offenders

Figure 4.27 reveals that carjacking was concentrated in the second half of the year, with all women carjacking during the season. Men carjacked in all seasons but were lowest between January and June. From these findings, apparently there was less demand for carjacking products during the first half of the year. The December festive season and

New Year celebrations would have left people financially drained. This fact coupled with other financial obligations and scarcity of food stuff may have rendered most individuals unable to purchase luxury items like cars in the first half of the year. During the second half of the year there was ready market for second-hand cars, because most people would have somehow recovered economically. Thus, criminals worked hard to supply the market demand as well as to amass enough money to spend during the following festive seasons.

Results of data analysis of police crime records revealed that women did not use any weapon but 60% of men carjackers used guns or pistols, while 30% used knives and machetes. The police records may have failed to capture weapons used by women because when we asked women informants in Langata women's prison which weapons they had used, they said that they not only used guns but also drugged their victims unconscious to enable them take possession of the vehicle with ease. They also tricked and sweet-talked their victims in order to lure them into a trap. This concurred with Miller (1986) who stated that when women committed crimes against men they could carry a gun, but they were more likely to soften the target with their sex than with actual violence. This is consistent with Gender Schema Theory where women were expected to exhibit 'soft' characteristics and their role was to look beautiful and entertain men. Adhering to such gender organization, women used their feminine attributes to sexualize crime execution (Wincup *et al.*, 2005).

*Motives for car theft or /car jacking*

Seven men and four women charged and incarcerated for car theft/jacking were interviewed to give their motives for such crime. During our interactions with them we learnt that cars were stolen for different purposes. There were those who stole cars for sale and some who only targeted extract spare parts. Others used stolen vehicles to escape during robbery.

28.6% of male and 25% female convicts stated that their motive for stealing cars was to meet the high demand for second-hand posh cars as well as a ready market in and outside Kenya. A male convict narrated:

I had stolen more than 1000 cars... if a posh car that made me 'salivate' passed by; I would make sure I possessed it before it moved beyond Limuru...I would drive it across the border to Tanzania, sell it and be home early the next day. But with the new vehicle tracking system, the trade is getting a bit tricky; it is the General Packet Radio Service (GPRS) that landed me here.

28.6% of female and 25% female convicts stated that they were employed to steal cars by crime barons. They claimed that rich people of Asian origin and some old African affluent men and women with criminal history recruited and encouraged younger people to steal cars for them. They explained that these 'employers' kept their 'employees' informed on the type of car and model required. They revealed that employees were paid a standard fee of Ksh 200,000 on the spot upon delivery of the required car model. 14.3% of male and 25% female convicts said that they were motivated by a desperate urge to own cars.

Male and female convicts (at 14.3% and 25% respectively) said they stole cars for fun. They said the nice feeling and showy attitude that came with driving a posh car that one could not afford motivated them. On the same token, female convicts said they were also motivated to steal cars to feel like 'heroes,' to gain admiration and instill fear in people showing that they were as tough as men.

The study established that some men and women who stole cars to sell would also steal for purposes of extracting spare parts. They explained that such vehicles, unlike those stolen for sale or as getaway cars, could be any model and colour. They maintained that once the right model was identified, it was stolen and taken to a garage for dismantling. They said that these spare parts were then sold at various garage outlets situated in Nairobi Ngara, Grogan and Makaburini. It was only male inmates (14.3%) who said that jealousy against those who owned posh cars motivated them to steal. As a male informant put it: "*Nikiona mtu ako na gari nzuri naona wivu sana, vile yeye akonayo na mimi sina, inabidi nimyang'anye*" "(I feel very jealous when I see a person driving a posh car because he has one while I don't have, I'm compelled to steal it from him).

#### **4.5.2.4 Gender Patterns in Malicious Damage**

Malicious damage is the act of destroying someone's property with a deliberate intention of making the victim feel hurt. The study established that men and women committed malicious damage to property. Analysis from police records revealed that 81.1% of men and 5.4% women offenders were reported to have engaged in malicious damage of their victims' property. Slightly over a third (38%) of malicious damage victims were men compared to 11% of women. In this crime 51% of the records were

not disaggregated by gender. However, cross-tabulation of gender of offender with that of victims shows that women targeted fellow women, while men targeted both women and men. Men victimized fellow men more (40%) than women (10%). This should not be taken to indicate that women did not maliciously damage men's property. Rather, as said by a female participant, a man could be reluctant to report a woman who had maliciously damaged his property, because they could have had a relationship or for fear of being ridiculed or/and being called a coward. The society did not expect men to display weakness of character (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2006). As such it would be embarrassing for a man to report a woman who had committed a criminal offence against him.

Half (50%) of women involved in malicious damage of property were between the 31-35 and 46-50 age brackets. The lowest age for men involved in malicious damage of property was between 21-25 years through to over 51 years, with the highest offending rate of 30% for the perpetrators in the age bracket 26-30 years. The age of female offenders suggested that they could be those married who would destroy property against their victims to settle relationship issues. Victims of malicious damage cut across most age groups with very young children being victims. While women victims increased to 50% for those aged between 26-30 years, male victims increased to 42.8% between ages 36- 50 years and then dropped to 7.1% for those aged over fifty years.

Figure 4.28 shows that men's victims comprised of children below 10 years of age and extended to older victims, above 50 years:



Figure 4.28: Age of victims by gender of malicious damage offenders

Consistent with gender organization of affiliation concerns, women would destroy property of their victims whom they perceived as “stealing their partners” (Steffensmeier & Allan, 2000). Malicious damage to property was mostly committed in the evening by 57% of the offenders, 23% in the morning and 20% at night. While majority (53.3%) of men committed malicious damage in the evening, 50% of women committed the crime at night. The time when the other 50% of women committed the crime was not specified.

Malicious damage to property was mostly committed by men and women from April to December. Women maliciously damaged property between April and June and October to December at a rate of 50 % for each in 2012. Women’s season to malicious damage

of property coincided with their high assault rate discussed above. This suggested that women in Kiambu County committed the two crimes to solve gender relationship (emotional) issues that were characteristic of these seasons. Men maliciously damaged property in both years at an escalating rate between July and December 2012. Analysis of venues and gender of offenders indicated that most (48.6%) of the items damaged by men were subsistence crops, while all the cases involving women offenders occurred in homes. Gender difference in choice of venues was attributed to their difference in motives as discussed below:

#### *Motives for Malicious Damage to Property*

Respondents indicated that malicious damage of property was sometimes treated as civil cases and were normally resolved by local administration consisting of chiefs, assistant chiefs and village elders. However, the welfare officers in charge of Kamiti and Lang'ata Prisons explained that even when the offence was reported to the police and taken through the legal processes, the offenders were sentenced for a period of less than 6 months with a fine option. As such, most offenders opted to pay the fine. Those who were unable to pay were incarcerated in jails such as Kiambu or Ruiru in case of men and Thika in case of women but not in prisons.

Tables 4.11 and 4.12 show the convicts' views on men's and women's motives of malicious damage of property respectively. Data in Table 4.11 indicated that 49% of men and 32% of women convicts thought that men damaged property following land disputes. Their views were confirmed by participants who cited land as a major source of conflict in many families. For example, sons would destroy property belonging to

individuals who had bought land from their parents without being consulted. They added that men would destroy property of a sister who had returned home after divorce or due to bitterness and rivalry that she had inherited their father's property.

*Table 4.11: convicts' opinions on men's motive to commit malicious damage to property*

<b>Men's motive to malicious damage property</b>				
<b>Responses</b>	<b>Men convicts</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Women convicts</b>	<b>%</b>
Land dispute	42	49	19	32
Jealousy	34	40	21	35
Drugs/alcohol abuse	29	34	18	30
Hopelessness	12	14	8	13
Hired	27	32	0	0

They asserted that disputes over land boundaries were also another factor that led to malicious damage to crops. Jealousy was stated by 40% of men and 35% of women convict, which was affirmed by participants who maintained that jealousy drove men to maliciously destroy victims' property. 34% of men and 30% women felt that men maliciously damaged property because of drunkenness or drug abuse. Only 32% of men convicts said that men damaged property because they had been hired by others to do so. These convicts explained that men would be hired by clients to destroy property of business competitors, among other clients. They could also be hired to destroy property by clients who were envious of their neighbours' prosperity.

14% of men and 13% of women convicts stated that men would be driven to maliciously damage property because of hopelessness. Due to their unproductive lives,

such men were said to be envious of their wives' achievements and expressed their discontentment by claiming that their wives were disrespectful to them. In order to "put their wives where they belonged", men maliciously damaged their property. Some even sold their wives' cows while they were away at work in order to get money to purchase illicit alcohol. Participants further added that anger and revenge could motivate men to damage property.

The respondents were also asked what would motivate women to maliciously damage property. convicts' feedback was as shown in Table 4.12:

*Table 4.12: convicts' opinions on women's motive for malicious property damage*

<b>Women's motive to malicious damage property</b>				
<b>Responses</b>	<b>Men inmate</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Women inmate</b>	<b>%</b>
Drug abuse	27	32	21	35
Jealousy	27	32	20	33
Quarrels with parents	27	32	11	18
Marital problems	21	25	18	30
Retaliation	20	24	15	25

35% of women and 32% men inmates who participated in the study felt that drugs and alcohol abuse could influence women to maliciously damage property. 33% of women and 32% men convicts said women could be driven by jealousy to commit this crime. Their opinion was shared by participants who felt that women's strong emotions of hatred, and envy towards a person doing better than them could be vented in form of malicious damage to property, or even poisoning their victims or their victims' children. The above statements suggested that respondents still held onto gender stereotype that perceived women as emotional beings (Wood, 2001). 30% of women and 25% of men

convicts felt that women were driven to maliciously damage property following marital problems. A female convicted for carjacking said that men stressed their wives to the extent that they were likely to project their anger on objects by burning or smashing them. Her views were echoed by another female convict who said:

My friend's husband would beat her up, bring women to their house, and steal money from her... other annoying issues like demeaning her in front of their children. She became stressed to the point of breaking and vented her pent-up anger on the husband's clothes, which she threw down, urinated on them and then set ablaze.

A person's feeling of powerlessness can result in their projecting anger to weaker objects. This is a form of coping mechanism which Santrock (2000) postulates that it is exhibited by weaker persons when stress is caused by a person they consider to be in authority. Some inmates claimed that a woman could destroy household goods which she had bought and was not being allowed to take along upon separation.

Alternatively, women could maliciously damage property in retaliation. This was cited by 25% women and 24% men convicts. They explained that women settled scores by damaging property equivalent to the amount of crops or property that a neighbour's livestock or child had damaged rather than report him/her to the administration. 18% of women and 32% men convicts felt that women were motivated to damage their parents' property after having quarreled with them. Respondents contended that this mostly happened because some parents did not entertain their married daughters who separated from their husbands to return home with a baggage of their children. They claimed that such parents were likely to chase the girl and her kids away and in frustration she could maliciously damage their property.

From the respondents' opinions, men's and women's motives for committing malicious damage were almost similar. However, men destroyed property due to land disputes and bitterness that their sisters had inherited property from their fathers. Women would destroy property to vent anger and repressed emotions, and to make sure that upon separation the husband was not left with the property she had bought. Women felt that men misused such property to their advantage rather than that of the family. As such women opted to destroy the property rather than witness it being used by another woman or being misused.

#### **4.5.2.5 Gender Pattern Formed in Larceny, Petty Theft and Livestock Theft**

Larceny, Petty Theft and Livestock Theft is the act of a person/s stealing or unlawful taking and carrying property belonging to another person. Analysis of data collected from police crime records showed that majority (84%) of theft/ larcenies were committed by men compared to 10 % by women. The gender for 6% of the cases was not specified. Respondents felt that women theft was almost equal to that of men and having fewer women in theft cases should not be taken to mean that their offending rate was as low as it had been recorded. As noted earlier, the society tended to be lenient on female petty offenders where more often than not they were cautioned and then pardoned. Some criminologists attributed higher rate of theft cases among women to greater freedom accorded them to participate in public sphere, thus facilitating their indulgence in property crimes (Pratt & Cullen, 2005).

Data analysis showed further that 43.7% of the women involved in theft targeted same gender and this was almost equal to the 40.8% of the men who targeted women. 49.7%

of the men, however, targeted fellow men compared to 23.3% of the women whose victims were men. Figure 4.29 summarizes the distribution of theft offenders by gender and age:



Figure 4.29: Gender and age of theft offenders

The Figure indicates that theft was mostly committed by young persons aged between 16-40 years old. However, a closer scrutiny of data reveals differences between women and men, in that women over 51 years tended to increase theft incidences while that of men decreased. These findings were contrary to previous studies which suggested that the majority of offenders in Nairobi, Thika and Mombasa were young men aged 21-35 years (Kariuki, 1978; Odipo, 1996; Otieno, 2005; Ndikaru, 2010). Increased theft incidents for older women and not men could be attributed to the fact that many older women had the burden of fending for grandchildren who were orphaned or whose

parents, mostly mothers, had left for urban areas to look for greener pastures. The old women neither had the strength nor the courage to commit confrontational crimes such as robbery or burglary.

The analysis of police records revealed that theft victims increased their vulnerability with age. However, vulnerability started increasing at the age of 21 years (9% for men and 6.5% for women) reaching 11.7% at 40 years of age, after which there was a slight drop in victims among persons aged 41-50 years for both men and women (4.2% and 9.4% respectively). Then there was a sharp increase in victimization rate (26% for women and 21.6% for men) for elderly persons aged 51 and above years. The fact that elderly persons were the majority of theft victims indicated their vulnerability in Kiambu County and contradicted findings of previous studies (Otieno, 2005; Jones, 2006), which stated that older people were the most afraid yet least targeted group in theft incidences. This study suggests that unlike in urban region, the desirable property in Kiambu County was owned by older persons making them vulnerable to property crimes including theft.

Figure 4.30 below shows the distribution of victims of theft by age and gender of the offenders:



Figure 4.30: Gender of theft offenders by age of the victims

The Figure reveals gender differences between offenders and the age of victims. While women victimized persons aged 16 years to those above 51 years, men victimized both young children and older persons. Men would steal items owned by children such as dogs, rabbits and bicycles to sell. Women could consider such items irrelevant and childish, or they would be restricted by their nurturing and caring roles to steal from young children. Data revealed that men victimized older persons more (19.1%) than they victimized other age groups. In contrast, women targeted victims aged 36 to 40 years of age (18.3%) than they victimized other age groups.

Generally, most thefts (40%) occurred in the evening. However 34% of the thefts took place in the morning and 26% at night. While majority (29.4%) of men committed theft in the evening, majority (31%) of women did so in the morning. Women's theft in the

morning could be attributed to their timing when it was too early for owners or any other person to be around. This would avoid the embarrassment of being found out as well as minimize the risk of apprehension which was consistent with the perceived gender organization. Also, Steffensmeier & Allan (2000) postulated that women would be restricted by their gender roles from being out at night, as well as fear of falling prey to other criminals at night.

This study established that petty and livestock theft occurred throughout the year. Unlike other property crimes, theft was notably higher in the earlier months of the two years, that is, 17.6% from January to March 2011 and 14.2% from January to March 2012. The study also observed that whereas theft cases were higher between January and March, other property crimes registered low incidences during this season. For instance, police recorded more theft incidences among men and women (16.8% and 21.1% respectively) between January and March, 2011. In addition, women offending rate was higher (19.7%) compared to 11.7% for men between April and June 2012. Women also had a higher offending rate of 16.9% compared to 10.5% for men, between July and September 2012.

