THE EFFECTS OF IMPRISONMENT ON RECIDIVISM AMONG RECIDIVIST OFFENDERS: A STUDY OF KIBOS MAIN, KIBOS MEDIUM AND KISUMU WOMEN PRISONS, KISUMU COUNTY, KENYA

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Criminology of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

November. 2025

DECLARATION AND CERTIFICATION

Declaration

This research thesis is my original work and has not been presented to any examination body. No part of this research thesis should be produced without my consent or that of the college.

Sign…… Date……

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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that they have read and hereby recommend for acceptance of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology a thesis entitled: **"The Effects of Imprisonment on Recidivism among recidivist offenders: A study of Kibos main, Kibos medium and Kisumu women prison, Kisumu county, Kenya"**

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated, first and foremost, to my beloved wife, Lynn Cheruto, and our dear children, Jedidah and Romiel, my parents, Jafred Wanyama Simiyu and Mary Kavala Wanyama whose unwavering love, patience, and encouragement have been my greatest source of strength throughout this academic journey and to Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology for the opportunity to study.

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ABSTRACT

Despite significant governmental efforts in Kenya to reduce recidivism, the rate of reoffending among ex-convicts remains high, raising concerns about the effectiveness of existing correctional programs. This study aimed to examine the effects of imprisonment on recidivism among recidivist in Kisumu County, Kenya, with specific focus on three variables: prison-based treatment, inmate interaction, and re-integrative programs. The study was guided by Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory and Howard Becker's Labeling Theory. This study adopted a descriptive research design. In addition, the study employed explanatory mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The target population comprised 946 individuals, from which a sample of 254 was selected using Krejcie and Morgan's Table and Neyman's Allocation Formula. Data collection tools included structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using *IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 25.0*. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were used to summarize respondent characteristics and major study variables. Inferential statistics were employed to examine relationships among the objectives. Specifically, Chi-square tests were used to assess associations between categorical variables, while Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient measured the strength and direction of relationships between continuous variables. Additionally, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to compare group means across key variables. All tests were conducted at a 95% confidence level, with statistical significance set at $p < .05$. Qualitative data, obtained from open-ended survey items and interviews, were transcribed verbatim, coded, and analyzed using a thematic approach. The research was conducted in three correctional institutions: Kibos Main Prison, Kibos Medium Prison, and Kisumu Women Prison. Findings indicated a strong inverse relationship between prison-based treatment and recidivism ($r = .901$; $R^2 = .812$), and between re-integrative programs and recidivism ($r = .-871$; $R^2 = .758$). Conversely, inmate interaction showed a significant positive correlation with recidivism ($r = .689$; $R^2 = .643$). A combined regression model demonstrated that these three variables collectively explained 66% of the variance in recidivism. The study concludes that imprisonment in its current form is not uniformly effective in reducing recidivism. Its success depends on the presence of rehabilitative infrastructure, the management of inmate socialization, and the availability of post-release support. First, the study recommends that correctional institutions invest more substantially in rehabilitation infrastructure. This includes recruiting qualified trainers and counselors, upgrading vocational and educational facilities, and ensuring that treatment programs are relevant to both inmate needs and labor market demands. Second, regarding prisoner interaction, prisons should design and implement structured engagement programs that foster positive socialization. Activities such as peer mentorship, faith-based dialogue, recreational sports, and staff-facilitated group discussions can help transform inmate relationships into tools for behavioral change. Lastly there is need for establishment of a coordinated framework for post-release support involving correctional institutions, probation officers, local government, NGOs, and community organizations.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACSA: African Correctional Services Association International

CGP: Commissioner General of Prisons

CJC: Criminal justice and Correction

GK: Government of Kenya

ICCPPC: International Commission for Catholic Prisons Pastoral Care

ICPA: Corrections and Prisons Association

KNCS: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

KPS: Kenya Prison Service

NACOSTI: National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation

NGO: Non-governmental organization

NIJ: National Institute of Justice

RODI: Resources Oriented Development initiatives

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Science

UNAFRI: United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

VTP: Vocational Training Programs

KPS: Kenya Prisons Service

COVID 19: Coronavirus disease 2019

NCAJ : National Council on the Administration of Justice

KNCHR: Kenya National Commission on Human Rights

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Imprisonment: In this study, imprisonment refers to the lawful confinement of individuals in government-run correctional institutions (such as Kodiaga, Kibos Main, and Kibos Women Prisons) following a criminal conviction. It encompasses both the duration and the conditions of confinement**,** including access to rehabilitation programs, security levels, and institutional routines.

Recidivism: Recidivism is defined as the act of reoffending or being re-arrested, reconvicted, or reincarcerated within a specific period after release from prison. In this study, it refers to any post-release criminal behavior reported or recorded within three years of an inmate's release.

Rehabilitation Programs: Rehabilitation programs include formal in-prison interventions aimed at reforming inmates' behavior, such as vocational training, life skills education, psychological counseling, and substance abuse treatment. The study operationalized this variable by measuring inmate participation and type of program accessed.

Reintegration Support: Reintegration support refers to the services and resources provided to ex-prisoners after release to facilitate their re-entry into society. In this study, it includes access to housing, employment opportunities, family reunification support, and community supervision**.** It was assessed using self-reported experiences from ex-convicts and interviews with probation officers.

Inmate Interaction: This term refers to the social relationships and peer dynamics within prison settings. It captures the degree to which inmates are influenced by their fellow prisoners whether

positively through peer support or negatively through exposure to hardened criminals. It was measured using both survey responses and officer interviews**.**

Prison acculturation: Is the cultural modification of an individual, group, or people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture. In this study it is where an inmate adapts to certain traits and identifies with them in prison.

Prison Subculture: These are groups that come up in prison with different aims and purposes.

Prisoner- this is a person who has been found guilty of crime and sentenced to correctional institution to serve his term.

Prisons: In this study, prisons refer to state-managed correctional facilities where individuals are lawfully confined, either while awaiting trial (remand) or following a criminal conviction. The term specifically applies to Kodiaga Prison, Kibos Main Prison, and Kibos Women's Prison in Kisumu County, which were the primary study sites.

Professional Counseling: Structured psychological support services delivered by trained personnel within correctional institutions. This study considers counseling programs targeting behavior modification, substance abuse treatment, trauma recovery, and emotional regulation as part of in-prison rehabilitation efforts.

Re-arrest: Refers to the act of being apprehended by law enforcement after release from a previous incarceration, due to alleged involvement in another criminal act. In this study, re-arrest is treated as one indicator of recidivism and is measured through self-reported experiences and official records.

Recidivist: A person who has re-engaged in criminal behavior after previously serving a sentence for an earlier offense. This study identifies recidivists through both self-identification and institutional data, focusing on individuals with two or more recorded offenses or incarcerations.

Reconviction: The act of being found guilty in a court of law following a previous conviction and release. It is used in the study as a legal indicator of recidivism and is tracked through reported cases and correctional officer feedback.

Re-entry Programs: Structured interventions aimed at helping ex-offenders transition back into society and reduce the likelihood of reoffending. These include job placement services, housing support, family reunification assistance, and counseling, as assessed in the study through qualitative interviews and document analysis.

Reforms: Institutional strategies within the prison system aimed at rehabilitating offenders and reducing recidivism, such as vocational training, professional counseling, education, and religious programs. This term is used to analyze the systemic capacity of prisons to meet rehabilitative goals.

Rehabilitation: The process of restoring offenders to law-abiding status through in-prison interventions like education, therapy, vocational training, and counseling. In this study, rehabilitation is measured by inmate participation in such programs and their post-release outcomes.

Religion in Rehabilitation: Refers to faith-based programs and activities (e.g., chapel services, spiritual mentorship, religious counseling) that aim to instill moral values, self-control, and

social accountability in inmates. The study considers religious participation as one element of informal rehabilitation.

Vocational Training: Technical and skills-based training programs offered within prison settings to prepare inmates for gainful employment post-release. In this study, vocational training includes tailoring, carpentry, metalwork, and agricultural activities, measured by participation rates and perceived usefulness.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Globally, confinement remains the primary response nations deploy to address criminal activities, serving both punitive and corrective functions. Nevertheless, mounting evidence suggests that incarceration alone often fails to deter future criminal behavior. According to international statistics, recidivism rates frequently range between 30% and 60% within a few years of release (UNODC, 2018). In Kenya and other sub-Saharan nations, systemic challenges such as overcrowding, inadequate rehabilitation infrastructure, and insufficient post-release support undermine the potential of prisons to reduce reoffending. Recent reports from the Kenya Prisons Service reveal that more than one-third of released individuals are returned to custody within three years of release, raising concerns about the effectiveness of the correctional system.

Imprisonment is the confinement of an offender in a facility or environment that is intended to restrain the offender's movement and freedom (Hall, 2018). The facilities responsible for confinement include prisons and other penal facilities like treatment centers (Green, Donald, & Winik, 2015). The social benefits to imprisonment are traditionally thought of in three separate categories that are incapacitation, general deterrence and specific deterrence (Ramagaga, 2019). However, rehabilitation requires interventions that reduce offending causes or improve an individual's capacity to resist criminal behavior (Kowalski & Bellai, 2018).

Despite global investment in prisons, prisoner numbers and related costs continue to rise (MacDonald, 2018; McLaughlin, 2016). Studies show that a significant proportion of crimes

are committed by individuals recently released from custody (Petersilia, 2011). In the U.S., for instance, 20% of released prisoners reoffend violently within three years (Alper, 2018), while the UK grapples with the socio-economic burden of reoffending (Newton, 2019). Global prison populations increased by 20% from 2000 to 2016 (Walmsley, 2016), with variations across continents: Oceania (59%), Americas (41%), Asia (29%), and Africa (15%) (Jacobson, Heard, & Fair, 2017). In contrast, Europe experienced a 21% decline.

The world has seen an approximate 20 percent increase in prison population; it is predicted that between the years 2000 and 2016, the world has also experienced an 18 percent rise in population of the same period. Over 55 percent (55%) of member countries of the United Nations had less than 150 prisoners per 100,000 of the population (Jacobson, 2017; Walmsley, 2016; UNODC, 2015). Same sources show that the prison population was quite different in different areas and countries. As an example; in United States it rose to approximately 500,000 in 1980s, reached its peak of more than 2.3 million in 2008, in Brazil 30,000 in 1973 to over 600,000 in 2015, in England and Wales 40,000 in 1975 to 87,000 by 2012 (Jacobson et al., 2017).

Moreover, prison population in Oceania grew by 59 percent between the year 2000 and 2015, America 41 percent, Asia, 29 percent, and Africa, 15 percent. In comparison, there was a 21% decline in the total prison population in countries in Europe Jacobson, J., Heard, C., & Fair, H. (2017). On the one hand, the global world has adopted imprisonment as the main institution and way out of tasks presented with punishment, correction, and rehabilitation of convicts, crime and social disorder reduction Yukhnenko, Farouki, & Fazel (2022). These percentages pose critical issues on the behaviors of reintegration of ex-prisoners and re-convicting.

In Africa, similar trends persist. Countries such as South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya report rising rates of reoffending, pointing to systemic challenges within prison systems. The continent's criminal justice systems are often characterized by overcrowded prisons, inadequate rehabilitation programs, and limited post-release support structures (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2020). Factors such as overcrowding, lack of rehabilitation programs, poor reintegration support, and stigma contribute to these outcomes. In Kenya, the Kenya Prisons Service reports that over 47% of released offenders return to prison within three years of release (Kenya Prison Annual Report, 2021). These statistics indicate a gap between the intended rehabilitative role of imprisonment and actual outcomes in offender reform.

Moreover, socio-economic factors such as poverty, unemployment, and social stigma significantly contribute to reoffending among former inmates (Omale, 2014). Some African nations have adopted alternative sentencing mechanisms, including community service and parole programs, to reduce prison congestion and enhance reintegration efforts (Penal Reform International, 2021). Although the Prisons Act provides for offender rehabilitation, reintegration programs such as vocational training, counseling, and parole are underdeveloped. The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS, 2021) reports that nearly 26% of the prison population consists of repeat offenders, with a 47% reoffending rate within three years.

Kenya’s prison system is marked by overcrowding, under-resourced programs, and poor post-release support. Approximately 47% of ex-prisoners reoffend within three years (KNBS, 2021). Although the Prisons Act emphasizes rehabilitation, efforts such as vocational training and halfway houses have yielded limited success (NCAJ, 2018; Muigua, 2020; Omboto, 2013). A study by Oruta (2019) showed a 75% likelihood of recidivism and a 50% chance of re-

incarceration within two years. Oruta, Omosa, and Lusire (2017) further found that longer prison terms worsened reentry outcomes due to disintegrated families and employment barriers.

Numerous studies on prison-based treatment have been conducted (e.g., Omboto, 2013; Kowalski & Bellai, 2011; Deady, 2014), but most suffer from key limitations. For instance, Kowalski & Bellai (2011) studied sex offenders using predominantly univariate analysis, without theoretical grounding. Deady (2014) focused on U.S. inmates with small sample sizes, limiting generalizability to the Kenyan context. This current study seeks to address these gaps by adopting a theory-driven, Kenya-specific, and mixed-methods approach with a sufficiently large sample and robust multivariate analysis.

Moreover, scholars like Lois (2013) and Gaes (2013) demonstrate how *prisonization* where inmates adopt criminal norms can erode conventional values, increasing the likelihood of reoffending. Bazemore & Stinchcomb (2011) and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2012) emphasize how broken relational bonds and societal rejection of ex-offenders hinder reintegration, necessitating programs that promote community acceptance.

A major challenge in evaluating recidivism is the reliance on incomplete official records. Maltz (2004) notes that since not all crimes are reported or lead to convictions, recorded recidivism data underrepresents the full scope. This study addresses this by using mixed data sources official records, interviews, and surveys to capture a more comprehensive picture.

These realities highlight why incarceration's effects are highly context-specific. Abrams, Bertrand, & Mullainathan (2013) argue that imprisonment may either reform or worsen criminal tendencies, depending on inmates' backgrounds, prison conditions, and available programs.

Hence, assessing the impact of prison-based treatment and inmate interactions on recidivism in Kisumu County becomes crucial.

Despite global efforts, significant gaps remain in evaluating how prison environments shape post-release behavior. Thus, this study investigates how imprisonment through the lenses of prison-based treatment, inmate interaction, and reintegration support affects recidivism in Kisumu County. It adopts a theory-driven, mixed-methods approach to generate policy-relevant evidence for sustainable reform in Kenya's criminal justice system.

Kisumu County mirrors this challenge. Home to correctional facilities such as Kibos Main, Kibos Medium, and Kisumu Women's Prisons, the region has experienced adverse trends in reoffending. Despite operating vocational and educational programs, these prisons often lack the sufficient resources, quality supervision, and consistent implementation necessary to achieve tangible reform. Ex-inmates frequently encounter significant obstacles, including unemployment, social ostracism, and emotional trauma, which heighten their vulnerability to reoffending. These conditions point to a critical need for empirical research focused on the links between prison experiences and recidivism to inform policy and practice in Kenya.

This study is anchored on the recognition that without effective in-prison treatment and structured post-release support, incarceration may not achieve its reformative purpose. The study, therefore, sought to investigate how imprisonment experiences influence recidivism in Kisumu County, with a view to recommending practical and policy-level interventions.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although Kenya's penal system purports to support offender rehabilitation and community reintegration, recidivism continues to be a pressing issue. Recent data from the Kenya Prisons Service indicate that approximately 35% of ex-offenders return to prison within three years. This is particularly pronounced in Kisumu County, where limited resources, inconsistent rehabilitation programming, and gaps in reintegration services undermine the effectiveness of correctional institutions.

Between 2019 and 2022, Kenya's correctional facilities reported an average recidivism rate of 12%, with prison populations surging by 82% post-COVID-19. By December 2023, the prison system was operating at 176.5% of its intended capacity, with 213% occupancy across 108 institutions designed for 26,757 inmates. Repeat offenders make up nearly 26% of the current prison population (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics [KNBS], 2021). These statistics point to significant reintegration barriers, such as limited post-release support, high unemployment, social stigma, and weakened familial ties. For instance, Dennis and Lumiti (2004, as cited in Ramagaga, 2019) observed that 60% of inmates released under Presidential amnesty end up re-incarcerated, evidence of the revolving door phenomenon that defines recidivism in Kenya.

Most existing studies in Kenya have taken descriptive or regional approaches, with limited use of theoretical frameworks or quantifiable measures of imprisonment effects on reoffending. There is a growing need for locally grounded, empirically robust research in Kisumu County to investigate how participation in prison-based treatment, inmate peer dynamics, and the presence or absence of reintegration support affect recidivism rates. This study seeks to address this gap

by evaluating these relationships through a structured, measurable approach, offering insights for more effective policy and practice in reducing reoffending.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 Main Objective

The main objective of the study was to examine the effect of Imprisonment on recidivism; a study of Kisumu County, Kenya

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

This study was guided by the following specific objectives

1) To determine the influence of prison-based treatment on recidivism
2) To assess the outcome of prisoners interaction on recidivism
3) To evaluate the impact of re-integrative programs on recidivism

1.4 Research questions

This study will be guided by the following research questions

1) What is the influence of prison-based treatment on recidivism?
2) How does prisoner's interaction affect recidivism?
3) What are the effects of the re-integrative program on recidivism?

1.5 Justification of the Study

This study is justified on three fronts: academic contribution, policy relevance, and philosophical grounding. It explores the effects of imprisonment on recidivism in Kisumu County, Kenya, and seeks to inform both scholarly discourse and practical correctional reform.

1.5.1 Academic justification

This study is expected to provide valuable knowledge to scholars and students interested in criminal justice, particularly in the area of recidivism and offender rehabilitation. By exploring the specific effects of imprisonment on reoffending, it contributes to the expansion of academic discourse and provides a model for future empirical investigations. Additionally, the study strengthens existing literature by integrating theoretical frameworks namely Social Learning Theory and Labeling Theory into its analysis, which may offer new perspectives on correctional practices within Kenya's context.

The research also enriches the methodological landscape by employing a mixed-methods approach, combining both statistical and narrative data. This approach will be beneficial for other researchers seeking to conduct holistic evaluations of prison effectiveness, especially in African settings where local studies remain limited. Ultimately, the academic community gains not only new insights into recidivism trends but also a grounded reference for comparative research.

1.5.2 Policy justification

From a policy standpoint, this study aims to offer evidence-based insights that can inform national and county-level interventions targeting recidivism. The findings are expected to aid correctional officers, prison administrators, probation departments, and policy-makers in evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of current prison practices. Through its recommendations, the study could help shape future correctional reforms, especially those that emphasize treatment-based incarceration and structured reentry support.

Furthermore, this research aligns with Kenya's Vision 2030 agenda, particularly its emphasis on improving safety and security through institutional reform and crime reduction. The study's findings may support legislative priorities, help justify budget allocations for rehabilitative services, and encourage more inclusive reintegration programs for ex-offenders. It also responds to the public's growing concern about crime and offender reintegration, helping foster better understanding of the role prisons play in either curbing or perpetuating criminal behavior.

1.5.3 Philosophical justification

This study is grounded in philosophical orientations that shape its methodological choices and interpretation of findings. From an ontological perspective, the study adopts critical realism, acknowledging that correctional systems operate as structured entities that influence and are influenced by human behavior. It recognizes prisons as real institutions with tangible effects on offenders' post-release experiences.

Epistemologically, the study combines positivist and interpretivist paradigms through a mixed-methods design. The quantitative aspect examines measurable relationships between imprisonment and recidivism, while the qualitative component captures the lived experiences of ex-prisoners and correctional staff, revealing deeper social and psychological dimensions.

Finally, in terms of axiology, the study upholds ethical research principles and emphasizes the value-laden nature of punishment, rehabilitation, and social reintegration. It acknowledges the implications of correctional practices on marginalized groups and aims to generate practical knowledge that upholds justice, fairness, and human dignity.

1.6 Scope of the study

This study investigates the effects of imprisonment on recidivism within Kisumu County, Kenya. It specifically examines how prison-based treatment programs, inmate social interactions, and post-release reintegration experiences influence the likelihood of reoffending.