This study attributes high theft cases between January and March to geographical factors. In that, these were dry months of food scarcity, and the little available was very expensive. It was also when money circulation among people in Kiambu County was at its lowest. Bearing this in mind, it could be argued that offenders would steal food items that were on high demand. This was so because during the content analysis phase it was observed that the items stolen from the farms included arrow roots, bananas,

maize, and vegetables. Other exhibits of theft at the police stations were bread, flour, sugar, soap and cereals. Some of the offenders had stolen livestock such as donkeys, cows, sheep, chicken and dogs. There were also incidences of stealing ready food left overnight from detached kitchens. These goods were stolen to supply ready market emanating from food scarcity in the region at particular times of the year.

The study's respondents explained that livestock was stolen for different purposes in different regions. For instance, animals stolen in Kikuyu, Karuri, Lari, Kiambu and Kibicho were slaughtered for beef market. The stolen animals-chicken, cows, sheep and donkeys- were slaughtered in the evening or at night at isolated places such as along extensive floodplains. Some respondents added that after slaughtering the livestock, the steak meat was sold to Burma Market in Nairobi, while the hides, heads, and bones were left behind. Two dogs had been stolen in Kikuyu area and were likely to have been sold to affluent families in Westlands, Nairobi, where there was ready market for pedigree dogs. Respondents stated that stealing of cows was rampant in the region, especially in Nachu area which borders the Maasai. They blamed rampant cattle theft to Maasai warriors (Morans) who culturally stole livestock as they graduated to manhood. Cows stolen in Githunguri were not slaughtered but preserved to increase milk production. Regarding this view, a male participant opined:

No one can imagine slaughtering a cross-breed cow unless she or he is mad. Cows here are stolen for purposes of milk production because Githunguri has several milk processing industries which offer ready market and constant income...the thieves steal either to keep the cows or to sell them to farmers who need to boost their milk output. Here a grade cow costs as much as Ksh 120,000, money one will not get if s/he slaughters the cow for meat.

Theft venues by gender of offenders were sought. Results of data analysis from police records on the distribution of offenders by venue and gender are depicted in Figure 4.31:

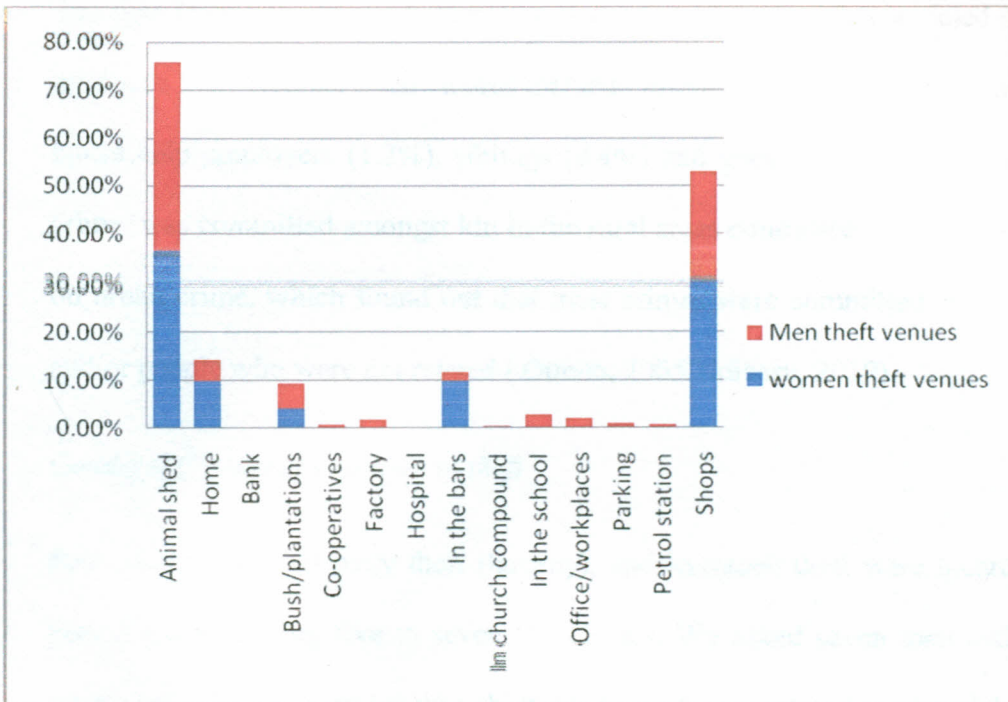


Figure 4.31. Venues by gender of thefts offenders

Most of theft cases (42.3%) involved livestock, where 36.6% of women and 39.2% of men stole from cattle sheds, chicken coops and sheep barns. Livestock theft was explicitly a rural crime, because most of the urban population did not rear livestock. Shops were the second common theft targets in which 31% of the thieves were women and 22% were men. The difference in rates could result from the fact that theft of animals and against shops were reported unlike those from other venues that could be considered petty and not worth of reporting. Both men and women stole from homes, plantations and bars. Women dominance in the domestic domains limited their exposure

and opportunity to commit theft in diverse venues frequented by their male counterparts. As such, they stole from venues they were familiar with and were exposed to.

The data from police records indicated that some of the people convicted of theft were known to their victims. Such victims included formal employers (2.6%), parents (1.9%), house help employers (1.2%), siblings (0.4%) and grandparents (0.3%). The fact that crime was committed amongst kin in the rural areas contrasted with findings of studies on urban crime, which found out that most crimes were committed amongst strangers and/or people who were not related ( Otieno, 2005;Ndikaru, 2010).

#### *Gender differences in motives of theft*

Persons convicted of petty theft (larceny), and livestock theft were incarcerated for a period not exceeding five to seven (5-7) years. We asked seven men and six women what motivated them to commit theft. Contrary to expectation, only 14.3 % men and 16.7 % women mentioned poverty as motives for stealing.

Out of the seven males convicted for larceny, 42.9% said they were motivated by the urge to revenge or compensate themselves, since their victims owed them money and were reluctant to pay. Their intention was not to steal but take items of equal value to the amount of money owed. A male convict said:

My employer came for me from our rural home and brought me to work for him in Kiambu. I worked for several months but he seemed not to remember that I needed to be paid. One day, I gathered courage and asked if he could remit my dues, for I needed to send to my parents. Instead of paying, he arrogantly told me that I should be grateful to him for having removed me from abject poverty and from the village to work for him. I

realized this man had no intention of paying me. I decided to compensate my sweat, and recruited a friend who could assist to steal from the man. On the planned night, three of my friends and I attacked the family. We took money and other valuables and I went away. Unfortunately, one of his children had identified me as one of the attackers. Later, I was apprehended, convicted and sentenced. During my trial, I tried to explain that I had worked for him but he told the judge that he had never seen me before nor had I at any time worked for him. So I was incarcerated for seven years. I am about to get out and he will pay for his action....

Slightly over a quarter of the male informants(28.6%) imprisoned for committing larceny or livestock theft stated that they were driven by the desire to be like their wealthy neighbours, against whose comparison they felt deprived. Regarding this view, one of them observed:

I was born in a humble family. While growing up, I observed my neighbours who "had everything" that we never had. Sometimes, our family went without food while they had more than enough to even throw to the dogs. I longed to one day live like my neighbours. As a young boy, I desired to have items like the ones they owned. I started stealing from my neighbourhood and as I matured, I graduated to stealing elsewhere until I was caught by the police.

A further 28.6 % of the convicts said that one's wife and children could push a man to steal if they constantly compared him unfavourably with his wealthy neighbours. The feeling of inadequacy forced them to steal to provide for the family. This was well-articulated by a male convict:

My wife and children kept asking me why we did not have items like those owned by other people in the neighbourhood. My children would narrate all the items they had seen in their friends' homes and wonder why their daddy couldn't buy such. I wanted to prove I could also provide for them just like their friends' fathers, so I started stealing.

Like their male counterparts, majority of female convicts (83.3%) incarcerated for theft cited the urge to revenge and/or compensate themselves as their motives for stealing. As one of the female convict informants explained:

I was working for my sister who could never buy me clothes or sanitary towels, I would request her to pay me so that I could buy the items I needed but she never did. One day, I desperately needed sanitary towels so I took Ksh700 from her purse. She reported me to the police and that is how I landed in jail because I could not afford to pay the fine. My mother could not intervene because she wholly depends on my sister for financial support.

Only 16.7 % of women stole because of poverty. They said that they were the sole bread winners, yet jobless, hence had no alternative but to steal in order to survive. Some said they stole because they felt they were being underpaid by their employers. One observed:

...These rich people just want us to remain poor and miserable so that we can keep on working for them, while we worship and treat them like gods. We are compelled to steal in order to liberate ourselves.

There were no significant gender differences in motives to commit theft. Women as well as men committed larceny to bridge the glaring economic gap between the poor and the rich, or because of absolute poverty.

#### **4.5.2.6 Gender and Vandalism**

Vandalism is dismantling or plucking of someone's or institutions' property with the intention of selling parts or the whole item for monetary gains. This study confirms that vandalism in Kiambu County affected mainly government institutions, parastatals and individuals. Of the 189 vandalism cases reported, 82% of the incidences were committed against institutions and public property. 18% of vandalism was committed

against individuals, and this was more against men than women. More women vandals (57.1%) targeted men than they did fellow women. However, most men (46.3%) targeted fellow men more than the proportion (35.4%) which targeted women. This was an indication that men controlled more property than women within the County. The data from police records showed that women tended to vandalize at an older age than the men. Involvement of men increased in the age bracket 26-30 years then decreased with age to 5.5% between ages 41-45 years. This increased again with age to 14% for men above 51 years. The gender of vandalism offenders by age of their victims is depicted in Figure 4.32:

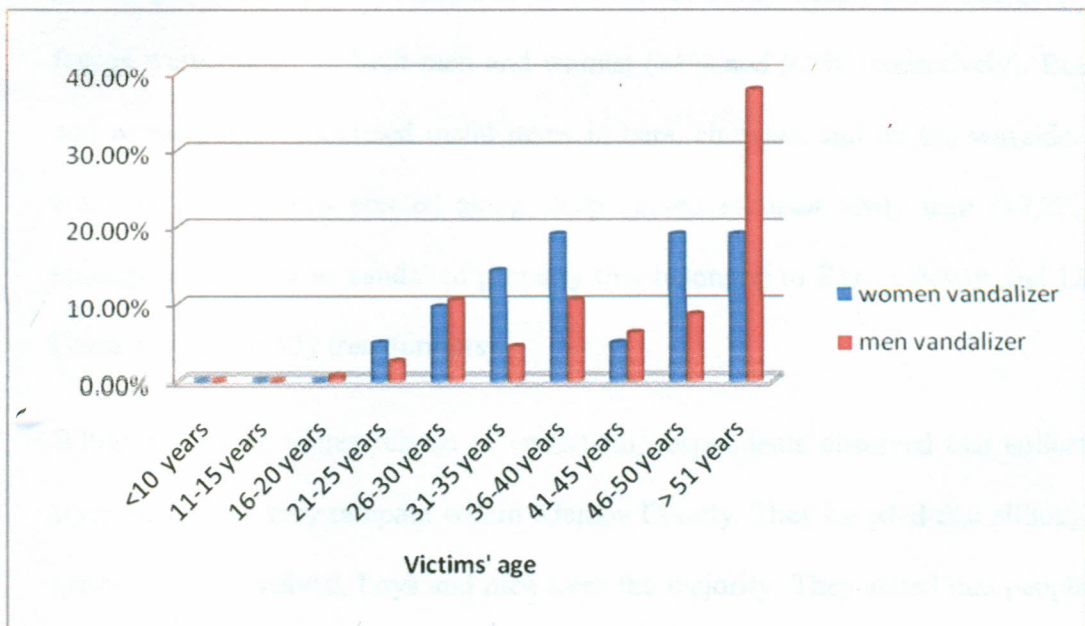


Figure 4.32: Gender of vandalism offenders by age of victims

The data analysis shows that majority of vandalism victims were older persons, above 50 years of age. 43.1% of the victims of vandalism were women while 44.4% were men. In addition, the minimum age of male victims were 16 to 20 years while women

were 21-25years. This showed the difference in property ownership between men and women within the County, with younger men owning property unlike their women counterparts.

Analysis of police crime records showed that 40% of vandalism occurred in the evenings, another 40% occurred in the morning and 20% at night. Majority of women (42.9%) vandalized in the evenings, while majority of men (35.4%) vandalized in the mornings.

Data analysis indicated that majority of items were vandalized from home by either gender (women at 52.8% compared to 23.4% for men). Metal gates and barbed wire fences were ripped by both men and women (24% and 9.5% respectively). Both men and women also vandalized metal items in bars, churches and on the wayside. These could be road guards erected along steep curved sections. Only men (13.2%) were courageous enough to vandalize property that belonged to Kenya Power and Lighting Company (especially transformers).

While discussing issues related to vandalism, respondents observed that collection of scrap metal was very rampant within Kiambu County. They asserted that although both genders were involved, boys and men were the majority. They stated that people of all ages vandalized metal/iron to supply the ever increasing demand. A fact that could be proven by the mushrooming metal weighing kiosks in almost all shopping centres like Wangigi, Banana, Rironi, Kiamaiko, Ikinu, Rwaka, Gachie and Zambezi among others. During content analysis phase at the police divisions, the researcher established that items vandalized were those which had iron/ metallic content and their nature depended

on the venue. For instance, items vandalized on the wayside included transformers, road guardrails, and iron sheets. Items vandalized from homes, bars and churches were old vehicle parts, barbed wire fences, metal gates, *sufurias*, metal cups and plates, wheelbarrows, *jembes*, *pangas*, metal spring beds, metal doors, windows, chains, fodder milling machines, grave side crosses, wheelbarrows, oil drums, iron sheets, metal chairs and tables. These items tallied with the list provided by respondents who maintained that domestic items were mostly vandalized by fathers and sons who sold them to scrap metal dealers.

Respondents revealed that once items were vandalized they were sold as scrap metal to middle men whom they suspected exported to China and Japan until the export ban in 2008( Price & Scott, 2009). But they wondered whether the ban was really effected because scrap metal business was still booming in the County. This business was affecting education because boys would drop out of primary school to engage in collection and sale of scrap metal.

Data from police records and respondents also indicated that vandalism of electricity transformers was high. It was claimed that transformers were vandalized in collaboration with some Kenya Power and Lighting Companies (KPLC) employees, who had the required skills and technical knowhow to safely and successfully vandalize a transformer. From convicts, this study explored why men risked vandalizing transformers, to which they responded that besides being apt to risk taking, men did so because of the huge economic benefits assured from sale of transformer oil. They maintained that the oil had different uses and purposes which ensured a large market.

The various uses of siphoned transformer oil included:-frying chips since this oil lasted longer than ordinary vegetable oils without picking dirt; making lip balms which were sold to girls in various urban streets and as a medicine for applying on persistent wounds (*kironda kia ndira*). They also maintained that the oil was bought by Asians for the purpose of purifying used engine oil which they did by mixing with the transformer oil. Once it was mixed, it was later re-packaged and sold as new but at a cheaper price. They added that Asians also used the oil for polishing second- hand vehicle parts and repackaging them. Asked whether it was only men who vandalized transformers, the respondents said that women would desist from such activities because they were scared by the risk involved.

This study reveals that 23% of vandalism took place among siblings and 20% among other relatives. 18% of the vandalism cases were perpetrated by own children, 11% by husband, and 5% by former husbands. The view that vandalism was committed among kin is affirmed by a male participant who noted:

A victim discovered that his fodder machine had been vandalized at night. The next morning, he went in search of the machine at one of the scrap metal dealers in a nearby shopping centre, where he found it... The dealer told him to hold on and wait for he was sure the seller would come shortly to collect his money. After about two hours of waiting, the victim was shocked to see two of his neighbours' sons coming to demand money for the sale. Since the victim had already called his sons and relatives to assist him apprehend the criminals, the two thieves were roughed up by the mob and as we speak, one of them is still hospitalized from the injuries sustained from the beatings.