1.6.1 Time Frame

The study was done within 12 months, between January and December 2022. Data data collection was done in January to March 2022, and the data was analyzed in April-August 2022. The research was based on the mixed method, as it combined quantitative and qualitative research. The qualitative data that allowed gaining an in-depth picture of the factors influencing recidivism.

1.6.2 Geographical Focus and Generalizability

While the study is geographically confined to Kisumu County, its findings may offer insights applicable to other regions in Kenya facing similar challenges in the correctional system. However, due to regional variations in prison conditions, rehabilitation programs, and socio-economic factors, caution should be exercised when generalizing the results beyond Kisumu County.

1.6.3 Content Scope

The study focused on three main variables: prison-based treatment, inmate interaction, and reintegrative programs, as they relate to recidivism.

1.7 Limitation to the Study

The research was conducted in a main and medium-security prison where access to the facilities and being allowed to collect data was anticipated to be difficult. This was countered by presenting a research permit from NACOSTI and a letter from the University which requested the administration of the prisons to allow the researcher to collect information from the respondents. The study was also performed during the respondents' routine jobs and other inmate activities and routines; therefore time to fill in the questionnaires was seen to be difficult. This was countered by constant communication between the researcher and the administrators of prisons under study to find the opportune time for data collection. Information regarded as confidential was also foreseen to be difficult to get from the respondents which were countered by the researcher clarifying the purpose and importance of the study to the respondents.

1.8 Assumption of the study

One of the key assumptions of this study was that male and female prisons are experiencing identical problems. The environment and the resources available in both prison environments are comparable. This is in order to provide a comprehensive overview of all prisons in Kenya as opposed to a single correctional center. As such, it was supposed that study samples were heterogeneous, to produce representative data on the whole population.

The initial assumption was that; the prison officials would take time to allow the inmates to be interviewed and complete the questionnaires without fear, and that the officers in-charge will be willing to take the questionnaires without fear or intimidation by the prison authority. A

presumption was that Prison authority possessed enough information of the trained convicts who already found their place in the society.

1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter covered background of the study, statement of the problem, both general and specific objectives, research questions, limitation and justifications of the study. The chapter further address the scope of the study, and assumption of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews existing scholarly literature relevant to the effects of imprisonment on recidivism, particularly within correctional settings in Kenya and comparable regions. The review focuses on key variables including the nature of imprisonment, prison conditions, reintegration efforts, and policy frameworks. The aim is to identify what is already known, reveal existing contradictions or limitations, and demonstrate the need for the current study. Summary of the Literature review, theoretical framework and conceptual model.

2.0 Effects of Imprisonment on Recidivism

The debate on whether imprisonment deters crime or fosters further criminality remains central in criminological discourse. On one side, scholars argue that imprisonment achieves deterrence through incapacitation and retribution (Nagin, 2013). On the other hand, critics contend that incarceration fosters recidivism by exposing individuals to criminal subcultures and reinforcing stigmatization (Duwe, 2017).

While Nagin (2013) defends imprisonment's role in deterrence, he offers little empirical grounding in the African context, where overcrowding, weak rehabilitation, and poor reintegration skew outcomes. Duwe (2017), although persuasive in discussing criminogenic prison effects, bases his conclusions on U.S. data, which may not translate well to under-resourced Kenyan facilities. This limitation highlights a persistent gap: most global studies lack contextual relevance to sub-Saharan penal systems.

In Kenya, Omboto (2013) and Oruta (2019) note that imprisonment has limited rehabilitative outcomes due to lack of structured programs. However, their studies largely remain descriptive,

failing to offer theory-driven, multivariate analysis. Moreover, few consider inmates' lived experiences, further limiting their explanatory power.

Studies like Bazemore & Stinchcomb (2011) rightly emphasize the role of community rejection in recidivism. Yet their frameworks are Western-centric and neglect the role of familial ties and informal economies, which are critical in Kenya's reintegration process. Similarly, Maltz (2004) critiques official data's incompleteness, yet does not provide solutions for triangulating data through qualitative means something this study addresses.

In summary, existing studies have identified that imprisonment can either deter or exacerbate reoffending. However, there are three critical gaps: (i) most research is descriptive and fails to test theoretical explanations such as Social Learning or Labeling Theory in the Kenyan context; (ii) there is limited comparative analysis of how prison-based treatment, inmate interaction, and reintegration interact to shape recidivism; and (iii) most studies rely on official records alone, which underreport actual reoffending (Maltz, 2004). This study addresses these gaps by using a theory-driven, mixed-methods approach with a larger and more representative sample from Kisumu County.

2.1 Concept and Causes of Recidivism

Recidivism, broadly defined as the relapse into criminal behavior, is often measured by re-arrest, reconviction, or re-incarceration. Scholars such as Visher and Travis (2003) argue that while recidivism rates are high globally, the phenomenon is rooted in systemic failures such as insufficient rehabilitation and reintegration frameworks. Recidivism is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by a range of personal, institutional, and societal factors. The

recurrence of criminal behavior post-release reveals systemic gaps in the correctional, reintegration, and justice systems. This section critically examines the leading causes of recidivism from both global and Kenyan perspectives.

2.1.1 Socioeconomic Disadvantage

Socioeconomic disadvantage remains one of the strongest predictors of recidivism. Duwe (2017) notes that unemployment and low education levels limit legal livelihood options for ex-offenders, pushing them back into crime. However, this analysis is largely Western-centric and assumes the availability of welfare systems, which do not exist in Kenya. In Kisumu County, unemployment rates exceed the national average, and ex-offenders often return to informal settlements where opportunities are scarce (KNBS, 2021). Omboto (2013) similarly observes that Kenyan prison systems do not provide sufficient vocational or entrepreneurial support to address these systemic challenges.

This gap underscores the need for context-specific studies, such as the current research, to examine how economic marginalization drives reoffending locally.In Kenya, Omboto (2013) and Oruta (2019) found that ex-convicts, especially in urban slums and informal settlements, are often trapped in cycles of poverty and criminality. In Kisumu County, the concentration of ex-prisoners in densely populated areas like Nyalenda or Obunga further compounds these vulnerabilities.

2.1.2 Stigma and Social Labeling

Labeling Theory (Becker, 1963) posits that being branded a "criminal" can create a self-fulfilling cycle, as stigmatized individuals internalize societal rejection. While this is widely

accepted, few Kenyan studies have empirically tested how stigma translates into recidivism. Oruta (2021) found that over 60% of ex-offenders in Kisumu were denied employment due to their criminal records, which increased their likelihood of reoffending. This aligns with findings in the U.S. (Pager, 2007) but may have even greater consequences in Kenya, where social safety nets are limited. The present study addresses this by capturing lived experiences of stigma during reintegration.

Maruna (2001) observed that rejection from family, employers, and communities reinforces negative self-perceptions, pushing ex-offenders toward reoffending. Muigua (2020) notes that in Kenya, the stigma surrounding imprisonment is so strong that many ex-inmates are denied employment, housing, and even participation in religious activities. In Kisumu, several ex-convicts interviewed by Oruta (2021) expressed feelings of invisibility and hopelessness, citing rejection by both community members and relatives.

2.1.3 Weak or Absent Reintegration Support

Effective reintegration is contingent upon transitional services such as housing, job placement, and community mentorship (Bazemore & Stinchcomb, 2011). However, Kenya lacks structured halfway houses or probation programs that can guide ex-offenders during the high-risk post-release period (Muigua, 2020). International evidence shows that structured reentry programs reduce reoffending by 25–30% (Davis et al., 2013), yet these findings cannot be directly transferred to Kenya due to systemic underfunding and weak coordination between prisons and community-based organizations. This study seeks to determine how such service gaps affect recidivism in Kisumu County.

While high-income countries have structured re-entry frameworks, Kenya lacks coordinated post-release services, leaving ex-inmates vulnerable to unemployment and stigma (Muigua, 2020). Labeling Theory (Becker, 1963) suggests that such social rejection can entrench criminal identities.

This study builds on these insights by analyzing whether limited reintegration support in Kisumu County predicts higher rates of reoffending.Bazemore and Stinchcomb (2011) argue that many criminal justice systems release inmates without adequate preparation for reentry. In Kenya, reintegration services are fragmented and poorly funded. Karanja (2018) asserts that only a few NGOs in Nairobi, Eldoret, and Kisumu provide post-release support. Without case management or follow-up, ex-offenders fall through the cracks, increasing their risk of reoffending.

2.1.4 Inadequate Prison-Based Rehabilitation

Davis et al. (2013) warn that incarceration without rehabilitation leads to the "warehousing of offenders," where inmates leave prison no better equipped than when they entered. Kenyan prisons often exemplify this problem, offering sporadic or poorly resourced rehabilitation initiatives (Omboto, 2013; Julius & Omondi, 2021). Unlike Western systems, which integrate individualized case planning and cognitive-behavioral therapy, Kenya's rehabilitation tends to be one-size-fits-all, reducing its effectiveness. This study adds to the literature by assessing whether existing rehabilitation initiatives in Kisumu County reduce recidivism or simply occupy inmates' time. In the Kenyan context, Omboto (2013) and Julius & Omondi (2021) found that rehabilitative services are inconsistently implemented. Many inmates in Kisumu

County prisons report receiving no formal training or support. The failure to tailor rehabilitation to individual risks and needs reduces its effectiveness.

2.1.5 Peer Influence and Prison Subculture

The prison environment often fosters a subculture that glorifies crime and discourages reform. Clemmer (1940) termed this process "prisonization," in which inmates internalize prison norms and identities. Goffman (1961) described the prison as a "total institution" that isolates inmates from social reality and fosters antisocial norms. In Kisumu, Oruta (2021) observed that first-time offenders are often housed with repeat or violent offenders, increasing exposure to criminal ideologies. Lack of inmate classification systems leads to a blending of risk categories, making prisons breeding grounds for reoffending behavior.

2.1.6 Psychological and Emotional Challenges

Untreated trauma, mental illness, and substance dependency are major drivers of recidivism (Johnson, 2011). Yet in Kenya, mental health services in prisons are virtually nonexistent; most inmates rely on chaplaincy or NGO volunteers for psychological support (Julius & Omondi, 2021). While such interventions provide comfort, they often lack clinical rigor. This highlights a significant service gap that exacerbates reoffending, as untreated mental health issues manifest in impulsive behavior and substance relapse upon release. In Kenya, professional psychologists are rare in prisons, and most counseling is offered by religious volunteers. Julius & Omondi (2021) emphasize that such interventions, while important, are not sufficient to address clinical mental health needs. Emotional issues remain latent and resurface post-release, especially under stress.

2.1.7 Criminal Justice System Failures

Justice system inefficiencies such as prolonged trials, lack of parole structures, and overreliance on custodial sentences discourage reform. ICJ Kenya (2016) notes that pre-trial detention in Kenya can last several years, disrupting family, employment, and rehabilitation continuity. Further, the absence of individualized sentence planning or probation monitoring undermines recidivism prevention. In Kisumu County, anecdotal evidence suggests that parole boards rarely function, and follow-up after release is minimal or nonexistent.

2.1.8 Lack of Community and Family Engagement

Communities and families are essential partners in successful reintegration. Penal Reform International (2021) underscores that ex-offenders who return to supportive families are less likely to reoffend. However, in Kenya, incarceration often breaks family bonds, especially when the sentence is long or the offense is seen as shameful. Many former inmates in Kisumu report being shunned or even disowned. Without a family safety net, they become vulnerable to homelessness, addiction, or criminal networks.

2.1.9 Technological and Digital Exclusion

With the digital economy growing rapidly, ex-prisoners who lack basic digital skills are at a disadvantage. According to the World Bank (2021), digital illiteracy increases the risk of economic exclusion. Kenyan prisons rarely offer digital skills training. When ex-offenders re-enter society, they often cannot access online jobs, mobile banking, or even digital government services, limiting reintegration opportunities.

2.1.10 Institutional Culture and Corruption

A punitive prison culture discourages rehabilitation and promotes fear, survivalism, and manipulation. Studies by Liebling & Arnold (2004) show that prison environments that lack dignity and fairness undermine offender reform. In Kenya, reports of bribery, favoritism, and neglect by correctional officers are common (KNCHR, 2020). This fosters distrust between inmates and the system, weakening engagement with rehabilitative efforts.

Most existing research is anchored in Western penal systems, which have fundamentally different resources, legal frameworks, and social support networks. As a result, their findings cannot be generalized to Kenya without careful contextualization. There is an urgent need for studies that capture the interplay between poverty, stigma, weak reintegration programs, and prison conditions in sub-Saharan Africa. This study addresses this gap by focusing on Kisumu County, where these structural barriers are particularly pronounced.

2.1.11 Imprisonment and Its Relationship with Recidivism

Imprisonment has traditionally been viewed through the lens of deterrence theory, where the threat or experience of punishment discourages future criminal acts (Apel & Nagin, 2014). However, studies increasingly question this assumption, arguing that for many, prison is a normalized experience with minimal deterrent effect (Fazel & Baillargeon, 2019). In Kenya, the normalization of imprisonment among repeat offenders suggests that the deterrent value may be eroding. Moreover, the specific conditions under which punishment becomes rehabilitative or criminogenic remain underexplored locally. Thus, this research investigates whether the punitive nature of Kenyan prisons aligns with or undermines recidivism reduction efforts.

Various studies have been conducted to determine the correlation between incarceration and recidivism. According to Nagin, Cullen, and Jonson (2009), imprisonment fails to act as a potential deterrent in most cases and can even lead to recidivism through the effects of stigmatization and institutionalization. On the same note, Cullen et al. (2011) posit that the criminal justice system is more inclined towards punitive than rehabilitative models, a factor that is a hindrance to long-term crime desistance.

The idea that the prison experience itself is a deterrent is based on the basic form of specific deterrence theory (Nagin, Cullen, & Jonson, 2011) that states that those who receive a harsher treatment will perform fewer crimes in future. Scholars in economics have been at the fore-front with specific deterrence model (Cullen, Jonson, & Nagin., 2011). They argue that imprisonment has a direct and indirect economic impact on those in prison (i.e. loss of income, stigmatization) (Cameroun, 2011). Therefore, the logical person would opt not to commit additional crimes either because of the fear of jail or following a visit to jail. Secondly, there is the perfunctory, but no less potent, "cost" argument which is echoed by the defenders of the bolsheviki theme of the "schools of crime: in short, this argument is that, in case prison life is a defeating and de-humanizing experience, then obviously it must be counted as yet another "psychological" cost of "serving time."

According to surveys, the general opinion is that prison is the harshest and most effective form of punishment in response to criminal acts (Snodgrass, Blokland, 2011). Establishing the penal policy makers are of the notion that the worst casino San remo possible is a jail sentence (Wood & Grasmick, 2005). Wood and Grasmick (2005) also added that public and policy-makers anticipate that prison has potent deterrence implications and as such it should be embraced.

Moreover, (Nagin 2011), who is strongly convinced that deterrence literature, on the whole, is convincing, laments that the deterrence effectiveness of imprisonment risk will be neutralized should the imposition of imprisonment continue to ascend since then prisons would no longer be perceived as stigmatizing. Some others indicate that it might be only particular groups of offenders who can be deterred (i.e., those more tightly attached to society (i.e., less risky)) (Drago & Francesco, 2009 The Deterrent Effects of Prison: Evidence from a Natural 867ent). Another party suggested by Orsagh and Chen, 2016 is a U -shaped threshold theory of the punishing event, where a moderate dosage of prison would not be considered the worst. And, there is the contemporary opinion that the modern prison is too comfortable; only the so-called no-frills prisons can be punitive enough to become an effective deterrence (Kent & Myers, 2008)

However, most of these studies are based in Western contexts, with limited applicability to Kenya's correctional environment. For instance, while Western prisons might offer extensive rehabilitation programs, Kenyan facilities often lack such services, as noted by Omboto et al. (2013). Thus, the Kenyan context provides a distinct setting where imprisonment may have unique psychological, social, and economic effects on offenders.

This study contributes to existing literature by offering empirical data specific to Kisumu County a region where socio-political dynamics, poverty, and under-resourced correctional systems create a different recidivism landscape. Unlike previous studies that treat imprisonment as a homogeneous experience, this research disaggregates it into duration, type of offence, prison conditions, and post-release follow-up.

2.2 Effects of prison-based treatment on Recidivism

Prison-based rehabilitation programs, particularly vocational training and education, are widely recognized for their potential to reduce recidivism (Davis et al., 2013; Visher et al., 2017). However, evidence suggests that such programs are often under-resourced and inconsistently applied in low-income settings (Luyt, 2022). In Kenya, studies like (Oruta 2019) note that while intentions for rehabilitation exist, practical implementation is limited. This study explores how access, quality, and inmate participation in such programs influence reoffending rates in Kisumu County.

Based on a recent systematic review of the literature, inmates who underwent vocational training in prison also experienced lower rates of recidivism Oruta (2019). Criminals who enrolled at least some form of educational or vocational training in the time of their imprisonment were more likely to find a job after it. This was due to the fact that skills acquisition guarantees increased social resources and increased access to legal working opportunities Oruta, (2019). Nevertheless, prior studies further posit that reoffending risk factors can be correlated to treatment engagement. An example was that those with an overall higher risk of re-offending are less likely to enrol and complete treatment interventions in a comparable fashion; the greater (severe) number of criminogenic risk factors an individual has the less the probability of enrolling in and completing a correctional treatment program.

It has been found that systematic rehabilitation efforts within the prison environment, like education, counseling, and vocational training, have proven to be some of the most effective methods to minimize repeating of the offense. Wairimu (2019) adds that involvement in skills-based programming can provide inmates with useful skills that will make them more

employable after incarceration, and hence less likely to commit crimes in the future. Equally, Mutua (2017) identified that inmates who received therapeutic intervention and re-integration planning programs throughout the incarceration period were more likely to prosecute with lawful conduct as compared to their counterparts who were not exposed to any intervention programs during incarceration.

According to the empirical evidence about the world, imprisonment has not been enough to curb recidivism. Although imprisonment fulfills the functions of deterrence and incapacitation, many studies emphasize the significance of rehabilitation in decreasing the possibilities of recidivism. In an all-out meta-analysis, Davis et al. (2013) revealed that inmates enrolled in correctional educational programs were 43 percent less likely to recidivate as compared to inmates who did not enroll. On the same note, Abrams, Bertrand, and Mullainathan (2013) emphasized that the participation in worthwhile rehabilitative services like vocational training, therapy, and instructional programming to enable reintegration and deter criminal recidivism. Programs such as mother-child bonding units, victim-offender mediation, youth boot camps, faith-based initiatives, canine training programs by inmates, contemplative practices (such as meditation), substance abuse treatment programs, and honor programs including payment of structured honors have today become a part of the innovative rehabilitation systems in different countries (Nyauchi, 2009). These interventions may have to be enduring and adapted and make a difference in enhancing pro-social skills development, familial bonds, and vastly raise the possibility of successful reentry into society.

In United States state prisons and juvenile establishments generally provide at least basic education programming; this enables the inmate to progress to a high school diploma or general

education equivalency certificate (Bazemore & Stinchcomb, 2011). In some community colleges and universities, they might program as a public service where inmates might continue their education free of charge such programs will help in the job opportunities of inmates and will automatically decrease the chances of recidivism. Prisoners can acquire desirable employability skills that can be transferred to potential access to employment in the outside world (Aebi, Tiago, & Burkhar., 2015).

The reduction of idleness has been shown to lead to a reduction in institutional violence due to more positive inmate programs in prisons. Prisoners carry out meaningful tasks, which makes them feel that they belong to the greater community (Nyauchi, 2009). Such programs could be successful at taking inmates out of prison and into the world of work. Contributing to making the inmates successful can mean a shift in allowing prison culture to determine the manner of communicating at all levels of institutional life. A therapeutic model is being advocated and many prisons are abandoning the punitive model that is not working Nyauchi, (2009). To achieve the change, however, a comprehensive outlook on corrections is required. Communities need to integrate into the re-entry. The local community-based organizations are on the forefront in assisting to bring such a change in the avenues through which inmates can see a difference after being arrested, in prison and the remaining as the inmate progresses through the rehabilitative and other transitioning process and back to the wider community as a plus rather than a negative factor (Nyauchi,2009).