During the content analysis phase at the police division, the researcher noted that husbands vandalized their wives' kitchen items, iron sheets and metal spring beds. This was confirmed by respondents who maintained that husbands' vandalism against their

wives was a common phenomenon within the County. They said that women found their utensils smashed by their drug addicted sons or husbands and sold to the scrap metal dealers to get money to sustain their drug addiction and drinking habits. To avoid finding their items vandalized, women were forced to lock up their kitchens, bedrooms and cupboard doors. They ensured that men would not access the keys by hanging them around their necks while walking, working, visiting or sleeping. One female respondent reported:

A woman...was very ill, and was rushed to hospital where she was admitted. The son requested her to give out the cupboard keys so that he could have access to utensils when she was away. The woman responded: 'I will not leave the key behind, just to find my items scattered. Clean the dirty utensils in the kitchen, they are enough'. The woman stayed with the keys hanged around her neck on the hospital bed. Unfortunately, she died after four days with the key still round her neck. It is only when she died that the keys were given to the next of kin: her married daughter.

Such a scenario reflected the extent of men's vandalism against their wives/ mothers. This was an indication of the effect of drug and alcohol abuse that rendered men irresponsible and caused misery to their partners in Kiambu County.

From the foregoing we can affirm that there existed gender differences in the pattern of property crimes. Men formed the bulk of offenders in most property crimes, but women contributed to large percentage of arson, vandalism and petty theft offenders. Generally, these three crimes were mostly committed in the absence of the victims. As such, there was minimal risk of confrontation.

#### 4.5.3.0 Gender difference in white collar crimes

In this study, white collar crimes included forgery and fraud/ impersonation. Forgery involved making illegal documents in order to deceive people (Wincup *et al.*, 2005). These included people who faked documents such as identity cards, title deeds, vehicle log books, school certificates, college certificates, passports and bank statements. Forgery could be extended to include people who used forged documents with the intention of deceiving others. Data analysis from police crime records revealed that men accounted for 83.7 % of the offenders in this crime, compared to 15.2 % women. Gender of 2.5% was not specified.

Figure 4.33 shows that both men and women were targets of forged documents. Men targeted either gender at almost equal rate, while women targeted fellow women more than they targeted men. This was because one was likely to convince same gender more easily than the opposite gender. While it would be easy for a man to convince a woman victim, it seemed difficult for a man to fall into a woman's forgery snare. 1.3% of young boys below ten years committed forgery.



*Figure 4.33: Gender of Offenders and victims in Forgery*

Apparently the lowest age of women who were involved in forgery was between 16 and 20 years. Women of age bracket 26-30 years had a higher (42.9 %) forgery offence rate than men (19.5%) of the same age. Older women (28.5%) of age bracket 41 to over 51 years also forged more compared to 18.5% of men in the same age bracket. Majority (42.9%) of the men offenders fell between 21-30 years, compared to the majority (42.9%) of women who were between 26-30 years of age.

Content analysis of police crime records revealed that people of different ages forged different documents. Young people between 21-30 years generally forged educational certificates, identification cards, passport or certificates of good conduct, perhaps to enable them secure jobs. Older offenders forged title deeds, passports, bank statements, identification cards and log books among other documents, perhaps to enable them sell stolen property, perform fraudulent transactions, con a victim and/or travel abroad.

There was no much difference in the rates of men and women victims of forgery crimes. 26.1 %, of the victims were men while of 21.7 % were women. Equal representation of men and women in this category of crimes could be attributed to the fact that, unlike other categories of crimes, white collar crimes required manipulative skills to convince victims into the trap. This favoured women because they were endowed with such skills (Woods, 2001) and that the crime did not involve confrontations which women could desist. Figure 4.34 shows distribution of gender and age of forgery victims:

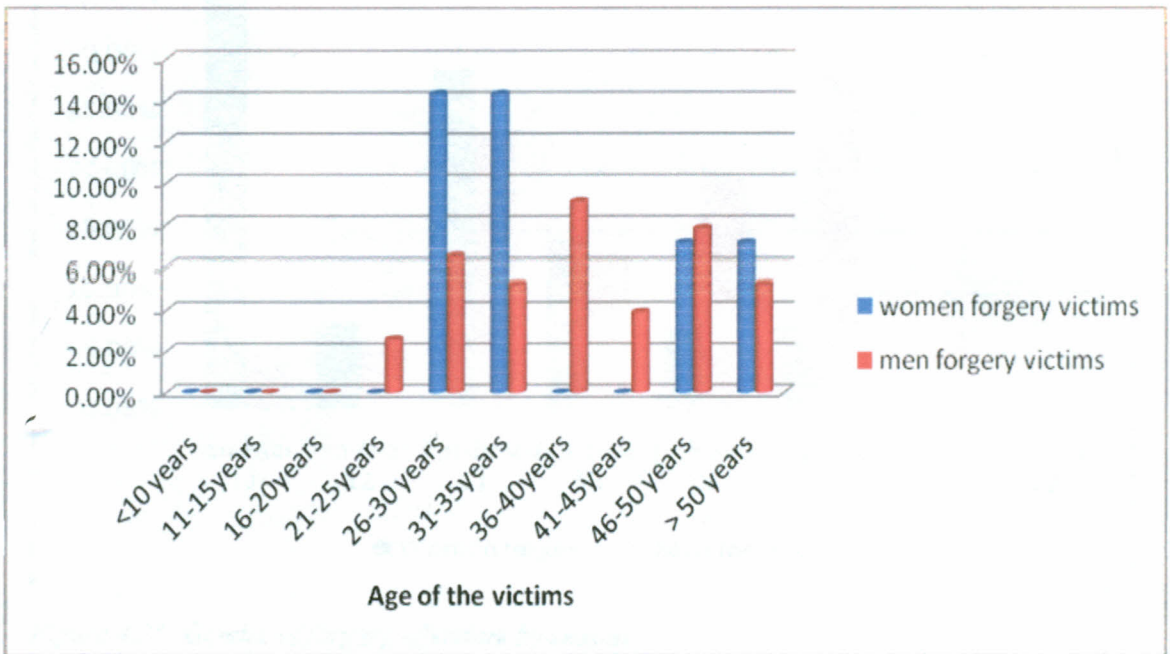


Figure 4.34: Gender and age of forgery victims\*

The data shows that relatively mature people were the majority of victims of white collar crime. Vulnerability of men to such crime tended to commence at a younger age bracket (21-25 years) than that of women (26-30 years). However, both men and women were victims of these crimes beyond 50 years of age. This study suggests that persons of this age were those who ran business, owned or sought to own property,

hence fell easy prey to crime. Additionally, men ran business, sought or owned property at an earlier age than women.

Figure 4.35 shows that there were gender differences with regard to the timing of forgery. Men's incidences were high from April to September and relatively low between January and March and lowest from October to December.

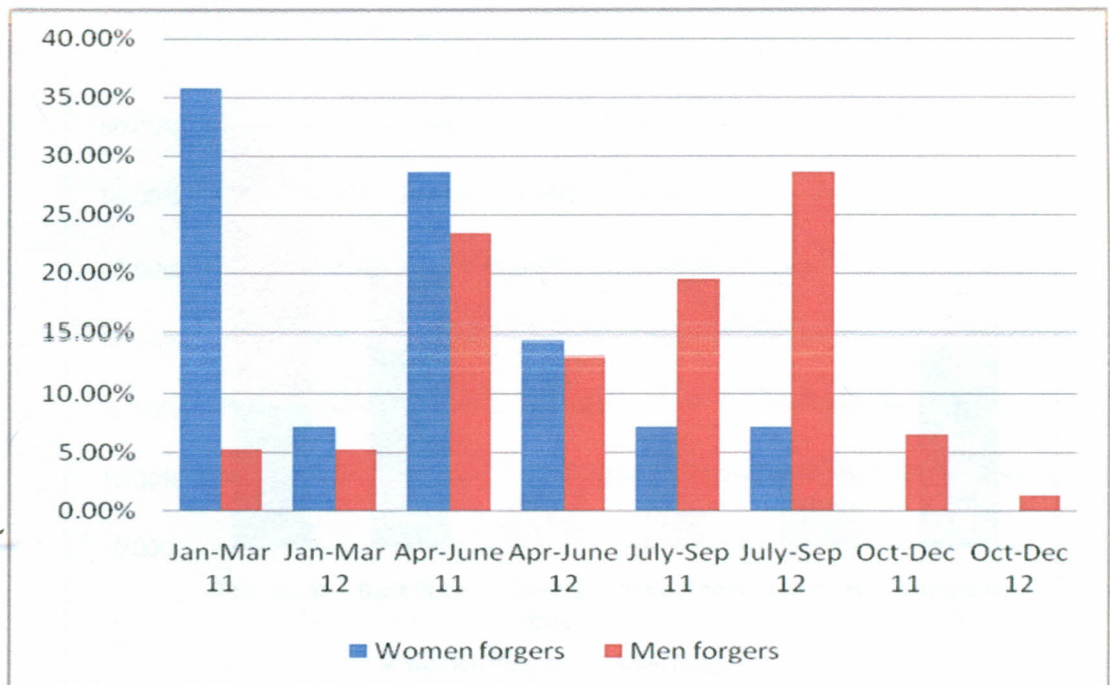
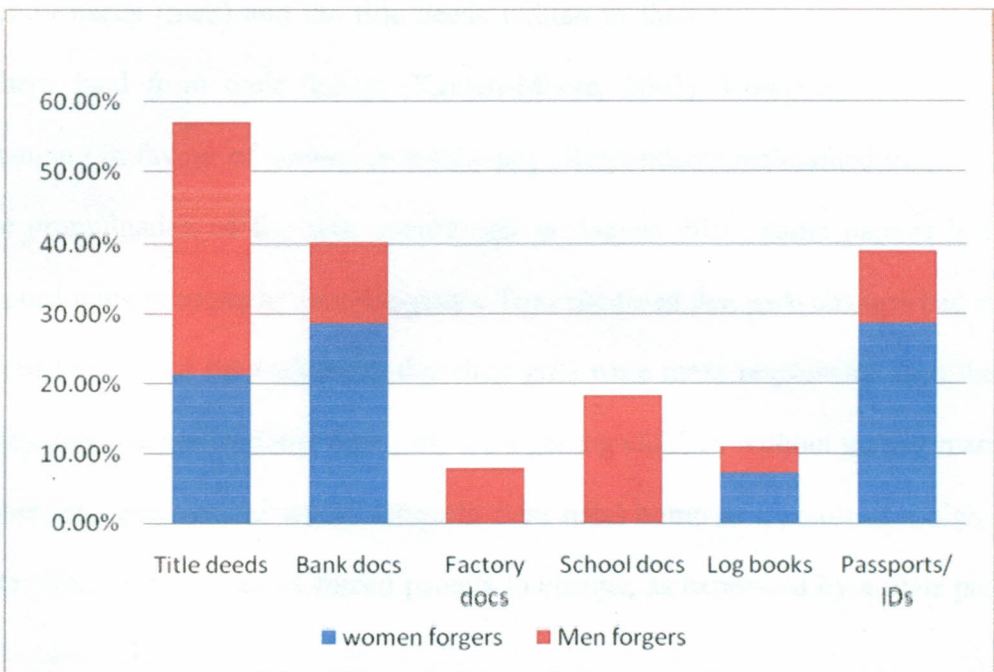


Figure 4.35: Gender of forgery offenders by season

Conversely, women's forgery rate was higher from January to June 2011, then lower between July and September, and no female forgery incidents at all from October to December for the two years. The difference emanated from the purpose for which item was secured, prevailing conditions and gender role expectations.

Results of data analysis from police crime records as presented in Figure 4.36 show the kinds of documents forged and the gender of perpetrators. Both men and women forged title deeds, bank documents, vehicle log books and passports or other identification documents. However, only men forged school and factory documents. We asked respondents why title deeds were the most forged documents especially by men in the County.



*Figure 4.36: Documents forged by gender of offenders*

They said that land in Kiambu was on high demand because of its proximity to Nairobi. They observed that because of its pleasant climate most people from across the world and Kenya wished to buy land there. Some people could forge titles to facilitate selling the same piece twice. Some land brokers processed fake titles to sell non-existing land to unsuspecting clients. It was claimed that Kiambu Land Board and land officers were

very corrupt, to an extent that some collaborated with men to sell land without the consent of their families. In such instances, the buyers faced dire consequences including children appealing in court.

The difference in title deed forgery rate between genders was a clear indication of the unequal ownership and control of land by men and women. This was attributed to historical injustices against women where, during demarcation, land was allocated to family heads (men) and the title deeds written in their names and women could not inherit land from their fathers (Kameri-Mbote, 2002). However, the situation was changing in favour of women in the County. Respondents maintained that even before the promulgation of the new constitution in August 2010, some parents had started apportioning property to their daughters. They observed that such changes had started to occur because of the realization that their girls were more responsible than their sons. They also had realized that their girls were getting children without getting married and those who got married would return to their natal home as a result of a high divorce rate. These circumstances forced parents to change, as expressed by a male participant who observed:

With the boys proving undependable and irresponsible in Kiambu County, the parents are also opting to share their property without discrimination. After all, girls are not staying in their marriages; others don't want to get married. Where do we take them? Besides, all children are equal.

Some families had readily embraced this change because in Kikuyu culture, women who remained single or were divorced after marriage were entitled to parents' inheritance including land (Kenyatta, 1938; Kameri-Mbote, 2002).

Such families had improved girls' position to the extent that at least some women inherited and owned land in Kiambu County. Some women had also bought land for themselves such that about 1% of title deeds were now in women's hands. Aware of this fact, land buyers had started transacting land business with women. Such opportunities had tempted some women to forge title deeds just like their male counterparts. Women's forgery was validated by a case that the researcher encountered during the document analysis phase, where women had stolen their fathers' title deed and forged a letter of administration, while others had fake titles to their fathers' pieces of land with the intention of selling them off. This was a clear indication that women, if exposed to similar opportunities, would engage in crimes which had been dominated by men (Flavia, 2003).

Men forged school documents such as procurement awards, expenditures, delivery notes, invoices and claim forms. Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and Board of Governors (BoG) members were the most reported in cases involving forgery of school documents. The absence of women in school cases could be interpreted from two perspectives. Firstly, it would imply that although 1/3 of women were elected to participate in school management, they were not given key responsibilities, such as handling finances. Thus, they could not be presented with opportunities to forge school documents. Secondly, women elected to participate in running schools were likely to be more trustworthy than their male counterparts.

Forgery of bank documents was committed by both men and women. However, as can be observed in Figure 4.36, more women than men forged bank documents. The

difference between men's and women's rate of offence was attributed to the differences in access and control of productive resources within the County. Although women may have had access, they had little control over means of production which was mostly under men. This situation made women economically dependent and unable to operate a bank account, as was supported by gender differentials in forged bank documents. For instance, during content analysis phase of police crime records, the researcher observed that majority of men's forgeries was related to over the counter money withdrawals or the use of Automated Teller Machine Services (ATMS). This researcher also observed that 25% of bank cases by women were over the counter withdrawals of money, using forged identity documents and signatures. However, 75% of the women were caught having secured fake bank statements. Men and women forged bank documents for different reasons. Men could forge documents to get money, which was not the case for women.