In the United States a study was conducted in Queensland based on more than 1,800 individuals who had stayed in custody again within a span of three years where connections were made

between the involvement of prison participants in Vocational training programmed and their probabilities of going back to prison. It discovered that 32 percent of the prisoners who failed to attend vocational training programmed prior to their initial release appeared back in custody within two years as compared to 23 percent who attended vocational training programmed (Drago, Francesco, Roberto Galbiati, & Vertova, 2009).Vocational education can be thought of as a general term covering those elements of the educational process branching, besides general education, into acquisition of practical skills and attitudes, understanding, and knowledge relevant to occupations in diverse areas of the economy and social life (Green, Donald, & Winik

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Although this has been the case, a significant number of Kenyan correctional facilities encounter difficulties associated with such programs. According to a report by the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (2016), inconsistency in program quality and access to counseling services, particularly in overcrowded institutions was identified. Such constraints diminish the rehabilitative impact of imprisonment. This study based on this issue analyzes the existence and access to treatment programs in prison-based regimes in Kisumu County and their measurable influence on recidivism rates.

2.2.1 Types of rehabilitation programs available in prisons

Rehabilitation is a core component of modern correctional theory. It includes educational, vocational, psychological, and religious programs aimed at reforming the offender. According to Lipsey and Cullen (2007), effective rehabilitation significantly lowers the risk of reoffending. However, these outcomes are contingent on program quality, staff competence, and sustained funding.

Rehabilitation in Kenyan prisons generally includes educational, vocational, psychological, and religious interventions (Nyonje, 2019). While these programs are well intentioned, their effectiveness varies significantly across regions due to overcrowding, inconsistent funding, and staff shortages (Omboto, 2013; Oruta, 2019). For instance, vocational training may enhance employability, but most programs in Kenya are outdated and poorly aligned with current labor market demands (Muigua, 2020). In contrast, studies in the U.S. and Europe show that well-resourced vocational and educational programs reduce recidivism by 30–40% (Davis et al., 2013). This discrepancy highlights a critical gap in the Kenyan context: rehabilitation is often symbolic rather than transformative.

This paper will fill that gap by determining whether the inmates in the Kisumu County perceive existing programs to be relevant to their reintegration needs. An extensive definition of rehabilitation encompasses social relation with others, education and compulsory skills and work. The intervention could influence the offender to become less prone to violate the law in future, or to decrease recidivism (Culen and Gundreau, 2000). Habitual offending, or criminal recidivism, is the purpose of rehabilitation. Rehabilitation would aim, through education reformation programs and programs, at kicking a criminal back into a more harmonious state of mind, or himself be helpful to society instead of being harmful to society (Okang a, 2014).

In the Kenyan prison context, Omboto (2013) and Simiyu (2019) found that most rehabilitation efforts are sporadic and unevenly distributed across prisons. Furthermore, some inmates reported that participation in these programs was either symbolic or inaccessible due to

overcrowding and limited resources. These limitations raise questions about whether rehabilitation programs in Kenya have any meaningful impact on post-release behavior.

This study examines not only the availability of rehabilitation programs but also the lived experiences of ex-inmates who participated in them, offering a grounded evaluation of their effectiveness in reducing recidivism.

2.2.2 Vocational Training

Vocational training can be defined as a training that imparts trainees with the process of the manipulative abilities in a selected occupation Drago & Francesco (2009). According to Hjalmarsson and Randi, (2012), vocational education is any kind of education whose first aim is employment in established occupations. This is to say that vocational education equips the learner with skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed in a particular job.

They allow opportunities to offenders to have a higher chance of reintegrating into the community and not committing a crime through the introduction of vocational education and training as part of the prisoner rehabilitation. Vocational education and training of offenders will significantly benefit in solving issues that resulted in offence as it will also discourage recidivism Abrams (2011). The low level of educational attainment adversity associated with the offender has had an undesirable outcome on their chances of employability and of course the effect of this on their physical and mental health. This offers the possibility of improvement in offender lives through the experiences of discipline gained from educating themselves, giving the offenders confidence and security in their lives (Aebi, Tiago, & Burkhar., 2015).

Vocational training helps inmates acquire skills that make them better employees once they leave prison, hence, they have less chance to offend again (Duwe, 2017; Latessa et al., 2014). Yet, it is suggested that the effectiveness of these programs is based on their labor market responsiveness and the sustainability of the assistance afterward (Graffam et al., 2019). In this paper, the extent of influence of vocational training will be measured in ratifying perceptions of inmates and actual recidivism rates.

Offenders, through the vocational training program, become motivated to change and can access employment opportunities (Mohammed & Mohamed, 2014). Vocational education globally encompasses courses in agriculture, carpentry, masonry, plumbing, wiring, welding, lathe machine, motor mechanics, tailoring, beauty culture, garage industry and other suitable vocations Webber & Chernikova (2017).

The information obtained was analyzed using meta-analysis to determine the relations between vocational education and training in controlling recidivism and upgrading employment after release on prison (Abrams, Bertrand, and Mullainathan, 2013). The results confirm the hypothesis that correction education during incarceration lowers the individuals chances of recidivism. Other findings by the researchers indicate that those inmates who received Vocational education and training had increased chances of getting after being released, high school education had increased odds, and vocational training showed increased odds of getting employed compared to those who did not get the education. This equates to a 13 percent decrease in recidivism risk, which means correction education can be cost effective as long as it is used to minimize recidivism.

Research has also been conducted on the reasons why vocational education training programs work in the reduction of recidivism and provision of opportunity to offenders Jaman, Dorothy, Robert, & Dickover, (2009). The discussion is reduced to two principal significant reasons: one, training augments human capital that a parolee can bring to the table potential employers and two, earning a certificate in any field sends a signal to potential employers as to seriousness that in part compensates in the stigma of a criminal record Kling, Rhodes, & Izrael (2016).

Probably the most often mentioned reason as to why an inmate should be incarcerated in a vocational education and training is investment in human capital. Philosophers and experts on human capital agree on the point that an employee is more valuable to an employer than someone who is untrained or non skilled. The importance of education in the consumption of human capital is clearly stated in the literature on vocational education curricula which emphasized through a rigorous combination of literacy, general education/ em ployability, hands on, and technical skills included in the courses Listwan, Shelley, Christopher, & Sullivan (2013)

This is essential since prospective employees have learned specific skills to a graduation level, which makes them of more value to employers. They stand a better chance of being employed and creating profits to the business and are likely to produce good income to the employee. Experienced employees mean that an employer has access to a human capital that is absent in individuals who are lacking this training on good terms of the degree of knowledge and skill. Key among those skills are provisions of basic protocols required in a good employee which include punctuality, co -cooperativeness, timeliness and team-work.

Certification and criminal records are sometimes referred to in labour market as signal Rhodes, Dyous, & Kling (2012). Licenses, certificates and other documents signal to potential employees that a potential employee likely has specific skills, interests and commitment to a profession whereas others may not. Possession of a nationally recognized certification helps overcome the stigma of a criminal record. Formal certification as part of an education program in prison is particularly important.

Vocational education and training reduces recidivism rates by providing inmates with the technical skills, literacy and numeracy courses, as well as motivation and employment opportunity: Prisoners believed that as well as providing technical skills, the courses also improved their communication and organizational skills, all of which would help find employment and reintegrate in to the community upon release. A technical skill is a skill that is required for the accomplishment of a specific task Abrams (2011). Barriers to undertaking or completing vocational training courses include the need for prisoner to undertake offending behaviour programed and desire to earn money through paid prison work. Other factors were short sentences (under 12 months) and long waiting lists of courses, being transferred to another center without much more notice or being release early.

The educational program offer literacy and numeracy courses as well as higher-level qualifications such as Vocational training Diplomas. The completion rate was found to be over 80 percent. Yukhnenko, Blackwood & Fazel (2019), The high completion rate was attributed to: undertaking a risk assessment and looking at the sentence management plan to determine

the educational and vocational training needs of offenders, offering the courses as modules, having dedicated training workshops, promoting the employment opportunities provided by the training, recognizing the achievements of trainees who completed the course Listwan, Shelley, Christopher, & Sullivan (2013).

Another factor that will determine an offender's recidivism is the motivation for the offender to change Kraus (2012). Argued that the analysis of former offenders indicated that their decision to change was a significant factor in them not re-offend. Offenders with no motivation had fatalistic and respondent attitudes towards their criminality whereas motivated offenders were able to identify and make sense of their criminality. Kent and Myers, (2008) argues that for some offenders, the motivation to change may need to include the severing of negative social bonds, as he argues that this may have been a factor in their original offending. According to Kent and Myers, 2008 offender's motivation to change is instrumental in improving an offender's mental health as they are more focused on goals and resilient to negative external and social impacts in their lives.

In order for Technical and vocational education to benefit the offender, it is important for it to be tailored and focused on the needs of the offender; an example of this is the needs surrounding female offenders. Gordon and Weldon (2014), argues that issues surrounding female offenders are compounded by other issues that can include being single percent family rejection, history of physical or sexual abuse as well as a high prevalence of mental health issues.

A female offender's history of physical and sexual abuse is an issue that will regulate training and education programs to be specifically tailored towards them for optimal effectiveness. Olaitan (2012) says that trainers and educators will need to present their programs in a manner that is inclusive, fair and consistent.

Lastly Roach, Michael and Schanzenbach (2015), describes how training and education offered to offenders needs to be relevant to employment opportunities that exist in the location that the offender lives and is likely to secure or be employed. An example of this is for offenders in areas with high tourism, hospitality courses would be the focus likewise, and vocational training in rural areas would focus on agriculture and forestry. Preparing offenders for employment through vocational education and training alone may not be enough to get them in to the employment market. Abrams, Bertrand, & Mullainathan (2013) describe how offenders, especially those who have been incarcerated, may have significant issues that inhibit their ability to find employment. These may include lack of recent employment experiences, being excluded from certain types of employment, as well as the potential to weaken social connections that may lead to employment.

Poor educational attainment coupled with poor employment record prospects on an offender's mental health indicates that 36% of male police detainee and 53% of female police detainees reported either being diagnosed with a mental or being treated for a mental illness Nagin, Cullen, & Jonson (2011). oughran, Thomas and Losoya (2010) describe how one percent of male offenders in prison present symptoms of depression, while 25 percent suffer major depression. Aebi, Tiago and Burkhar (2015) describes how many offenders with mental health

issues may have strained issue relations with their families and friends. This may leave them alone coping with factors that may include inadequate employment and housing, money management issues as well as medication management. Offenders benefit from training and education from improvement to their mental health. Listwan, Shelley, Christopher, & Sullivan, (2013) describes how offenders who participate in education programs illustrate positive psychological traits that include self-reliance, autonomy and independence.

A study in Australian institute of criminology Green, Donald and Winik, (2010) data illustrate that while those with low level of educational attainment have a higher probability of becoming a police detainee, those with higher educational attainment have a lower probability of becoming a police detainee. This is highlighted by the fact that while 40 percent of male police detainees and 51 percent of female police detainee had completed ten years or less. The number of male and female police detainees more than half had completed 11or 12 years. For those who completed university, the level of female police detainees was five percent while male police detainees were at four percent.

However while low educational standards are of great concern of particular role is the fact that many offenders lack even the basic fundamentals of education such as literacy skills. Offenders who participate in vocational training and education have lower recidivism rates than offenders who do not participate. Maurin, Eric and Ouss (2009) argue that those offenders who participated in prison education program had recidivism rate at four percent. This is contrast to 65 percent recidivism rate for those who did not participate in prison education program.

Offenders benefit from training and education from improvement to cognitive functioning and job prospects. Green, Donald, & Winik (2010). State that cognitive strategy that is the ability of individuals to analytically interpret information and enhanced the more the individuals is prepared to further their education. Higher cognitive functioning is of great importance in relation to individuals adapting to higher education and the workplace. As offenders prepare themselves to step back in to his or her community, they search within for a renewed sense of self image and plan to stay clear of criminal behavior. It has been implied that offenders returning to the community unprepared and uneducated results in better individuals that could be a further threat to public safety and increase recidivism rates which are costly.

2.2.3 Prison farms

The main objectives of establishing the prison farms were the rehabilitation of prisoners through training in such enterprises as field crop production, horticulture and livestock management. Over and above rehabilitating the prisoners, it was also expected that the farms would generate funds from the sale of farm produce and thus supplement Treasury's support to the department's training expenditure. The type of enterprises in each prison farm is determined by ecological aspects and equally important, by the potential market (CIS, 2010)

The horticultural enterprise is multifaceted as follows: Olericulture (vegetable production), Pomology (fruit production), Sericulture (silk production), Floriculture (flower production), Spices and herbs production. Livestock enterprises entail:- cattle, goats, pigs, poultry, rabbits, apiculture, fisheries and sericulture. Field crops such as maize, beans, sorghum, rice, finger

millet are also produced. The major producing stations of these crops are located in Rift Valley, Western and Nyanza provinces (CIS, 2010).

The researcher put so much focus on the importance of this prison farms to the convict after they have been released from prison. Does engaging in such activities contribute to the wellbeing of prisoners outside prison institution after they have been released and sent back to their families? Also it was of interest to the researcher to find out if such convicts make use of their farms at home after release in order to prevent recidivism.

Prison farms provide both vocational training and a form of productive engagement for inmates. Research in African contexts suggests these programs can instill discipline, routine, and agricultural skills (Luyt, 2022). However, their effect on recidivism remains under-studied. This study assesses the role of prison farm participation in reducing reoffending among ex-convicts in Kisumu.

2.2.4 Education

The numbers of prisoners worldwide are constantly growing. With prisons frequently overcrowded, many prison systems around the world are at crisis point, unable to provide services, such as education, in accordance with international standards, Farley & Pike (2016). Yet education is a fundamental human right and must not be denied to prisoners. Enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and at the heart of UNESCO's mission, the right to education implies a right to lifelong learning Esperian, (2010). In the prison context, this right includes ensuring that inmates are provided with continuous access to quality education, from

the first day of their incarceration through to and beyond the day of their release. The study sought to explore the level of education being offered and its implication in reducing the rate of recidivism.

Correctional education has consistently been shown to reduce recidivism (Davis et al., 2013). In Kenya, however, systemic underfunding and infrastructural deficits hinder program delivery. By analyzing access to and inmate engagement with educational programs in Kisumu prisons, this study contributes to understanding how education can serve as a pathway out of crime.

2.2.5 Religion institutions

Overwhelmingly, state prison chaplains consider religious counseling and other religion-based programming an important aspect of rehabilitating prisoners (Sullivan, 2009). They most of the time view support by religious organizations following the release of inmates in prison to be of paramount importance to the successful rehabilitation of the inmates and re-entry into the society (O'Connor, & Perreyclear, 2013). Most chaplains in prisons in which there are religion-related rehabilitation or re-entry programs report an increase during the past three years in the quality of these programs and an increase in the number of individuals involved in such programs. In most African nations system, there is little information publicly regarding religious lives of inmates in the mainstream of most nations.

Faith-based programs offer moral guidance and social support, which can foster rehabilitation (Johnson, 2011; O'Connor & Perreyclear, 2013). However, their success often depends on voluntary participation and post-release community integration. This research investigates how participation in religious programs in Kisumu prisons affects inmates' reintegration and likelihood of reoffending.

2.2.6 Counseling

Counseling is also a highly important element inside prisons as the majority of the criminals, usually, have an exhaustive and daunting criminal justice route by the time they reach the conviction. Intervening with different clients therapeutically is the central purpose of the treatment operation of correctional counselors, and most of their clients turn out to be offenders Julius & Omondi (2021). Such interventions are prison adjustment, prerelease and postrelease vocational and marital/ family readjustment, and work with adolescent adjustment problems. Correctional counseling and psychotherapy is a process comprising three critical skills: sense of timing (understanding and respecting where the client is value and perception wise); successful risking (giving the client the serious purpose to strive hard to significantly alter his or her attitude and direction of behavior); professional humility (being okay with the idea that all is not fair in life and that one cannot always win) Julius & Omondi (2021). Correctional counselors work with corrections in the community based and institutional based programs with the offenders. They have security and treatment concerns in their work; probation and parole officers are included in the counseling section Afari, Osei, & Adu-Agyem, (2015). The debate about the effectiveness of treatment, which still goes on, has differentiated highlights on the professional role of the correctional counselor. The researcher aimed at establishing the impression which such encounters have on ex-convicts and especially after conviction.

Counseling addresses emotional and behavioral issues that underlie criminal conduct (Afari et al., 2015). There is limited empirical evidence on how different rehabilitation programs impact long-term recidivism, especially in low-resource settings (James et al., 2019). Although increasingly integrated into rehabilitation frameworks, counseling remains underutilized in

Kenyan prisons. This study examines inmates' access to counseling and its influence on their attitudes and recidivism.

Correctional programs including vocational training, psychotherapy, and education have been shown to reduce recidivism. Gendreau and Andrews (2001) highlight the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral therapy in altering criminal behavior patterns. Despite global evidence, implementation in Kenyan prisons is inconsistent due to resource constraints and overcrowding. The applicability of Western derived treatment models in Kenya is questionable without cultural adaptation. Further, empirical evaluation of these programs in Kenya remains scant, limiting policy feedback loops.

2.2.7 Conclusion of prison based treatment on recidivism

Prison-based treatment programs are central to rehabilitation strategies in many correctional systems. In Kenya, studies by Otieno (2017) and Okoth (2019) found that vocational training, life skills education, and religious instruction within prison environments have the potential to reduce reoffending. However, these studies were limited to Nairobi-based facilities and relied on administrative reports without engaging inmates directly.

In contrast, Chuma and Muriuki (2020) used interviews with ex-offenders and concluded that many prison programs suffer from poor implementation, lack of trained personnel, and limited post-release follow-up. This suggests a gap between program design and practical outcomes. Their findings align with Social Learning Theory, which posits that unless rehabilitation programs reshape inmate behavior and thought processes, learned deviance from the prison environment may persist. The current study builds on this scholarship by quantitatively

evaluating the relationship between inmates' exposure to prison-based treatment programs and their recidivism outcomes in Kisumu Countya context underexplored in existing literature

2.3 Effects of Prison Interaction on Recidivism

Peer influence within prisons can shape an offender's behavior both positively and negatively. Studies indicate that inmates who are regularly exposed to hardened criminals or gang members often adopt similar antisocial behaviors. Omboto (2013) highlighted that young or first-time offenders in Kenya are particularly vulnerable to peer pressure, potentially learning more deviant behavior while incarcerated.

Inmate interaction is made up of the norms, traditions, habits, languages, customs, values, beliefs, as well as superstitions of inmates that are held at a prison facility (Lois, 2013). Once in the prison setting, prisoners are assimilated into prisoner culture via a process referred to as prisonization where new jailbirds are taught how to live in the prison community and how to conduct themselves (Lois, 2013). Research evidences indicate that the longer a person is imprisoned; the more significant the effects of being prisonized are. At the time when a prisoner gets into prison, his traditional values are not completely out of his life. With time, the person becomes a prisoner of this life (Gaes, 2013).

The learning process takes place in the verbal and non-verbal communication, inside the prisons. The process of learning involves techniques of committing various crimes, the given sense of direction, inspiration, motives, drives, rationalization, and attitude that are learned due to definition of the legal code as good or bad towards breaking the law. It is, thus, seen that,

when an individual is willing to accept to live and go-by then, the attitudes that are favourable to the act of committing a crime than the unfavourable ones, this individual then tends to view criminal behaviour as a permissible activity.

Conversely, institutions that foster positive peer mentorship and supervised group therapy have recorded reduced levels of reoffending. Research by Nyakundi (2018) showed that correctional facilities that introduced peer-based accountability groups experienced lower relapse rates among participants. This study seeks to extend these findings by exploring how inmate interactions in Kisumu prisons influence post-release conduct and whether such interactions promote rehabilitation or fuel recidivism.