This study endeavoured to establish why only women forged bank statements. Respondents said that men would forge documents to get a job or/and money. Conversely they said that many women in bad marriages would wish to leave their husbands and secretly travel abroad. Such women would most likely not have the money or a bank account to enable them secure an acceptable bank statement for visa approvals. The women, therefore, were forced to bribe bank tellers to process fake bank statements to present at the embassies.

Figure 4.36 on page 197 shows that men and women forged passports and identity cards, women at 28.6% compared to 10.4% of the men. Explaining why they forged, a

female convict imprisoned for forgery and study participants said that acquiring a passport through the legal channel at the immigration offices was normally a tedious process. They explained that fake passports were used for movement into the neighbouring countries of Uganda, Tanzania and Sudan to look for greener pastures or by women who crossed borders to buy cosmetics, clothing and other items for business.

Forgery offenders comprised of employees, siblings, relatives and sons /daughters against parents. Forgery was education specific. Going by the education background of inmates convicted for forgery, it was by people who were educated up to college level or university. These findings were consistent with Siegel (2003) who posited that forgery offenders were well-educated and intelligent enough to understand the nature of the complicated crime.

#### *Fraud or false pretence*

Fraud or false pretence is related to deceit in order to make money illegally. It involves misrepresenting a fact in a way that causes a victim to willingly give his/her property to the wrongdoer, who then keeps it (Siegel, 2002). For a person to fall victim of fraud he must have enough money, Fraud offenders have relatively higher education than the rest of the criminals (Siegel, 2002). Analyses of data collected from police crime records revealed that majority (79.3%) of fraud offenders were men compared to 19.5 % women. Data on gender of fraudsters and their victims indicated that of the 87 fraud cases reported, 39.1% of the victims of male fraudsters were men compared to 23.2% of the women. 29.4% of the women targeted fellow women victims more than men (17.6%). It could be argued that most male victims did not report if the offender was a

woman (Jones, 2006). Men were reluctant to report female offenders because of embarrassment and/or being humiliated by law enforcers. Regarding this view, a male respondent explained how difficult it was for a man to report a female offender: the police officers interrogated him as if he was the offender by asking questions such as 'How can such a mature man be conned by a woman?' or 'Did your attempts to woo her become fruitless?' Or instead of the police recording the crime, they were quick to offer a solution which touched on women's sexuality, such as, 'Go plead with her; you will reach a compromise....' Men found these questions not only humiliating, demoralizing and demeaning but also an attack on their ego and many opted not to report.

Figure 4.37 reveals that like forgery, fraud related crimes were committed by mature persons. For instance, the lowest of men offenders was between 16 and 20 years of age while women may have started at a later age bracket of 21- 25 years. Majority of the offenders were between 31-40 years old. After the peak age, the offenders decreased with increasing age (Incidents slightly increased for those above 51 years). The mature offending age implied that the persons had developed good interpersonal relationships among other necessary skills, such as self-confidence, feigning wealth and ownership of property, which enabled the offender to convince the victim into fraudulent dealings without suspicion ( Jewkes & Letherby,2006).



Figure 4.37: Gender and age of fraud offenders

This study established that very little difference between men and women's choice of targeted victim. Men targeted slightly victims aged 16-20 to those over 51 years of age, compared to women who targeted victims aged 21-25 and above years. However, majority (28.9%) of the victims targeted by men fell between 21-40 years, and those targeted by women were between 31-35 years (11.8%) of age. These ages were where most people embarked on investment and were likely to be conned of their money in the process of acquiring property. Also, older persons (over 51 years) were victims of men fraudsters. Most probably they were easy prey because they would not know how to read or write and relied on younger persons to assist them in various transactions, exposing them to fraud.

Venues of offenders by gender were investigated. Results of the patterns formed are presented in Figure 4.38:

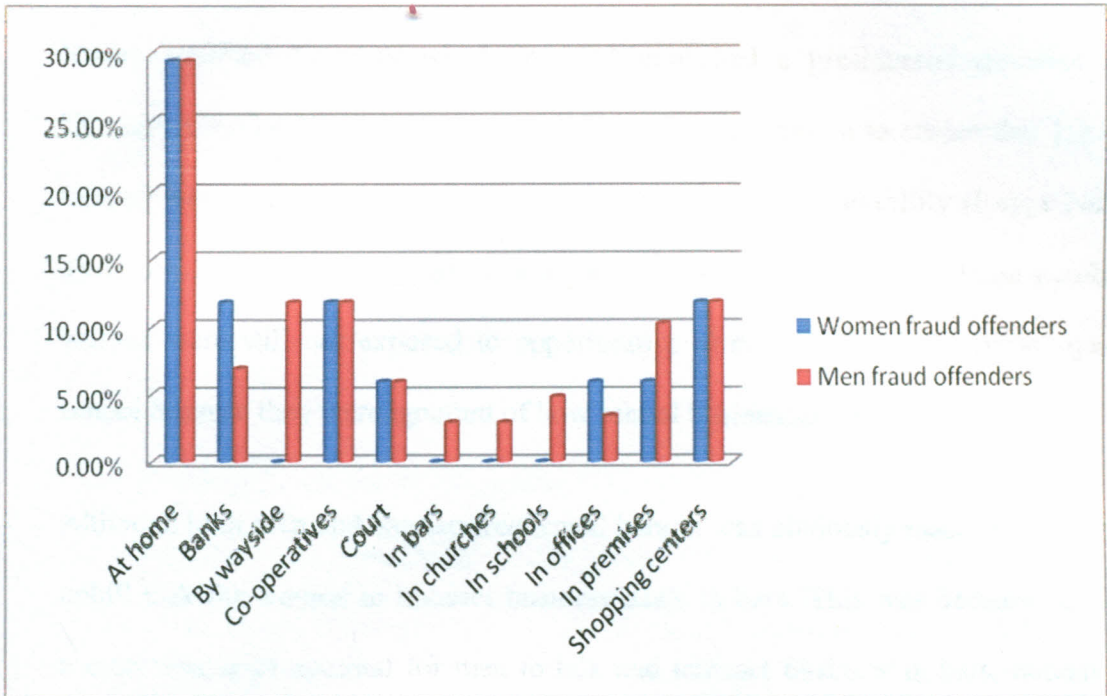


Figure 4.38: Gender by venues of fraud offenders

Out of 11 venues, both men and women offended in seven. Only men offended in the remaining four: by roadsides, in bars, churches and in schools. Women did not have similar opportunities as men to defraud in some of the venues. Although women constituted the majority of church followers, they were not in leadership positions which would expose them to opportunities to fraud against churches. This view was supported by Okemwa (2007) in her study on *assessment of responses towards African women's theology in selected institutions in Kenya* that postulated which women were rarely in church leadership positions.

This study suggests that absence of women offending against schools was because men were the ones who dominated in school business transactions. For example, women rarely won tenders to supply goods to schools. Maybe they did not apply or they were

discriminated against in the tender awarding processes. This view was affirmed by the Kenya National Treasury which in 2013 published a presidential directive under Treasury Circular No 14/2013 requiring school administration to ensure that 1/3 of the tenders was awarded to the youth, women and people with disability (Kenya National Treasury, 2013). This suggests that as at the time of this study, a large number of women were still not exposed to opportunities to carry out a fraud crime against a school because they were ignorant of how school businesses were conducted.

Although both men and women frequented bars, it was obviously easier for men but an uphill task for women to transact business deals in bars. This was because, while the society saw it as nominal for men to talk and transact business in bars, nobody took women frequenting bars seriously. Affirming this view, respondents maintained that community regarded women who frequented bars as second rate citizens and were mostly referred to as *Jangili/ ahiki a bara / maraya* (derogatory names given to prostitutes). Unlike men, therefore, women found it very difficult to convince a customer to transact business in a bar. Moreover, women in bars had variety of other methods of getting money from victims which were easier than the tedious fraud method. While society condoned men idling by road sides, women were constrained to do so. Hence, it was expected that women would not be involved in crime in places where society prohibited them from spending their time.

Analysis of data collected from the police crime records on relationship between the victims and perpetrators revealed that although 40% of the cases were not specified, 42% of the offences were perpetrated by husbands against their wives, 14% by

sons/daughters and 4% by employees. During the document analysis phase at the police divisions, the researcher encountered a number of incidents where a husband had stolen his wife's bank automated teller machine (ATM) card and used it to withdraw money. Confirming this, respondents stated that cases of husbands fraudulently getting money from their wives were rampant within the County. Regarding this view a police respondent narrated a case he had encountered about two months, prior to the period of this study, as follows:

A woman working for a certain firm noticed that her money was being withdrawn by an unknown person, which she reported to the bank manager. The bank manager assured her that the ATM always processes a photo of the person whom it had served. He then produced the photos so that the lady could identify the pictures displayed as having accessed her account. Among the pictures she identified, several were her husband's. After discussion with the manager, they agreed that she keeps it to herself and wait to see if her husband would make further withdrawals. They did not have to wait for long, for the husband visited the ATM at about noon the next day. He was accosted by the police and is now serving a jail term for stealing by false pretence.

Several respondents indicated that the study area was experiencing a shift from cash crop/ agriculture economy to service economy which tended to favour women. This coupled with the implementation of Structural Adjustment Policy by which several public servants were laid off, rendered a number of men in the region jobless( Rono, 2002 ). Such factors left men unable to provide for their families. As a result women had taken up all the family burdens, a situation that rendered men insignificant in the family and therefore sidelined from playing their roles. The participant added that most men stole money from their wives to buy illicit alcohol and/or to lure prostitutes. Concerning this view, a female participant lamented:

“These men don’t want to work, yet they want to feed and maintain their drinking habits ...they make their wives and mothers miserable by stealing items from them. That is why such men are thoroughly beaten by their wives, while others send them away or deny them food.

From the foregoing, there were differences and similarities between men and women with regard to white collar crimes. Women and men were almost equally represented in these crimes because they did not involve physical confrontation. Women tended to avoid crimes that involved great risk because society censured risk-taking behaviour among girls and women (Wood, 2001). The study suggested that although white collar crimes required intelligence, they were not considered dangerous and risky to be carried out by women. However, there were indeed gender differences in patterns of white collar crime. For instance, forgery cases tended to heighten from January to March for women and April to September for men. The difference suggested that men and women forged for different reasons. For example, men forged to ensure they had enough money to spend during the festive seasons.

#### *Motives for White Collar Crimes*

Four women and six men convicted of white collar crimes (forgery and fraud) were asked for their motives to commit crime in this category. Both men and women involved had a relatively higher education level than the other criminals. Some were university graduates, while others were working in the judicial system. These were people who were likely to be well- informed about which documents they could effectively forge or fraud with.

25% of female and 16.7% of male convicts who participated in this study said that it was media reports which informed them where documents could be forged and

motivated them to engage in the crime. In view of this a female respondent explained that a detailed highlight and exposure on document forgery carried out along River Road in Nairobi gave her ideas of where to get fake identification cards and other documents.

A further 25% of female and 33.3% of male convicts said they were motivated to forge because they felt they had the talent. They started forging when they realized that it could enable them make money. Half (50%) of the male and 25 % of female convicts said that they decided to engage in forgery because they were educated but the type of jobs that were available were low paying manual work. Kenya's education system seemed to prepare students for white collar jobs (Chege & Sifuna, 2006). Since these jobs had become scarce, educated citizens opted for criminal dealings rather than tiring manual work. Only 25% of the female inmates who participated in this study stated that they committed forgery of bank statements to enable them acquire VISA to travel abroad. In this regard a female convict had this to say:

...I married when I was very young, actually before I completed college. In my twenty five years of marriage I went through hell. My husband battered me often but because I was dependent on him, I chose to stay at least to bring up my children and to make sure they were educated. When my children completed secondary school and the first two were in college, and the man continued battering me besides keeping several mistresses, I said enough was enough. That is when I requested a friend of mine living in United States of America to invite me... When I went to look for visa from their embassy they told me that I had to produce a bank statement. Where would I get one and I had never held a bank account in my life? ...I met a friend who connected me to a banker whom she claimed had helped many people to secure fake bank statements. The banker agreed to help at a fee..... I got the bank statement the following day. Unknown to me, the embassy and the bank had already noticed that people were producing fake statements and had decided to take action against anyone who produced such. I took mine after two days...Oh my God I have never been

apprehended that way! I was locked in the police cells for some time. Then my husband bailed me out. After the court hearing, their ruling was that I be jailed for five years and that's why you see me here.

Such incidences reflected what women who were economically dependent on their husbands went through. However, there were no gender differences in forgery motives. Both men and women were motivated by the fact that they were educated, talented and that the media gave them information needed on where to procure the documents.

#### **4.5.4.0 Patterns in public order crimes**

Crimes in this category included public nuisance and drug/ alcohol related crimes. Public nuisance could be in the form of abusing, threatening and throwing objects at a person. Public nuisance was ranked 18<sup>th</sup> position in the prevalence of crimes committed in Kiambu County. The crime was gender specific, with only men recorded to have committed. The study reveals that majority of the offenders (60%) were aged between 16-20 years. This implied that public order crime was a young man's crime because those who committed it were below 30 years. These were people who had not developed appropriate conflict resolution skills and had less control over their emotions.

Data from the police records indicated that majority (70%) of men committed public nuisance in the morning. Analysis by season showed over a half (50%) committed between October and December, 30% between July and September and 20% between April and June. It could be inferred that most of the public crimes occurred during the festive seasons, that is, over Christmas and New Year when celebrations were accompanied by merry making and over-drinking. Such uncontrolled drinking inhibited self-control resulting in antisocial activities and public nuisance.

Data on gender and venues showed that 50% of public nuisance incidences were committed by men in schools. The rest were committed by the wayside and shopping centres at a rate of 20% each. Data from police crime records revealed that only teachers had been victims of public nuisance crimes. Much of the public nuisance was committed by youths who had just completed school. They had grudges with some teachers and wished to retaliate for the perceived mistreatment they received during their school years. Informal survey of 10 students, 5 girls and 5 boys, indicated that most (60%) of the students interviewed were just waiting to complete school to get even with a certain teacher. One of them said: "Wait I finish school, my Kiswahili teacher will know who I am, because he always picks on me for punishment for no apparent reason". Girls (unlike boys) did not seem to support direct confrontation with their teachers. 60% said that if given a chance, they would rough up an unreasonable teacher outside the school compound, but under the cover of darkness to conceal their identity. However, they added that they did not have enough courage to do so even after they would have completed school.

As stated above, public order crimes also included drug or alcohol peddling and taking. This study grouped alcohol related cases under drugs. The nature of these crimes involved the notion of willing buyer and willing seller. Therefore, they were considered victimless crimes. Rather, they were offences against self and the state. The bulk (92.6%) of drug offenders were men compared to 4.9% women. Women were treated chivalrously by police officers and courts were biased in their favour (Jewkes & Letherby, 2006). A female convicted of drug dealing said that she managed to evade

arrest on many occasions by stuffing the drugs inside a baby doll and carrying it on her back. Any time the police were on patrol searching out people in possession of drugs, she would always escape for they thought it was a real child.

Another convicted drug dealer said that women stuffed drugs in their undergarments, where the policemen were prohibited by law to search. Men who hid drugs in their undergarments were almost always apprehended because the law allowed policemen to search them. Women who failed to hoodwink the police and were apprehended; they solicited sympathy by crying and pleading. The policemen were often softened by such an act. Or, as aforementioned they would ask for monetary or/and sexual bribes from the women. Similarly, Ayres *et al.*, (2000) observed that during drug raids police in Wales did not arrest women offenders who cried, claiming to have been led astray by men or expressing concern about the fate of their children. But female offenders who were more aggressive and hostile were arrested. This suggested that police officers were likely to be more lenient towards women who acted in the expected stereotypical feminine ways. Jewkes and Letherby (2006) argued that police had a tendency not to arrest women as often as men, especially if the female suspect behaved in the expected stereotypical feminine ways such as showing remorse by crying or apologizing.