The condition in which certain offenders are socialised to commit another crime is highly prevalent in prisons particularly among the prison population or those who have been put in prison. This is in response to the fact that some offenders end up being hardened and chronic criminals due to the situational or social situation in which they are put. These sorts of inmates is given a chance of learning the criminal culture involving the knowledge, values, attitudes, beliefs, habits, customs and techniques that make the individual deviate desirable way of life instead of remaining law-abiding citizens. There is a community within prison walls just the same way people in the free world have society. Lopez & Aguado, (2016) refers to it as prisonization and it is the assimilation of prisoners where they are socialized into the prison culture. He notes that universal prisonisation occurs in that all the prisoners go through prisonisation in which the inmates internalise the culture and the current patterning of prison living in which new inmates start sharing the sentiments, memories, and traditions of the community.

Researchers in earlier studies reveal that communication between offenders and hardcore criminals in prisons raised their risks of recidivism Oruta (2021). It means criminal behavior is acquired by interacting with others, and mostly in the prison population Oruta (2021). Although offenders of different categories are segregated in various units of accommodation within a prison, they are bound to interact, at least during meal times, open days and recreation, vocational training and other common programs. It is through such interaction that criminal behavior is learnt Oruta (2021). According to Omboto (2010), poor diet, degrading clothing and beddings, lack of clean water, poor sanitation, infectious diseases and homosexuality among others are some of the factors which have resulted to harsh prison conditions mostly characterised by overcrowding and congestion in Kenya.

According to researches carried out on aspects of correctional practice, a poor accommodation of the offenders in the prison facilities have indicated a case of high assault rates among the various inmates (Gaes, 1992; Fagan, 2002; Morgan et al., 2002). Furthermore, there is evidence that even the overcrowding of the prison establishment can, in itself, create some pressure on the inmates. To a certain degree, overcrowding may also be an amplifier to stressful conditions in prisons that have already been prompted by other factors and the result of which is life threatening at the worst. Penal Reform International (2012); Gaes, (1985). Mass incarceration and nonuse of solitary confinement have led to coerced cohabitation, generalized inmate subculture and burgeoning loss of the capacity to resist undesired associations. In turn, these factors predispose the risk of joining gangs in prison Irwin, (2012) Stevens, (2010).

More to the point, drug abuse by inmates in prison environments has been found to be one of the greatest challenges of the prison system in Kenya. Researches carried out by Omboto (2010) have revealed that prisoners in the prison facility manage to obtain drugs that are banned in the correctional facilities. And the primary key aim of these prisons is rehabilitate the prisoners or criminal offenders. The collaboration of the corrupt prison authorities facilitates the introduction of drugs within the correction facilities. This clearly demonstrates how the criminal are addicts who apparently do not reform. Omboto (2013) studies demonstrate clearly that the jail system is in a bad need in order to wipe out the evils that divert the goal of the correctional or the prison centers to rehabilitate and reform criminals.

2.3.1 Inmate Code

In order to endure the agonies and the loss of liberties that come with incarceration and to exist in the coercive subculture that inmates find themselves in, there is a code that they live by called the inmate code (Brannen & Gemma, 2012). The morals of the prison society are manifested in the inmate code. The inmate code emphasizes the unity of all the inmates with the prison staff. An example of such a significant rule of the inmate code is the rule of not snitching on another inmate to the correctional personnel. And by breaking this inmate code, offending inmates have been declared a “snitch” and killed (William, Dulla, & Kunda, 2014).

The inmate code does not even exist in writing but simply verbally passed on by old-time convicts to new ones (Jaman, Dorothy, Robert & Dickover, 2009). Inmates have their codes, which they observe and both males and females follow codes and they also have gender specific codes (Howerton & Burnell, 2012). A majority of male inmates adhere to the inmate code and

do their time and they will never snitch or tell on an inmate (Leanne, 2010). They also adhere to the rest of inmate-imposed rules that are non-written like never expressing an emotion about your sadness or pain; be tough and masculine (Cameron & Miller, 2015). It is normal to be hostile and manipulative against some inmates and the majority of prison personnel. The codes also do not allow the interruption of the business of another inmate and theft to other inmates (Abrams, 2011).

The inmate code as a type of informal rules encouraging loyalty and toughness may obstruct the process of rehabilitation, as it rewards antisocial practices (Sykes, 1958; Trulson et al., 2016). It is essential to understand the extent of effects of adherence to this code on behaviours during prison stay and the released stage in order to structure effective interventions.

2.3.2 Prison Argot

Argot which is actually a language or thief jargon, though generally used to refer to groups of other people is a specific kind of slang Bowker, 1980; Nielson & Scrapitti, (1995). It has been posed that an inmate of the prison existence, lives, thinks and operates within the periphery of his/her definition as represented in the argot and as such, the argot will be focused over the functions that it fulfills to the prisoner (|Bondesson, 1989). The primary recorded uses of slanges/argot are but not limited to following ways; first need to be different and unique, second allaying of rejection and refusal feelings, third socializing interactions and relationships, fourth declaration of subculture belonging or social status, lastly a tool of social identification and belonging to a group and secrecy Partridge, (1970).

Language, being one of the prominent phenomena of communication, serves as central element in socialization, and in the formation and maintenance of behavioral code Dean-Brown, (1992). Therefore, unusual or uncommon groupings within society tend to be very discriminating in their language. To be more exact, the subgroups in the society can be precisely separated by special features of their language which they usually speak Hudson, (1980). The language which a group of people think, think and communicate through is the organiser of the experience of the members of the group and it is also the developer of their world and the social reality in which they live Halliday, (1977). The resources and the varieties of a language depict the inventory list of requirements and interests of the users of the language Elaine, Fishman, (1972). Consequently, within any given society, one can always point out sub groups with common behavioral and linguistic patterns that help them easily disseminate and transfer any given information (Maurer, 1981).

To Gans, (1962), in most instances such subgroups might have gotten to form due to an organized response of its members to opportunities, change, or rewards and, on the other hand, to gaps, restrictions and pressure of his/her environment. Subgroups have their own language and may contain idiosyncratic terms that are not shared by the general society or form a group of words that are borrowed and then given new meanings or new applications Alatis & Trudgill, (1990). Argot can give expression to the particular pressures of language within a given subgroup in a society (Andersson & Trudgill, 1990; Hebdige, 1985; Matoesian, 1993; Maurer, 1955; Strong, 1981).

Two primary supplementary explanatory models of argot have been posited; these are the endogenous model and the import model. The endogenous model then produces a new language, which names and tags the behavior patterns and roles applicable to the prison situation. This model states that argot is the result of life in and experience of prison and is a response to the sufferings of jail. In the endogenous model, this assumption is that due to the probability that the prison societies may have very many things in common, there would be a corresponding manifestation in their argot as used by its inmates Bowker, &Tittle, 1965). As postulated in the import model, the inmate language and behavior patterns are a cluster involved in the greater criminal code which is imported into the prison (Irwin & Cressey, 1962; Thomas and Pool, 1975). The nature and use of the inmate argot, the initial purpose of this study was to analyze the language that is spoken by prisoners and to determine that such an argot heavily leads to abscondence.

The code of behavioral and moral code developed by the prisoners of the prison has been well documented Clemmer, 1940; Irwin, 1985; Sykes & Messinger, 1960; Toch, (1992). An inmate subculture consists of the social norms and values of the inmate code, without which it will have no access to the informal methods of acquiring power and status and, thus, a way of relieving their feeling of social rejection and atoning for their loss of autonomy and security (Bondesson, 1989; Sykes & Messinger, 1960). Prison argot was applied in crimes and correctional institutions mainly by convicts and others who were under arrest. It is an anti-language employed in conjunction with prison institution. A lot of them are criminal behavior, life inside prisons, court cases, life in the streets as well as the various varieties of inmates. Prison argot is contextual to the institute, area and country Okoth, Issac, & Stephan (2018).

Therefore, to the inmate, the code has a direct connection to the socialization and prison life adaptation process. It has been reasoned that, the natural enemies of the prisoner are the normative society and its symbols, as well as its representatives, and as such existence of such a code is unavoidable and must exist in all prisons and prison populations Irwin, 1980; Sykes (1958). Code is considered to be a collaborative and practical action to deal with the prison environment (Fisher, 1990; Goffman, 1961; Language, as one of the primary means of communication, plays one of the main roles in socialization and development and maintenance of the codes of behavior Dean-Brown, (1992). Therefore, when this sense of family hood has been nurtured the sense of belonging develops and thus offenders become offenders and go back to their so-called family. Thus the gap was addressed in the current study as the study attempted to present literature and empirical analysis about interaction with prison and recidivism.

The role of peer influence within prison settings is underexplored, particularly in how interactions with other inmates shape post-release behavior (Wright & Cesar, 2021). This study will analyze the effect of prison culture on recidivism, filling a gap in criminological literature.

Prison specific slang (argot) reinforces group identity and secrecy, sometimes strengthening resistance to authority and rehabilitation (Jewkes, 2012). While linguistically rich, its criminological implications are underexplored in African contexts. This study examines how language within prison communities reflects and potentially reinforces criminal identities.

The prison environment often fosters a subculture that undermines reform and strengthens criminal identities, a process Clemmer (1940) described as "prisonization." However, most studies treat this as a universal phenomenon without contextual analysis. In Kenya, overcrowding and the lack of inmate classification exacerbate the problem by housing first-time offenders with hardened criminals (Oruta, 2021). Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) explains how exposure to deviant peers can normalize antisocial behavior. Yet, few Kenyan studies have quantified the extent to which inmate interactions influence reoffending. This study addresses this empirical gap by examining how peer dynamics in Kisumu County prisons shape post-release behavior.Peer influence inside prison can act as both a rehabilitative and criminogenic factor. In the context of Kisumu County, inmate relationships are shaped by local tribal affiliations, shared community histories, and prison hierarchies. Few Kenyan studies critically examine how these dynamics impact recidivism outcomes. Incorporating ethnographic approaches could enrich this under-theorized area.