Police respondents gave a different insight as to why more men than women were apprehended. They argued that generally more men than women risked peddling and taking drugs. They asserted that the proportion of the arrest of men was commensurate with their ratio to women offenders. Such responses showed the chivalry of law enforcers while dealing with criminals.

Figure 4.39 illustrates the distribution of drug and alcohol dealers and abusers by age and gender:

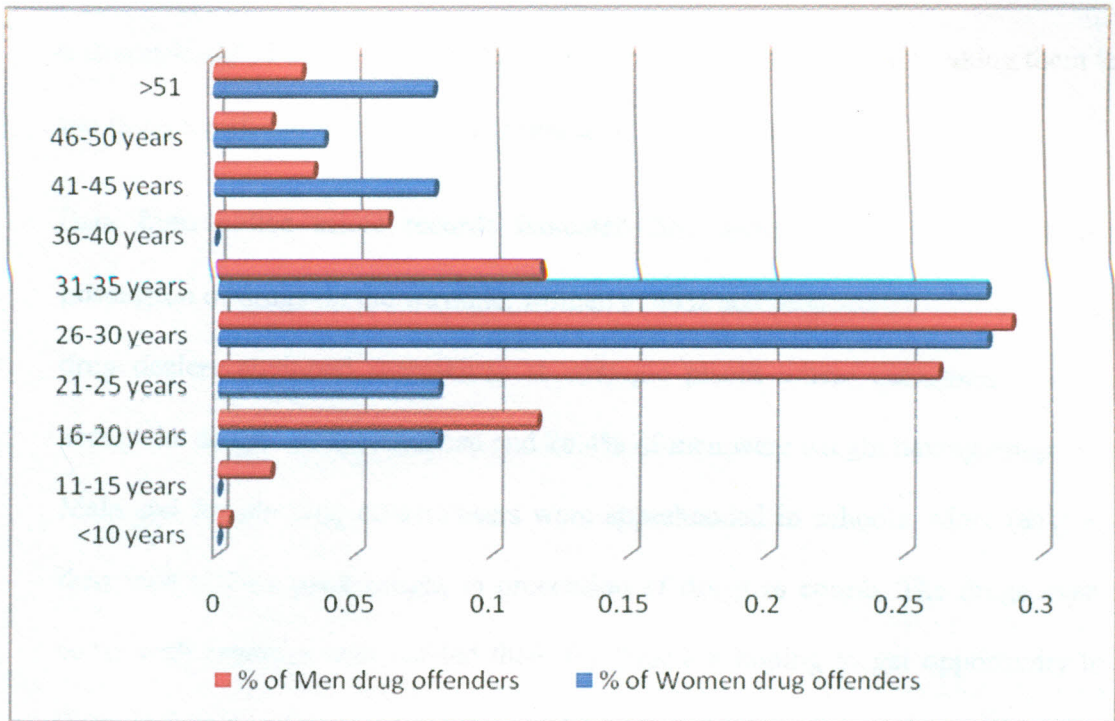


Figure 4.39: Gender and age of drug offenders

Unlike girls, boys started being in possession of drugs or using alcohol at a very early age of less than ten years. Apparently, women had got involved in drugs at a later age (16-20 years). Early indulgence in drugs by very young boys, unlike girls, could be attributed to the fact that the society exercised social control on girls and accorded a lot of freedom to boys who used the time to indulge in various activities including drugs (Visvanathan, Duggan, Nisonoff, & Wiegersma, 2007).

Both men and women tended to take or peddle drugs and alcohol at an increasing rate, until the age of 35 years when it started decreasing. The rate of drug abuse/peddling slightly increased for both women and men over 51 years. It could be argued that men

and women sold drugs together with their children when they were old enough to assist in the business. This view was supported by an incident encountered during content analysis phase where a 60 year old woman who had attended her son's court hearing was apprehended for being in possession of drugs. She was allegedly taking them to her son to replenish the stock to sell to inmates in prison remand.

Data from police crime records indicated that men and women were caught in possession of drugs on the wayside, women at 44% and men at 60.8%. This showed that drug dealers stationed themselves at strategic places where customers could easily access the drugs. 32% of women and 26.4% of men were caught having drugs at home. Male and female drug dealers/users were apprehended in schools. More (8%) women than men (1.1%) were caught in possession of drugs in courts. The drugs must have come with relatives who carried them for their kin hoping to get opportunity to give them before or after court hearings. The notion that relatives carried drugs for their remanded kin was confirmed by some of the convicts who said that drugs were mostly brought to courts and prisons by female relatives who were not easily suspected by prison warders and that drug peddling and drug abuse was rampant among inmates in remand and in prisons.

#### *Gender motive in drugs/ alcohol*

This researcher interviewed seven male and four female convicts who were incarcerated for being in possession of illicit alcohol and drugs. The researcher asked the men what had motivated them to engage in drug-related activities. 28.6% of them said that the drug business ensured quick and easy money. Although drug peddling was risky, it was

attractive because the returns and profits were very high such that dealers became wealthy within a short period of time.

The convicts said that drug selling involved an operation web and drug peddling linked them to drug barons at the top, followed by traffickers, distributors and lastly the vendors who peddled the drugs to their consumers. However, the penal system normally apprehended suppliers and peddlers while leaving out drug barons who, as long as they were not apprehended, would ensure drug selling would never be curbed in Kenya. This was because the barons recruited new sets of people to carry on with the business once a lower hierarchy peddler had been apprehended.

A further 28.6 % of male drug peddler respondent said they were employed by suppliers to peddle drugs for them. They added that to ensure easy access, these suppliers hired several people and placed them in strategic places like bus terminuses, along the streets, and in residential estates. The employees would collect drugs from a central point and take them to their selling points. A male convict stated that through peddling he had managed to buy a parcel of land and to build rental houses. He asserted that the ease and speed with which drug dealers got rich motivated other people to be recruited.

Idleness, boredom and desire to engage in productive activities motivated 28.6% of male convict informants to engage in drug business. Farmlands in Kiambu County are very small due to fragmentation, and can barely engage a person for more than two hours a week. This has contributed to high rates of unemployment especially among the youths who have become desperately poor and can easily be enticed to engage in drug

business. 14.3% of male respondents said they engaged in drugs because they lacked skills due to their low level of education. As such, they found it difficult to get formal employment. Their only option was the informal sector which included hawking. They discovered that their friends (most of whom were primary school dropouts) were doing financially well because of peddling drugs and decided to give it a try. Majority of drug users and peddlers were recruited by friends, succumbing to peer pressure.

50% of female convicts cited the influence by male friends to peddle drugs and alcohol. Men took advantage of various gender stereotypes existing in the society which led officers to rarely suspect or search women. Men, therefore, would coax women to assist in transporting, hiding and peddling drugs for them. This view was well illustrated by a female convict who said:

Men understand the rule of the underworld better than women. As such, men use women as porters, not because they are good at selling but because they are aware that women are rarely apprehended. When one woman is caught, the men coax and hire another to continue with the business...

Loss of a source of livelihood and fear of change in socio-economic status contributed to 25% of the female inmate informants getting involved in drugs trafficking or peddling. These women engaged in the business to retain their economic status. As a female convicts said:

I was living a good life until my husband abandoned us for another woman and stopped providing for us...I was economically dependent on him and had no other source of income. With children in private schools, workers and other bills to be paid, I became overwhelmed by the financial burden that I had to meet every month end yet I was not employed. I shared my predicament with a friend who easily lured me to traffic drugs because it not only enabled me to pay the bills but also ensured economic independence.

Such cases showed how men's withdrawal of financial support pushed their female dependants to poverty and crime.

A further 25 % of the female convicts cited lack of emotional and financial support from their partners and that was why they peddled drugs/alcohol. Their husbands' late nights or long periods of absence from home and lack of financial support made them look for ways and means to fend for families. These convicts said they had sought to engage in any economic activity that would not only provide them with cash but also keep them busy, and thus settled for drug peddling. They added that since they started selling drugs/ alcohol, they had become economically independent and no longer relied on their husbands.

The responses given by drug dealers showed that women peddled drugs as a result of change in gender relations and the need to maintain their status quo, attain economic stability and independence. They also peddled drugs because they were influenced by men. Men cited lack of education and skills that left them with no other option but to sell drugs. They cited need for quick money, unemployment, family problems and peer pressure as their motivation to engage in drugs/alcohol related crimes.

#### **4.6.0 Objective Five: Existing and Suggested Strategies to Curb Crime**

The section below discusses existing strategies. It also explores why these strategies are not effective and discusses respondents' views on gender responsive programmes that could be put in place to reduce crime in Kiambu County.

#### **4.6.1 Government's effort to curb crime**

This study asked convicts, respondents and participants what the stakeholders were doing to curb crime in the County. Police respondents stated that the government had been making conscious efforts to improve security in the County due to the effect of crime on socioeconomic development. They highlighted that in 2008, the government reacted to public outcry on heightened crime levels within the County by creating a new police station (Kibichoi) from the larger Githunguri Police Station. In addition, the government provided every police station with a patrol car which enhanced police mobility and intensified patrols in their areas of operation. They stated that the government also increased police posts, such as the Kwamaiko Police Post in 2009, and patrol bases like Raini and Kitsulu. The rationale behind creating new police stations and posts was to reduce the distances between them and for police officers to be assigned relatively small areas in order to intensify security while addressing the rampant crime rates within the region.

Several respondents maintained that the government had encouraged police officers to open up to the public and work together to combat crime. As such, some police officers even gave their mobile phone numbers to the public, who could now access and give crucial information about crime without having to go to the police station. The police state that in 2006 the government introduced the concept of community policing strategy to combat crime. The strategy had taken root in every village. Members of community policing included young, mature, old men and women. The community was involved in crime prevention by furnishing the police with information about crime and

criminals, since the criminals were part of the larger community and were known to the residents. The participants of all FGDs stated that the most important aspect of community policing was that members did not necessarily include the chiefs, who were frequently bribed by the offenders and/or their relatives to conceal their criminal activities. Also, police respondents stated that the government had assisted in erecting floodlights at every shopping centre such as Ruaka, Ndenderu, Banana, Ting'ang'a, Tigoni, Bibirion, Ikinu, and Gachie among others between 2010 and early 2011. This was meant to light dark alleys and footpaths, thus reducing crime rates. Improvement of road network could also be seen as the government's effort to avert crime.

Critically analyzing the above mentioned strategies, it was clear that the government had not taken a gender dimension to prevention of crime. It had, therefore, not domesticated security strategies to suit the uniqueness of the community. But there was need to improve the existing strategies by including gender specific responsive programmes.

#### **4.6.2 The community's efforts to reduce crime**

Aware of the impact of crime on economic growth and wellbeing of the community, the people had embraced the concept of community policing. A community policing committee composition for a location should have at least nine (9) men and four (4) women members. Since their inception in 2006, the committees liaise with chiefs and police officers in relaying information about criminal activities in an area. They also hold regular security meetings with the OCSs to strategize on crime reduction. Over a

third of policemen and policewomen respondents stated that the community was now making efforts to report crime.

A police respondent cited Tigoni as having one of the most organized community group initiatives. He added that the group collected money from residents which they delivered to the police station to assist in fueling the patrol car as well as giving incentive to the police who patrolled their region.

Participants asserted that with the assistance of the community policing members, regions such as Githunguri, Thindigwa, Nderi, Komothai, and Kimende had formed groups known as *miji kumi* (ten families). This was a security concept borrowed from Tanzania where 'Nyumba Kumi' ensured that police and immigration officers knew precisely who was staying in which hotel, who was renting and living in which house, who owned which property, and who was moving in and out of villages. No aliens could rent a house in Tanzania, stay in a hotel or arrive at a village without the immigration and police knowing about it within 24 hours. They even kept written records of such people (Musyimi, 2013).

The FGDs participants said that, like in Tanzania, *Miji Kumi* comprised ten neighbouring homesteads, who worked as a team in combating crime in their midst. Each member of the *miji kumi* provided their mobile phone contacts to the others. In this way, if any one of them was in trouble, his neighbours could liaise with each other to assess the situation and strategize how they could assist. The participants also stated that *miji kumi* members were encouraging and supporting each other to report any crime

incidence and to mention names of suspected criminals to the police. Although the idea was working, they expressed fear of individual *miji kumi* members being victimized by criminals while walking or at shopping centres. It was, however, important to note that the '*miji kumi*' idea had existed in these regions since 2007, long before its formalization by the Cabinet Secretary in Charge of Internal Security in 2013.

Educating the boy child as a community effort to curb crime was raised by 22.5% policemen and 7.6% policewomen respondents. This was supported by participants who stated that they were holding public *barazas* to educate parents on the importance of encouraging their sons to complete school. According to them, majority of boys who dropped out of school ended up joining criminal gangs which terrorized the community. Various groups were putting their efforts together to train boys in Kikuyu customs, culture and traditions during their initiations into manhood, in the hope that they would learn the right values and appropriate attitudes towards work and material wealth in order to desist from crime. They added that elderly men (including former freedom fighters) especially in Ngecha and Kikuyu areas were talking to the young men to stop their criminal behaviour.

The community, through the church, was also making efforts to plead with criminals to change their ways. This was affirmed by some police respondents. The notion was supported by participants who mentioned that the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) and other Pentecostal churches had formed women groups that were talking to young girls to stop prostitution and turn to more honourable alternative employment. However, they highlighted the challenges that were facing these efforts since the girls'

parents (most of them single parents) encouraged their daughters to engage in prostitution to bring them financial assistance.

Nevertheless, women had come up with various women groups (*chamas*) whose aim was to improve their status and minimize their involvement in crime. This point was brought out by female participants who noted that women funds improved their lives. However, they lamented that the terms and conditions of getting access to women funds were very prohibiting. A person was supposed to join a group of 10-20 women so that they could access a loan. Since it was not easy to get 10 like-minded women to form a successful group, the possibility of one accessing a loan was reduced. This notwithstanding, the community needed to address the causes of murder, assault, arson as well as land and property inheritance issues within the County.

#### **4.6.3 Individual's efforts to reduce crime**

Residents lived in constant fear of falling victims to crime or repeatedly being victims. Individual members had put great effort to ensure their own security, that of their family members and property. The first measure entailed individuals' fencing their compounds. There were three types of security fences, depending on the economic status of the individual. First, dwelling units were enclosed with perimeter walls and a gate either manned by a watchman or without one. For example, we had the gated communities in Kiambu Municipality, Tigoni and Kikuyu areas. These categories of people with perimeter walls had enhanced their security by installing floodlights, CCTV cameras and/or alarm systems. Outside the metal gate was a security company logo attached.

The second form of fence was keiapple, *bougainvillea* or cypress tree hedges planted around large parcels of land, trimmed to a height of about ten feet. At the entrance was a metal gate with a small wooden board fixed on the outside written *Mbwa Kali* (fierce dog) on it. These were regions that respondents said were not frequented by criminals because the inhabitants were mainly a farming community, majority of whom were Europeans. The third type of fence that was observed was barbed wire intertwined with *lantana kamara*, vines, climbers, creepers or herb hedges with a wooden or an iron sheet gate fixed at the entrance. Most compounds in this category had a dog or two and the dwelling units were semi-permanent or small brick-walled houses. Burglaries, animal and other thefts were very rampant in these neighbourhoods.

The region had a group of people who had no fence or gate, nor any other observable form of security apart from dogs that roamed outside the compounds. Maybe they had nothing to protect. However, the fields had food crops such as bananas, maize and beans; chicken and one or two domestic animals tethered to a small pole within the compound. Majority of the people in such neighbourhoods had no electricity in spite of their proximity to electricity supply. The respondents explained that these groups of people were rarely victims of burglary but could be victims of other crimes such as stock and food crop theft committed within the region.

Majority of the respondents maintained that individual persons reported home early to avoid being mugged along the paths and plantations at night. They stated that others had stopped drinking in bars but stocked beer at home so that they did not risk being robbed along the way or in bars. In regions where *miji kumi* groups were operational, many

households had joined. They further added that individuals made sure they cooperated with the community policing members to maximize security in their villages. Participants also said that certain rich individuals avoided being crime targets by opting to live humbly such as driving old cars, preferably old Peugeot 404 pickup models, and building ordinary permanent houses. Such people did so to blend in and hoodwink criminals to think that they (rich persons) did not have wealth that warranted the criminals' attention.

In spite of all the above efforts that had been put in place by all the stakeholders, crime in the region had been on the increase as validated by data analysis from police crime records, which revealed that it increased from 12.4% in 2011 to 12.6% in 2012. This study was therefore interested in establishing why the above strategies were not reducing crime. Information on why existing interventions were not very effective in curbing crime was found necessary as it gave insight and a pointer to the issues that needed to be addressed while modifying and improving the existing strategies and/or drawing up alternative strategies.

#### **4.6.4 Why the above efforts are not effective in curbing crime**

Table 4.13 presents an analysis of police responses as to why local efforts failed in curbing crime in the target area of study. 50% of policemen and 30.5% of policewomen respondents indicated that young people lacked guidance, and so they continued engaging in crime.

Table 4.13: Police responses on why efforts to curb crime are not effective

Questions	Police offers' response	No. of male	%	No. of Female	%
Why do you think the above mentioned strategies are failing?	Corruption by police	8	25	1	7.6
	Single motherhood	3	9.6	1	7.6
	The community is uncooperative	7	22.5	0	0
	Intimidations	1	3	3	23
	Drug abuse	1	3	2	15
	Young ones lack advice	17	55	4	30.5
	Parents encouraging crime	9	29	2	15

Concurring with police respondents, participants explained that most women in Kiambu County were overburdened as sole family providers. Coupled with their triple roles they worked from dawn to dusk, leaving them no time to guide their children. Yet, most men idled around especially with their friends, male relatives and peers in social places. They engaged in other activities rather than guiding their children. The respondents maintained that when children, especially boys, lacked parental guidance and a good role model at home, they could experience identity problems which could increase their likelihood to join gangs. The gang could serve as a surrogate extended family for adolescents who did not see their own families as meeting their needs for belonging, nurturance and acceptance (Myers, 1998).

Regarding this view, Berndt (1997) postulated that children with rejecting-neglecting parents were likely to have problems with drug abuse and possibly engage in delinquent

behaviour as adolescents. These individuals in gangs were likely to get involved in underworld criminal activities.

Respondents observed that parents offered misguided advice which encouraged their children into crime. Since most parents were illiterate, they didn't encourage boys to be educated and perhaps that was why they dropped out of school.

Single parenthood was cited by 9.6% male and 7.6 % female police respondents who indicated that crime escalated because of the large number of single mothers within the County. This was affirmed by a police informant who stated that children from single mothers engaged more in crime than those from both parents families. Regarding this view, participants asserted that there was a direct relationship between female-headed households and crime in the region. Their view was affirmed by demographic data of convicts which revealed that majority (58.1%) of them were single or from single families. In 2001 Kiambu County had 35,675 female- headed households. The figure had increased to 38,995 female- headed households in 2009 (Kenya Population Census, 2009). Criminologists have tended to agree that single motherhood and informal social controls are variables that are the most powerful predictors of deviant behaviour in any given society (Anderson, 2002). Single motherhood in the County had thwarted the efforts to curb crime. Not only had it led to a dysfunctional society but it had also contributed to a lot of social evils such as infidelity, immorality, assault, murder and misery in the society. Fagan (2001) asserted that the relationship between single-parent families and crime was so strong that it tended to surpass that between race and crime and between low income and crime.

This is supported by a national longitudinal survey of 34,031 youth aged between 14 to 17 years, carried out by Harper and McLanahan (2004) in the United States, which found out that children who grew up without their biological fathers in the homes were roughly three times more likely to commit a crime that led to incarceration than children from intact families. Further, the study found out that boys raised without their fathers were more than twice as likely to end up in jail as those raised with their fathers, and that 70% of incarcerated adults came from single-parent homes. Egley and O'Donnell (2009) asserted that the likelihood of a young male engaging in criminal activity doubled if he was raised without a father and tripled if he lived in a neighbourhood with a high concentration of single-parent families. The two scholars maintained that the proportion of single-parent households in a community predicted its rate of violent crime and burglary, but the community's poverty level did not. Also, 80% of rapists driven by displaced anger came from fatherless homes.

Fear of victimization was indicated by 3% policemen and 23% policewomen, who stated that criminals intimidated both victims and by-standers against reporting them. The residents were threatened with death or were actually killed for reporting a criminal to the law enforcers. 22% of policemen respondents indicated that the community was not cooperative since they hid criminals. The FGDs participants explained that people did not report crime because offenders were their blood relatives. They further added that even chiefs failed to take action against reported crime incidences and even concealed others because the offenders were their blood relatives.

Respondents cited women empowerment as another reason for increasing crime rate within the region. The change in gender relations due to improved women's conditions and positions threatened men's very existence and encouraged their criminality. They explained that, apparently, women's empowered status threatened men's dominant status and affected power- relations in the family. Married men who were economically dependent on their wives felt that their ability to exercise control and subjugate women was minimized. Some respondents maintained that some men whose wives were empowered got frustrated because they were unable to play their headship roles. So they turned to destructive behaviour such as violence, alcoholism and drug abuse. Eventually, such men became useless, hopeless and perpetrators of assaults, vandalism, fraud and theft against their own wives and community.

#### **4.7. 0 Respondents perception on how to curb crime in Kiambu County**

A critical analysis of the fore-mentioned shows that measures put in place to curb crimes within the region by the stakeholders were addressing symptoms but not the root causes. As stated above, the strategies were protective rather than preventive. Attention was directed to the victim instead of the offender. To address offenders, respondents were asked to give their opinions of how male and female crimes could be reduced. These opinions are analyzed below:

##### **4.7.1 Opinions on how to curb women's crimes**

This study found it appropriate to adopt a participatory gender approach in exploring what the stakeholders (community, police and convicts) would recommend as effective

crime remedy. The opinions of the 44 police officers and 145 convicts who participated in the study are summarized in Table 4.14 and discussed together with data collected from other respondents.

*Table 4.14: Police and prisoners' responses on opinion to reduce women crime*

Questions	Police officers' Responses	No. of	%	No. of	%
		male		Female	
What do you think should be done to reduce women crime?	Creating more employment	15	48	1	7.6
	Educating them	17	55	3	23
	Empowering them through groups	17	55	4	30.5
	Improve on up bringing	4	13	0	0
	Men to become responsible	4	13	1	7.6
	<b>Convicts' Responses</b>	<b>No. of</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No. of</b>	<b>%</b>
		<b>male</b>		<b>Female</b>	
	Empowering them	34	40	41	68
	Proper counselling	12	14	7	12
	Men to become responsible	0	0	17	28
	Create employment	25	29	6	10
Support their talents	0	0	7	12	
Educate them	37	44	22	37	

The convicts and police respondents had similar opinions on what would be the effective method to reduce female crime as shown in the Table. 68% of female convicts and 30.5% of policewomen respondents, with a large number of male convicts and policemen, held that women's economic empowerment would help control crime. They explained that according to Kikuyu traditions, children remained in the custody of their mothers. As such, whether single or married, the woman carried the burden of fending for them. They further stated that most Kikuyu men had no attachment to their wives and children, and often abdicated their family responsibility to the women, a situation which renders them irrelevant.

Policewomen respondents and female convicts suggested that men should become responsible in order to reduce crime. Their opinion was shared by this study's participants who maintained that men's irresponsibility was the cause of most evils in the County. Policemen respondents, as well as male and female convict informants, expressed the need for better upbringing and counselling programmes as a way of reducing women crime. The FGDs participants asserted that there was need to train society on proper parenting. They wondered whether school curricula could incorporate family education and parenting skills as integral part of teaching young generation the importance of a family unit as well as how to rear children.

Only female convict informants felt that crime committed by women would only be reduced by recognizing and supporting their talents. They claimed that women had very many talents and skills that were ignored by the male dominated society. Their view was consistent with female participants who cited the community's belief that it was not feminine for a woman to engage in sports, and other public activities. Women were supposed to be domesticated and restricted to their homes and socialized to believe that their role was to entertain men and perform other activities considered feminine in the Community.

From the foregoing, male and female respondents shared similar opinions on what should constitute women's crime reduction strategy. However, neither highlighted change of attitude towards money, marriage, and the boy child which also contributed to women's crimes, nor did they mention development of a strategy or policy that would govern land and property ownership, access and control of means of production.

Such issues ought to be addressed because they affected women and men differently and contributed to a number of crimes within the society as revealed by this study.

#### 4.7.2 Opinions to curb men's crimes

The respondents were also asked what they thought would reduce male crime in the County. Table 4.15 presents police respondents and convicts' responses:

*Table 4.15: Police and Prisoners' responses on opinion to reduce men crime*

Question	Police Officers' Responses	No. of Male	%	No. of Female	%
What do you think should be done to reduce men's crimes in Kiambu County?	Educate them	15	48	2	15
	Create jobs	9	29	1	7.6
	Empower them through groups	2	6	4	30.5
	Introduce community policing	1	3	1	7.6
	Discourage them against drug abuse	3	9.6	0	0
	<b>Convicts' Responses</b>	<b>No. of Male</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No. of Female</b>	<b>%</b>
	Create employment	36	43	22	37
	Empowering them	21	25	12	20
	Counsel them	19	22	22	37
	Write agreement in marriage	0	0	22	37
Should be punished severely if found guilty	18	21	0	0	

While policemen and policewomen respondents were of the opinion that encouraging boys' education would reduce crime, no convict felt that education was necessary in reducing it. FGDs participants' opinions were consistent with those of police respondents which emphasized the need to encourage the boy child to aspire for more education. They felt that majority of boys who dropped out of school ended up engaging in criminal activities and other illegal dealings. During interviews, a male

police respondent illustrated how illiteracy among boys in Kiambu County had affected their employment opportunities. He had noted:

A certain Non- Governmental Organization (NGO) wanted to employ about 50 youth, half from either gender, who had attained secondary school level of education. The District Officer (DO) advertised in churches and in public *barazas*. It was shocking to realize that very few men had met this minimum qualification.  $\frac{3}{4}$  of those employed ended up being females because they could not get enough educated men to fill their quota. Imagine men in the county desire white collar jobs, yet they don't have the necessary qualifications. Again, men are very choosy; they don't like doing manual work, but desire prestigious positions or jobs from which they will have an opportunity to steal.

This study indicated that girls were more educated than boys in Kiambu County. If boys as well as girls could be well educated, they would compete favourably for employment opportunities and probably reduce crime.

From their responses, one can infer that convicts did not see the connection between education and employment. Majority (43%) of male and 37% female convicts, 29% policemen and 7.6% policewomen respondents indicated that creation of employment opportunities could reduce crime committed by men. Expressing a similar opinion, participants observed that it was important to create employment because the available opportunities were feminine in nature in which men could not engage. However, police respondents argued that men in Kiambu County remained jobless because they had a low opinion towards certain manual jobs. What they seemed to desire were prestigious jobs and yet they were least qualified for them.

The respondents wished that men could be encouraged to form groups through which government funds could reach them. Unlike women's groups, men's groups were characterized by conflicts and infighting which led to failure.

Counselling and discouraging men from abusing drugs was highlighted by policemen respondents as well as male and female convicts. Supporting this view, police respondents observed that men committed crimes to get money to sustain their drug habits. FGDs participants were of the opinion that the Alcohol Control Law (2010) popularly known as '*Mututho law*' ought to be maintained and supported by all Kenyans because since its inception, alcohol-related crimes had reduced by a half. Police respondents also hoped that a drug abuse bill in parliament could be drawn and implemented to reduce drug incidences and related crimes.

Respondents were of the opinion that men should receive intensive counselling on family life, and recommended the content of the programme to include how to love and treat their wives and children. It should also include role modelling that would enhance their wooing skills and how to relate to empowered women on an equal level. Respondents recommended that the programme should entail behaviour modification. This would enable men have control over their desire for prostitutes/concubines /mistresses and know how to be useful members of the family and society. The respondents believed that acquisition of such skills was paramount to reduction of crime in the County. Their opinion was shared by 37% female convicts who stated that there ought to be prenuptial agreements in marriage so that men took responsibility of their families. These responses showed that members of community policing committee and

the female convicts had a deeper insight of the issues contributing to men's crimes and their social solutions.

Crime in Kiambu County was embedded in social relationships rather than entirely related to property issues as evident from data. Violent crimes were rampant within the County and strategies to curb them should have been relation-oriented rather than purely property-oriented. The society attributed drug and alcohol crime incidences to men, yet it was evident that there were women offenders too. The respondents did not highlight the unequal distribution of resources and land crises. Parents encouraging boys towards property crime and girls towards prostitution was not addressed. None also looked at the impact brought by a preference shift from the boy child to the girl child and how it could be addressed to reduce men's crimes. Yet, devaluation of boy child within the County seemed to contribute to various crimes such as child homicide, suicide and other related crimes. It also threatened the boy child and male adult very existence within the County.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This Chapter summarizes the study and links the findings to the theory adopted to guide data collection and analysis as indicated in Chapter Two. A brief discussion of the research questions and objectives is presented and the study conclusions are drawn from the findings. The Chapter also provides recommendations and suggestions for future research.

#### **5.1 Summary**

The purpose of this study was to establish the gender differentials of crimes committed in Kiambu County. More specifically, it set out to identify types and causes of crime committed by men and women between 2011 and 2012, and to find out how they differed in patterns with regard to its socio- economic aspects. Similarly, the study aimed at exploring the underlying motives of criminal activity among men and women, examine the existing strategies of curbing crime, and suggest gender-responsive programmes that could reduce the crime rate in Kiambu County. The key findings are summarized thematically according to the objectives of the study.

##### **5.1.1 Types of Crimes Committed by Men and Women**

From police crime records, the study found that men and women committed about 21 different types of crimes. These crimes were consistent with the four established categories of crime. Person-to-person violent crimes had the highest frequency,

followed by property crimes, public order crimes and white collar crimes. It also established that Kiambu Police Division recorded the highest frequencies in most crimes, except for malicious damage to property and robbery where Lari Police Division took the lead. Kikuyu and Kiambu Police Stations, both peri-urban, - had higher crime than the rest. Karuri Police Station recorded low crime rate among women even though located in peri – urban. In this region, women were said to engage more in prostitution which was rarely reported. Prostitution reduced the need for women to seek financial returns through serious property crimes or violent crimes.

Contrary to the Gender Schema Theory of criminal behaviour that women are not expected to commit crimes, and if they do they engage in minor crime, this study revealed that both gender committed all types of crime. The crime most frequently committed by either gender was assault, followed by theft. However, the police and the society treated male and female criminals differently. For instance, police officers, community policing committee members and community in general dealt leniently with female criminals while they were ruthless with male criminals. Women collaborated with men in committing most of the crimes, yet it was mostly the men who got apprehended and convicted. Police used their discretion in determining which crimes warranted recording. They concealed some crimes and criminals especially when bribed, and the form of bribe given by either gender differed. Men offenders bribed police with money while women bribed them with money or/and sex.

## 5. 2 Causes of Crime in Kiambu County

This study established that there were various causes of men and women crimes in Kiambu County. These included: kin relationships among the rural population, which encouraged crime since relatives concealed crime. Our study also established that labelling of communities contributed to an increase in criminal activity and that media contributed to copycat crimes as male and female criminals not only learnt new ideas on how to commit crime successfully but also where to target as well as getting the necessary weapons. Availability of illegal firearms encouraged criminals to bravely commit crime with impunity, as resistance from victims and neighbours was normally futile and at times fatal. Modern technology had also heightened crime levels within the region, with use of internet and mobile phones not only making crime sophisticated and complex but also intensifying criminal activities.

This study also revealed that breakdown of family and the social fabric, especially negligence of the boy child and lack of sound community leadership, had contributed to crime in the County. This, in conjunction with poor role modelling from an affluent but illiterate older generation, motivated some youth from humble backgrounds not only to have low regard for education, but also to drop out of school and commit crime as a means to wealth. Respondents noted that most crimes were committed by members of the same family, some of whom came from wealthy backgrounds. Hence, their criminality could not be attributed to other factors such as poverty.

The findings indicated that the County's proximity to Nairobi (Kenya's capital city) contributed to the trickling effect of urban crime into the rural, and that 'foreigners' could provide more crime opportunities as victims or offenders.

### **5.3 Gender patterns and motives to Commit Crimes**

The study revealed female offenders aged 11-15 years killed compared to 16-20 years for men. The gender difference could be attributed to gender socialization which determined the type of weapon used by either gender to murder their victims. Consistent with the gender stereotype of physical strength and aggression, women killed using poison and sharp objects that didn't require physical strength, while men strangled or used blunt weapons that required muscle strength. In addition, there were gender differences between women and men's choice of murder victims. While men murdered victims across all ages, women mostly murdered young females aged 11-25 years and older men above 46 years old, a clear indication of the different motives each may have had for killing. Since they controlled more property than other age bracket, older persons (over 51 years) were victims of murder at a relatively higher rate, female victims being more. Murder victims comprised of wives, parents, husbands, siblings, sons/daughters and other relatives.

This study concludes that consistent with Gender Schema Theory, men's murder motives were more related to their ego. They murdered to gain competitive advantage. Men murdered fellow men who threatened their socio-economic advancement. Murder involving relatives occurred as a result of family dispute over inheritance of land and other properties. Unlike women who killed both gender to protect loved ones and

misuse of property, men killed women because of changing gender roles which brought with them the fear of losing control and power. Women who were well-educated and economically empowered often threatened men's headship positions and masculine dignity. Such women could be murdered as the men tried to subjugate them through violence. They also murdered when the women in their lives got entangled in other affairs. Some men could also murder their sisters who inherited their fathers' property.

It emerged that homicide victims were mostly boys. Very few girls were murdered by men only. In Kiambu County, majority of the boys were killed by their own mothers. Gender difference in child homicide seasons was established. Men committed homicide anytime of the year. Women eliminated children between July and December which coincided with delivery of pregnancies conceived during the previous festive seasons. Men used aggressive methods and weapons, while women used gentler methods to suffocate or choke the child victim to death. Men killed children out of frustration and anger, for being unable to provide for them, or to conceal another crime.

It emerged that older men and women (over 51) assaulted at an increased rate. Women assaulted younger (16-35 years) on the wayside. The methods and weapons used in assault incidences were gender specific. This study concludes that Kiambu County experienced breakdown of family and social fabrics where moral sanctions that governed inter-generational social relations had diminished. This was because most crimes were committed among family members and other relatives, with cases of siblings, children and grandchildren assaulting their parents and grandparents being higher.

Gender difference was evident in gender-related crimes. While women targeted young boys below ten years, male rapists preferred girls below 15 years of age and old women. These victims (comprising familiar persons such as grandmothers, daughters, sisters, wives, neighbours, students and classmates) fell prey in the evenings when they were alone at home before other family members arrived or by the wayside and in the bushes /plantations when carrying out domestic chores like fetching water/wood fuel in lonely places, and even in churches.

Male rapists were motivated by the myth that they would get cured of HIV/AIDS if they had sex with young virgin girls. They also raped to exercise power, revenge and control, over women whom they perceived as proud or disrespectful to them. Some held intense hatred towards women in general and desired to hurt them. Women from wealthy families who did not integrate well with their lowly neighbours were raped in humiliation. Some men were driven to rape by lack of skills in the art of wooing or seduction, while women molested young boys for sexual gratification. While women committed incest against male children, men committed bestiality to domestic animals inside the bushes/plantations and sexual offences against their daughters, siblings and other relatives at home. Men, especially those above 51 years, were sodomized by fellow men mainly at night. This not only reflected vulnerability of older persons but also moral decay in Kiambu County.

There was evidence of differences in gender patterns of robbery. For instance, male offenders were young (16-35 years). Women perpetrators were older, aged over 46 years due to the increase in opportunity to commit crime. Consistent with gender norm

of schema theory, majority of men committed robbery at night, but women robbed in the evenings for fear of falling victims to other criminals or due to constraint from being out at night. Men seemed to maintain their appropriate gender behaviour of aggression by their choice of weapons. Although women carried weapons, they rarely used them preferring to utilize their feminine attributes instead.

There were gender differences in men's and women's motives to commit robbery. Men were motivated by the need to elevate their ego and economic status and to support their hedonistic lifestyles. Some parents motivated their children to rob by constantly citing the illiterate wealthy as the ideal. Such children's ultimate desire was to be like the uneducated wealthy and would therefore rob to improve their own and their parents' economic statuses. It emerged that women robbed because they felt they were rarely suspected and could easily get away with it. They were aware that the public and law enforcers still held the assumption that women did not commit crime. Single female parents robbed to fend for their children and meet their financial requirements for a modest life. Some women conformed to femininity stereotype in gender norm and claimed they were misled by men, while others said they robbed to sustain their alcohol and drug habits and to kill idleness.

This study revealed that kidnapping was a peri-urban crime, reported mainly in regions under the jurisdiction of Kikuyu, Kiambu and Karuri Police Stations which were predominantly peri-urban. The majority of the victims were young women aged 11-20 years, which suggested that people in Kiambu County preferred girls to boys. Kidnappers were mainly young men and women. Unlike men who kidnapped victims

from home at night, women kidnapped children by the wayside in the evenings with ease because of their perceived nurturing role. Kidnappers intended to either punish parents or supply stolen children to clients. However, some women kidnapped children because they did not have their own while some men kidnapped for ransom.

Gender differences in arson patterns were evident. It emerged that mature women aged 36 to 40 and 46 to 50 years explicitly targeted male victims of the same age brackets. Men, young and old, targeted persons aged 46 years and above. This implied dissatisfaction with how land and property issues were culturally resolved and the subsequent option by offenders to destroy other property as a way of getting justice.

It emerged that men committed arson any time of the day. But women went contrary to gender concept of social control, by committing arson in the evenings and during the night to avoid confrontation with the victims (men) who were physically stronger than them. While men used arson to forcefully evict victims from land and property, women (wives) mostly destroyed their matrimonial houses because they had contributed to their construction and yet they had now been chased away by their husbands.

In burglary incidences, both men and women commenced burglary at the same age bracket (11-15 years) while the men continued to burglarize to advanced age (over 51 years). Female burglars terminated their involvement in the crime at 26-30 years. The study revealed that majority of burglary victims were old men and women (over 51 years) who, besides having property to be burgled, were vulnerable because they were physically frail and could be living alone. For easy accessibility, majority of men and

women committed burglary against homes in the evenings. Burglary and break-ins took place amongst siblings, and was perpetrated by sons and daughters against parents.

There were gender differences in the methods and weapons used by men and women burglars. Consistent with gender schema norm, men used risky methods such as breaking doors, getting in through the roof and tying guards. Women could not dare use such methods because they not only feared the risk involved but also that these methods required physical strength and courage. Therefore, they broke doors, made holes in the wall and passed through the windows.

In carjacking, women commenced at an older age, 26-30 years compared to men at 16-20 years. But they terminated carjacking at 35 years of age, while men extended to over 51 years. Women over 35 years could not have the exposure and the opportunity to steal cars. They would find it too risky to continue with the crime. They had to seek alternative sources of livelihood. Majority of carjacking was committed by men and women during the second half of the year (July to December). This implied that there was large market during that time. Women carjacked in the evenings and their choice of venues were consistent with their gender organization of moral development and affiliation and would not steal cars from churches and hospitals. Men carjacked both in public and private venues either at night or in the mornings regardless of 'moral ethic' which was consistent with gender norm. Men and women stole cars for economic stability, for thrill or out of desperation to own a car.

This study revealed that men and women had an almost equal prevalence of theft cases. This was because theft was committed in the absence of the victim such that the

offenders encountered minimal risk of confrontation and the embarrassment of being caught in the act and subsequent apprehension. Women were also aware that the community sympathized with them as their actions were construed as being in line with their gender role 'to provide food for their children'. Also, livestock theft was the most rampant, followed by theft of crops, indicating different economic activities in the region. The bulk of thieves were young people aged between 16-40 years, with the rate increasing for those over 51 years. Women apparently commenced theft at a slightly older age, between 16 and 20 years, compared to men who started between 11-15 years. Older persons (over 51) were theft victims more than any other age group. This was because they controlled much of the property within the County.

In vandalism, majority of men targeted institutions such as Kenya Power and Lighting Company's transformers and metal items mostly belonging to their wives or mothers. Women vandalized metal items from roads and other public places including churches. Women vandals were older (16-20 years) than their male counterparts (11-15 years). Both gender vandalized in the mornings and evenings, but only men vandalized at night.

There were gender similarities and differences between men and women in patterns of white collar crimes. The jurisdiction of Kiambu and Kikuyu Police Stations experienced higher forgery cases compared to the rest of the stations, with men being the majority. Due to the non-confrontational nature, both genders committed forgery up to over 51 years. Majority of male forgery occurred between April and September. Since most women sought bank statements to acquire VISA to allow them relocate to other

countries, they forged these between January to June when air fares were slightly lower. There were also gender differences in the type of documents forged. Majority of men forged title deeds while majority of women forged bank documents and passport/identity cards. Either gender also forged log books, but at varying rates. Only men forged school and factory documents, suggesting that because of their subordinate status, women had limited access to criminal opportunity in some venues and that either gender forged documents for different motives.

Closely related to forgery was fraud, false pretence or impersonation crimes. Like forgery, these crimes were committed by people with high education attainment. Women defrauded fellow women more than they did men and vice-versa. Female offenders were older (21-25years) than male offenders (16-20 years) in similar crime. Gender construction constrained women to defraud in venues such as bars, by the wayside, churches and schools where men did with ease.

The study findings showed that there were gender differences and similarities in public order crime category. Social control enabled men to start dealing with drugs at a tender age (less than ten years), women's involvement started at a much later age (16-20 years). In addition, majority of men and women peddled drugs in the evenings by the wayside, at home, in courts and prisons, and in schools. They even peddled drugs in bushes, plantations and shopping centres, while women sold illicit alcohol and drugs in bars.

This study revealed that men's motive in drug-related crimes differed from that of women. Men drug dealers were motivated by high demand for drugs, which brought

instant high returns. The ease and speed at which sellers got rich motivated others to join in the lucrative business, regardless of the risk involved. Lack of employment and employable skills motivated young men to venture into areas that did not require formal skills, such as peddling drugs. Female drug dealers were hired by men. Unlike men, women involved themselves in drugs to maintain their socio- economic statuses after being abandoned by their wealthy husbands.

#### **5.4 Crime Control Strategies**

This study revealed that the stakeholders had made efforts to address insecurity within the target area. For instance, the government had employed personnel at all levels to ensure peace and security. It had also increased the number of police stations, posts and bases within the region. The government also had introduced a community policing strategy in 2006. There was improved relationship between police officers and the community such that through mobile phones, the community had access and could provide information on security issues to police officers. Additionally, police were supplied with police patrol vehicles which helped to intensify police patrols to apprehend and prosecute criminals. With the above strategies it was assumed that crime would reduce, perhaps because such measures were found to be effective in New York between 1980- 1990 under the zero tolerance policies (Dwyer, 2001). Unfortunately, statistics shows that crime in Kiambu County was on an upward trend between 2010 and 2012.

The study found out that individual members of the community took various security measures to ensure their safety depending on one's economic status and geographical

location. Most residents had fenced their homesteads. Residents with vehicles had installed GPRS gadgets to help track down their stolen vehicles. The community members took the initiative to report home early. However, despite such measures, men and women seem to have continued to committing crime in Kiambu County. This implied that more needs to be done to curb crime in the County.

### 5.5 Conclusions

- This study concludes that although at different rate, men and women committed both misdemeanors and crimes of felony. However, inaccurate disaggregated crime records on the basis of gender rendered women's criminality 'invisible' and this enabled them to commit crimes with ease.
- Geographical location influenced the types of crimes committed and how either gender executed them. For instance, some crimes were concentrated in peri-urban regions, while others were rampant in rural regions.
- Causes of crime that were unique to Kiambu County included breakdown of family and social fabric, single parenthood, separation and rejection, land disputes and ownership of productive resources which were mainly in the hands of the older generation (especially men). In addition, children (especially boys) preferred to drop out of school in order to engage in crime.
- There were gender differences and similarities in crime commission. While men seemed to adhere to Gender Schema Theory of criminal behaviour, women went contrary to this by committing all types of crimes and even using lethal

weapons. However, they were seen to adhere to the theory in their choice of venues and motives to commit crime.

- The study findings showed that males were overrepresented as victims of life terminating crimes. For instance, boys were being killed by their mothers at a high rate while men constituted the bulk of murder, suicide, mob –injustice and sudden deaths victims. This meant that there was need to create awareness of this fact so that the County government could take the necessary action to protect the male gender.
- Although crime was committed by young and old persons alike, this study concludes that older persons (over 51 years) controlled much of the property in Kiambu County. This could breed frustration, resentment and bitterness among younger persons and women who had no access to or over land and other material property. Such tendencies brought about glaring economic gap and predisposed older persons to crime victimization such as murder, assault, arson among others.
- Although majority of male and female criminals committed crimes in the evenings, the study established gender differences in some crimes which were found consistent with gender organization. Most of the crimes occurred between April and September. These were rainy seasons within the County, where noise from raindrops and the luxuriant vegetation were favourable conditions to camouflage and conceal criminal activities.

- While men adhered to gender organization of aggression, women did not. This was because both men and women used similar weapons in crime commission - apart from strangling which was used by men and poison and acid used by women.
- Gender differences in decision-making as well as access to and control over productive resources were evident in choice of venues for committing crimes. Men committed crime in both public and private spheres while women committed most crimes in domestic spheres.
- This community seemed to have undergone a lot of transformation and degradation of moral values, culture and traditions which governed social interaction such as taboos and other social sanctions. The result was that crimes were committed among community members with little regard to kinship, intergenerational hierarchy and respect. Most crimes were committed against people known to the victims, such as parents, grandparents, siblings, children, wives and husbands among other relatives.
- While men and women committed similar crimes, they had distinct motives for each crime and the choice of gender of their victims. And that it's the motive that dictated the type and pattern of crimes committed by men and women.
- The study concludes that men's inability to provide for the family left the burden solely to the wives, and this led to problems in power relations among

couples. This, together with women's desire for economic empowerment, resulted into masculinity disorder and culminated in crime.

- In as much as the stakeholders had taken initiatives to curb crime within Kiambu County, they did not seem to have addressed corruption among the police force and the judicial system, or the never ending- emphasis on material wealth as a measure of a person's worth and success. Yet, the unequal distribution of resources and the large economic gap between different people living as neighbours seemed to breed bitterness and discontentment among the lower class. This needed to be addressed because it heightened the desire to commit crime. Additionally, law enforcers did not apprehend or convict the actual masterminds of criminal activities (such as drug peddling, kidnapping and carjacking) which were carried out in the County, but apprehended the hired criminals.
- Although the community seemed to realise ways through which crime could be minimized(or even eradicated), it overlooked issues relating to societal attitude towards money, education, crime, boy and girl child. It also left out land issues, inheritance and unequal distribution of resources as well as the economic gap which, if addressed, would be key to crime resolution in Kiambu County.

### **5.6.0 Recommendations**

This section provides a set of recommendations that were informed by the findings of this study.

### 5.6.1 Recommendations for policy

Our study established that the existing database was neither accurate nor disaggregated. Police should record data disaggregated by gender otherwise it will always be distorted and this could lead to false assessment and judgment about crime. Due to the burden that women have to bear, the government should embark on empowering them to renounce their criminality. This can be done through gender mainstreaming and affirmative action in education, formal employment and the agricultural sector, and offering credit facilities to women so that they invest in micro business to improve their social and economic condition in society.

Police training curriculum should include an anthropological gender study of the 42 ethnic communities in Kenya to re-socialize individual police officers in order to remove gender bias and stereotypes which they carry from their respective communities to workplaces. Those already in service should undergo in-service training and seminars on anthropological aspects of the community they are going to serve. Police administrators should deploy more police women into crime departments to be used to identify and apprehend women criminals as well as dislodge criminal gangs. In other words, the government should recruit more female police officers for training and deployment. For example, a study by Box and Hale (1983) in England and Wales discovered a relationship between women's crime rate and the number of women police officers. They concluded that female officers uncovered more crimes by females than their male counterparts.

Some of our findings revealed that majority of cases were stock theft. The Kenya Anti-Stock Theft Unit should, therefore, deploy personnel to work with regular police to reduce the crime in Kiambu County. Our study also discovered that land was a major cause of violent and property crime. Hence, land board meetings which facilitate land transfers should be decentralised and held at the grass root level (the assistant chief's office) rather than lands offices. It is only at village level that individuals consenting to land sale can be verified as genuine persons. This is because men are known to bring other women and children impersonators to appear before the land boards and sale consent is given without the family's knowledge.

This study established that Kiambu County's economy had shifted in favour of women. Consequently, there was a shift in gender preference from the boy to the girl child. Men's roles in the society had diminished and boys were being killed by their mothers because they were considered burdensome and a menace. The County and Central Governments need to address this apparent shift in focus using education as a tool to enhance gender transformation and balancing in order to ensure equal career opportunities in life for both boys and girls within the Country.

Media are great socializing agents. Psychologists contend that people exposed to televised violence eventually become violent in life. If crime is to reduce, the Ministry of Information, Communications and Technology should censure all features and entertainment programmes.

Community crime prevention programmes or strategies should target changes in community infrastructure, culture, or the physical environment in order to reduce

crime. The diversity of approaches should include neighborhood watch, community policing, and comprehensive or multi-disciplinary efforts. These strategies may seek to engage residents, community and faith-based organizations, and local government agencies in addressing the factors which contribute to the community's crime. For examples, encouraging youth to have more attachment to school and more involvement in pro-social activities which may decrease the probability of criminal involvement.

We recommend that gender studies be incorporated in the police curriculum so that the Police Service undergoes transformation of attitude and stereotypical views of men and women. This would enable them to be more responsive so that they take action on criminal offences without bias.

### **5.6.2 Recommendations for Stakeholders**

#### *a) Social skills and anger management training*

Our study recommends Social Skills Training (SST). SST can be used on offenders to improve competence in dealing with social interactions and conflict resolutions. The Kenya Counselling Association (KCA) in conjunction with NGOs and church-based organizations should design cognitive-behavioural programmes to be used as social skills training tools for men and women in churches and seminars. Such programmes should be gender responsive and tailor-cut to suit the differences between men and women in relation to their psychological and emotional needs. Through modelling and efficacy learning from teachers and peer counsellors, the programmes can also be used to train pupils and students during their life skills lessons in schools. Doing this would ensure that the school system presents society with well-balanced individuals able to

control their emotions. This would reduce crime such as assault, rape, murder, arson and malicious damage which are rampant within the County.

Management programmes for anger can also be used to reduce violent criminal acts. Once individuals learn to control anger they reduce their tendency to commit anger-related crimes. County counsellors should use such programmes during public *barazas* to train individuals on self-control. Acquisition of such skills would check against unnecessary high incidences of murder, assault, malicious damage, and arson in Kiambu County.

*b) Civic education*

Our study findings established that most crimes committed were related to the access and control of land and property. Chiefs, County Commissioners and other government officials should educate the older generation regarding the importance of sharing and apportioning property to the younger generation to ensure fair distribution of resources among the potential beneficiaries. The government and other stakeholders should hold fora and seminars on civic education to enlighten residents on the importance of making written wills to reduce conflicts among family members in cases of sudden death. Again, they should be enlightened on land issues and property rights. The Kenya New Constitution (2010) on property rights, especially as regards Matrimonial Property Rights, should be implemented in total. Such measures require gender transformation and eradication of retrogressive cultural and traditional practices which discriminate against women, as well as flexibility on gender roles that exclude one gender from opportunities and productive resources.

*c) Empowerment projects*

Our study findings indicated that crimes within Kiambu County resulted from poverty and the glaring economic-gap between the rich and the poor. To reduce economic-related crimes, this study recommends that the County Governor and other stakeholders should initiate all gender empowerment projects. Social workers and gender officers should ensure that while women become empowered, they are socialised on how to react and behave in their new status. Men should also be re-socialised on how to treat empowered women in order to live amicably and in harmony with each other. Again, men and women in Kiambu County should be re-socialised for change of attitude towards material wealth and education, culture and land, work and crime, parentage and family among other issues.

A gender specific programme should be drawn to improve men's productivity by reducing idleness and laziness which are rampant within the County. For instance, since the County has extensive banana plants in nearly every homestead, NGOs and social workers within the County should come up with programmes and projects aimed at training idle men to utilise the banana fibres to make artefacts for export. Through such projects, they would be responsible to their families because they would now be able to perform their assigned gender roles and this would eventually reduce crime considerably.

*d) Create awareness*

Our study revealed that most crimes were committed in the evenings and not at night as was the common assumption by most stakeholders. County administration officers in conjunction with preachers and teachers, through public barazas, public discourses and

schools, should take initiative to create awareness among residents about the need to remain alert both in the evenings and during the nights. Police officers should also intensify their patrols during these periods.

*e) Dealing with drugs*

This study also recommends that in dealing with drugs, police should not only track down the peddlers but also their employers and bring them to justice.

*f) Dealing with car-jacking*

In dealing with car-jacking, vehicle owners should install GPRS tracking systems because, as one convict put it, it is the only device which deters potential criminals from stealing cars.

*g) Address the root cause of crime*

Lastly, since this study established that property crime was a result of revenge and desire to compensate oneself, it recommends that the prosecutors and judiciary should investigate and address the root causes of crimes. Prisons should organize for restorative justice as a platform where offenders and victims are able to talk to one another. If that is not done, recidivism among released prisoners will always be high.

### **5.6.3. Recommendations for Further Research**

This study recommends the following;

- A similar study should be replicated in other Counties to test the conclusions drawn herewith.

- A study should be done to test the relationship between gender-related crimes and seasons.
- Another study should be conducted to establish why women stopped committing property crime after age 30, while men seemed to continue to old age.
- In addition, studies should be carried out on gender crimes within the Police Service, prison and on electronic crimes.
- Finally, further research should focus on effective strategies for gender transformation both at County and national levels.

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### APPENDIX 3

#### INSTRUMENT 2:

#### QUESTIONNAIRES / INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR POLICE OFFICERS

##### Introduction

My name is Muthoni Mainah from Kenyatta University, Department of Gender and Development Studies. I'm conducting a research on gender differentials of crimes committed in Kiambu County, purely for academic purposes.

I request your cooperation and I trust that you will assist in this very important study as you fill in the questionnaire.

I would like to assure you that the information you give will be treated with a lot of confidentiality.

Thank you very much in advance for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Florence Muthoni.

Adm. No. C82/11013/08

##### a) Demographic Data

Date \_\_\_\_\_

P/Division of the respondent \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

Station \_\_\_\_\_ Rank \_\_\_\_\_

*Please tick what is appropriate to you*

Gender of the respondent      male                      female

Age: 15- 19      20-29      30-39      40-49      50-59      60 and above

Marital status:      Single      Married      Divorced      Widowed

Number of years you have worked in Kiambu County?      Less than one      1-3      4-6      7-10  
10 and above

**Part two**

1. In your opinion, what factors contribute to crimes in Kiambu County?
2. What do you generally think about the trend and prevalence of crime in Kiambu County?
  - It is on the increase.
  - It is on the decrease.
- b) If increased, what is the cause?
- c) If decreased, what is the cause?
- d) Which type of crime would you say has been on increase in this region?
- 2) What types of crimes do you expect women to commit?
  - a) Where do they carry out these crimes?
  - b) What time do they carry them out?
  - c) What weapons do they use?
  - d) Which method do women use in committing crime?
  - e) Which method do men use in committing crime?
3. How does this society view criminality?
  - b) How does this society view male criminals?
  - c) How do they view female criminals?
4. Are all the crimes committed in this County reported?      Yes                      No
  - b) If no, why are some crimes not reported?
5. Which crimes are committed by women in this area and are not reported?
  - b) Why are these crimes not reported?
6. Which crimes are committed by men in this area and are not reported?
  - b) Why are these crimes not reported?

**Part Three**

1. Tick the kind of weapons used by female and by male criminals while committing crime?

Type of weapon	Male	Female
Simi		
Stones		
Gun		
Fist cuff		
Metal rods		
Hot water		
Name any other weapon used		

2. Why is there high rate of prostitution in this County?

3. What contribute to high cases of boy infanticide in this County?

4. What causes children to assault their parents in this County?

5. What makes young men rape old women in the County?

6. What is the motivation behind men and women committing the following crimes?

Type of crime	men motive to commit	Women motive to commit
a). assault		
b). murder		
c). burglary		
d).Malicious damage of property eg crops		
e). robbery/with violence		
f). car theft		

g). prostitution		
h). vandalism		
i). rape		
j). extortion		
k). drug abuse /alcohol		
l). forgery		

7. What makes men steal from women in this County?
8. Why is malicious damage of crop and property rampant in this region?
9. What factors contribute to stealing of domestic animals in this County?
10. Why are there high suicide cases among old and young men in this County?
11. Why are there high incidences of young men stealing food crops e.g arrow roots, maize e.tc?
12. What is the government doing to reduce crime in this region?
- b) What is the community doing to reduce crime in this region?
- c) What are individuals doing to reduce crime in the County?
- d) Why do the above strategies seem not to be effective?
13. What do you think should be done to reduce crimes committed by women?
14. What do you think should be done to reduce crimes committed by men?
15. Do you have anything else you wish to add?

**APPENDIX 4**  
**INSTRUMENT 3**  
**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR MCPCs**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Division of the respondents \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

Number of the respondents \_\_\_\_\_

Gender of the respondents            no of males -----            no of females-----

**Part two**

1. In your opinion, what factors contribute to crimes in Kiambu County?
2. Which of the following crimes do you associate more with men and with women criminals?

<b>Type of crime</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>women</b>
a). assault		
b). murder		
c). burglary		
d). petty theft		
e). robbery/with violence		
f). car theft		
g). prostitution		
h). vandalism		
i). rape		
j). extortion		
k). drug peddling		
l). alcoholism		
m). drug abuse		
n). malicious damage to property		
o) Carjacking		

3. What do you generally think about the trend and prevalence of crimes?

It is on the increase.

It is on the decrease.

b) If increased, what is the cause?

c) If decreased, what is the cause?

4. What types of crimes do you expect women to commit?

b) What types of crimes do you expect men to commit?

5. Are all crimes committed in this County reported?      Yes                      No

b) If no, why are some crimes not reported?

7. Which crimes are committed by women in this area and yet they are not reported?

b) Why are these crimes not reported?

8. Which crimes are committed by men in this area and are not reported?

b) Why are these crimes not reported?

9. Which weapons do you think women use to commit crimes?

b) Which weapons do you think men use to commit crimes?

10. Why is there high rate of prostitution in this County?

11. What contributes to high cases of boy infanticide in this County?

12. What causes children to assault their parents in this County?

13. What makes young men rape young girls and old women in the County?

14. Why is malicious damage of crop and property rampant in this region?

15. What factors contribute to more boys than girls dropping out of primary school?

16. What factors contribute to stealing of domestic animals in this county?

17. Why are there high suicide cases among old and young men in this county?

18. What motivates women to kill men in this County?

b) What made men kill fellow men in this County?

19. What factors contribute to drug and alcohol abuse in this region?

22. How does this society view its men criminals?

b) How do they view women criminals?

23. How do men use the resources they get from criminal activities?

b) How do women use the resources they get from criminal activities?

24. What is the government doing to reduce crime in this region?

b) What is the community doing to reduce crime in this region?

c) What are the individuals doing to reduce crime in this region?

d) Why do the above strategies seem not to be effective?

24. What do you think should be done to reduce crimes committed by women?

b. What do you think should be done to reduce crimes committed by men?

c) Give any other recommendations.



b) Why are these crimes not reported?

6 a). Which crimes are committed by men in this area and are not reported?

b) Why are these crimes not reported?

7. What is the motivation behind men and women committing the following crimes?

Type of crime	men motive to commit	Women motive to commit
a). assault		
b). murder		
c). burglary		
d). Malicious damage of property eg crops		
e). robbery/with violence		
f). car theft		
g). prostitution		
h). vandalism		
i). rape		
j). extortion		
k). drug abuse		
l). forgery		

8. Which weapons do people use in the type of crime you have been incarcerated for?

9. What do you think should be done to reduce crimes committed by women in the community?

10. What do you think should be done to reduce crimes committed by men in the community?

11. Do you have anything else you wish to add?

## APPENDIX 6: AUTHORIZATION LETTER

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



### NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telegrams: "SCIENCETECH", Nairobi  
 Telephone: 254-020-241349, 2213102,  
 254-020-310571, 2213123  
 Fax: 254-020-2213215, 318243, 318249  
 When replying please quote

P.O. Box 30623-00100  
 NAIROBI-KENYA  
 Website: www.ncst.go.ke

Our Ref.

NCST/RR1/12/1/SS-011/37/4

Date:

31<sup>st</sup> August, 2011

Florence Muthoni Mainah  
 Kenyatta University  
 P. O. Box 43844  
 NAIROBI

#### RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Gender differentials in crime commission in Kiambu County*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Kaimbu and Nairobi & other selected Districts** for a period ending **28<sup>th</sup> February, 2013**

You are advised to report to the **Commissioner of Prisons, Kenya Prisons Service, the Commissioner of Police and the District Commissioners of selected Districts** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **one hard copy and one soft copy** of the research report/thesis to our office.

**P. N. NYAKUNDI**  
**FOR: SECRETARY/CEO**

Copy to:

The Commissioner of Prisons  
 Kenya Prisons Service  
 NAIROBI

The Commissioner of Police