2.3.3 Conclusion of inmate interaction on recidivism

Peer interaction among inmates plays a dual role in the correctional environment. On one hand, Makokha (2018) observed that structured peer mentoring programs reduced deviance among inmates in Kamiti Prison. On the other hand, Omondi (2020) documented that uncontrolled inmate interactions in Lang'ata Women's Prison reinforced deviant behavior and contributed to gang formation. These contradictory findings underscore the influence of prison culture and the need for context-specific analysis.

From the perspective of Social Learning Theory, prison environments may become "schools of crime" where offenders learn new tactics and adopt pro-criminal norms through daily

association. This learning process becomes a powerful reinforcer of recidivism. The current study tests this theoretical proposition by examining whether inmate interaction patterns within Kisumu County's prisons are statistically linked to post-release offending.

2.4 Reintegration and Reentry: A Global Concern

Reintegration refers to the process through which ex-offenders are absorbed back into society after serving a prison sentence. Scholars such as Travis (2005) and Petersilia (2003) argue that the success of reintegration largely determines whether an individual reoffends. In contexts where reintegration programs are weak or absent, offenders often return to environments marked by poverty, unemployment, and stigma all risk factors for recidivism.

The rising rate of incarceration has ignited widespread interest in prisoner reentry, making it a global policy and academic concern. Policymakers and researchers alike recognize that the scope of prisoner reintegration warrants significant research attention (Visher & Travis, 2003). A growing body of literature now seeks to understand the conditions under which offenders are most likely to reintegrate successfully into society. This interest is particularly pertinent given estimates that over 2.4 million individuals approximately one in every 100 adults are incarcerated in prison or jail (Pew Center on the States, 2008).

2.4.1 Role of Family in Successful Reentry

Research consistently shows that most former inmates return to their families and depend heavily on them for support during reintegration (Altschuler & Brash, 2004; La Vigne et al., 2004). Family members grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings form the core social network that facilitates post-release adjustment (Shapiro & Schwartz, 2001). This informal support is often

both tangible and emotional, providing housing, guidance, and encouragement (Martinez & Abrams, 2013).

However, reintegration can also place a burden on families. Many families are economically strained themselves (Farrall, 2004), and offenders often bring additional stress that can fracture these relationships. When familial ties weaken, ex-offenders may return to harmful networks, thereby increasing their risk of reoffending (Shover, 1996).

2.4.2 Social Networks, Housing, and Employment

Reentry outcomes are shaped by an offender's ability to reconnect with social networks and secure basic needs such as housing and employment. Studies show that most offenders return to disadvantaged urban communities, often characterized by poverty and crime (Visher & Courtney, 2006). Families provide critical support, but strained relationships can hinder this assistance.

A study in Illinois found that ex-offenders who secured independent housing were significantly less likely to be reincarcerated (Yahner & Visher, 2008). Employment, housing stability, and social connections function as protective factors that mitigate recidivism.

2.4.3 Community's Cultural Role in Reintegration

Communities play a vital role in shaping the reintegration experience. Defined by social ties and long-held values, communities can either facilitate or hinder an offender's return to law-abiding behavior. In some environments, cultural acceptance of deviant behavior undermines rehabilitation efforts (Braithwaite, 1989; Shover, 1996). In contrast, supportive communities that value inclusion can promote positive reentry outcomes.

2.4.4 Community Perceptions and Barriers to Reintegration

Stigma, discrimination, and institutional barriers often prevent ex-offenders from accessing roles essential to social integration such as employment, voting rights, or parental roles (Bazemore & Stinchcomb, 2011). This exclusion undermines their ability to form meaningful societal bonds, which are essential for avoiding reoffending. As such, civic engagement is emerging as a key strategy for reentry.

2.4.5 Civic Engagement and Reentry Strategy

The civic engagement model emphasizes identity transformation, public trust-building, and community collaboration (Bazemore & Stinchcomb, 2011; Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2012). This model supports policies that: Address stigma and identity transformation, Improve public perception of ex-offenders and Mobilize community resources for reintegration. Uggen, Manza, and Behrens (2006) found that many offenders aspire to civic participation but struggle with the societal branding of being an "ex-convict." Assistance is needed to transform these aspirations into reality through structured programs and social inclusion.

2.4.6 Role of Reentry Programs and Community Service

Community service has shown promise in reducing recidivism and increasing social inclusion. Bazemore and Boba (2012) found that structured community service programs reduced reoffending, especially among youth in diversion and probation programs. Such service not only facilitates skill acquisition but also reinforces offenders' commitment to prosocial roles.

Community service initiatives such as the Youth Corps and Utah juvenile diversion programs have yielded 8–10% reductions in recidivism (Bazemore & Boba, 2012). These outcomes demonstrate the power of meaningful, restorative engagement in promoting reintegration.

In Kenya, studies by Makanyengo (2017) and Nyabuto (2020) indicate that reintegration programs are poorly funded and inconsistently implemented. The result is a high rate of reoffending, particularly among youth and drug-related offenders. However, much of the existing literature tends to generalize reintegration challenges without accounting for specific county-level variations. This study addresses this gap by examining reintegration mechanisms specific to Kisumu County and assessing their direct impact on recidivism trends.

Reintegration support ranging from employment services to mental health counseling had been recognized as essential in reducing repeat offending (Petersilia, 2003). While reintegration is widely accepted in theory, practical support for ex-convicts in Kenya remains fragmented and poorly funded. Most NGOs operate in silos without alignment with criminal justice systems. Moreover, the stigma attached to ex-offenders, often reinforced by community and law enforcement, undermines reintegration efforts a dynamic that is underexamined in local research.

2.4.7 Theoretical Support: Life Course and Identity Transformation

Theories of identity transformation and life course perspectives underpin civic engagement models. These frameworks emphasize the role of social bonds such as marriage and employment in promoting desistance from crime (Maruna, 2014). Bazemore and Stinchcomb (2011) argue that civic engagement can similarly anchor offenders through prosocial identities

and responsibilities. Uggen et al. (2006) advocate for "civic reintegration bonds," arguing that active community involvement can help shift public perception and self-image, both critical for sustainable desistance.

2.4.8 Reintegration Challenges in the Kenyan Context

In Kenya, ex-offenders face similar but more acute challenges. Many reentry programs are underfunded, poorly implemented, or inaccessible to most inmates (Muigua, 2020). Promising models like halfway houses and vocational training exist, but they lack nationwide scalability. Moreover, formal pre-release planning is inadequate, with many ex-prisoners reporting a lack of information, job skills, or psychological support (Pogrebin et al., 2014).

2.4.9 Empirical Evidence on Reentry Outcomes

Oruta (2019) revealed that there is a strong correlation between reentry program involvement and decreased recidivism in Kenya. The recidivism of offenders who received post-release services including employment training, counseling, and provision of housing was also reduced. On the other hand, the group that felt reintegration barriers recorded the highest reentrance into prison.

2.4.10 Summary and Critical Analysis

Overall, family, community, and structured reentry programs are central to successful reintegration. While international evidence is promising, much of the literature emphasizes program design over impact evaluation. This study seeks to fill that gap by using qualitative and quantitative methods to assess how re-integrative efforts in Kisumu County affect recidivism.

The reviewed literature aligns with Labeling Theory and Social Learning Theory, illustrating how post-release support and social context can either reinforce or deter criminal behavior. Therefore, community service, family ties, and social capital must be central to policy and program development.

Although some studies refer to the post-release support, little collective research relates to reintegration models specific to communities, specifically in sub-Saharan Africa (Muntingh, 2020). This paper will address this research gap by evaluating the effects of frameworks of reintegration in various community burrows.

Successful reintegration depends on multiple factors including family support, employment, housing, and community acceptance (Western, 2018; Visher et al., 2017). In Kenya, reentry programs are sparse and underfunded. This study examines how post-release support or lack thereof contributes to recidivism among ex-convicts in Kisumu.

2.4.11 Conclusion of reintegration programs on recidivism

Reentry support remains one of the most critical yet underdeveloped components in the criminal justice system. Studies conducted by Otieno (2020) and Akinyi (2016) emphasized that the lack of structured reentry plans, housing, job placements, and psychological support significantly contributes to repeat offending in Kenya. Many ex-convicts are released without a clear reintegration strategy and face rejection from family and community, which increases their vulnerability to crime.

A report by the Probation and Aftercare Service (2022) similarly noted that although Kenya has a policy framework for aftercare, its implementation remains weak and inconsistently funded.

In this regard, the current study examines the extent to which ex-inmates in Kisumu County accessed reintegration support and how this influenced their post-incarceration outcomes.

Conclusion of the literature review

In conclusion of the literature reviewed in the study, existing literature provides valuable insights into imprisonment and recidivism. However, most Kenyan studies are concentrated in Nairobi or Mombasa and often lack a theoretical or empirical basis for examining causal relationships. There is limited research examining the interactive effects of imprisonment conditions, peer dynamics, and post-release challenges on recidivism, particularly in western Kenya. Moreover, few studies utilize theories such as Social Learning and Labeling Theory to interpret findings. This study fills these gaps by applying a descriptive research design to quantitatively assess the influence of these variables on recidivism among incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals in Kisumu County.

While previous studies in Kenya have offered valuable insights into rehabilitation, inmate dynamics, and reentry challenges, they are often limited by geographic concentration, qualitative scope, or lack of theoretical grounding. Moreover, few studies have examined these issues collectively within one framework or employed descriptive designs to test variable relationships. This study fills these gaps by using a structured, theory-driven, quantitative and qualitative approach to analyze how imprisonment and related variables affect recidivism in Kisumu County.

In summary, existing studies have identified that imprisonment can either deter or exacerbate reoffending. However, there are three critical gaps: (i) most research is descriptive and fails to

test theoretical explanations such as Social Learning or Labeling Theory in the Kenyan context; (ii) there is limited comparative analysis of how prison-based treatment, inmate interaction, and reintegration interact to shape recidivism; and (iii) most studies rely on official records alone, which underreport actual reoffending (Maltz, 2004). This study addresses these gaps by using a theory-driven, mixed-methods approach with a larger and more representative sample from Kisumu County.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical frameworks provide the foundational lens through which research problems are conceptualized, investigated, and interpreted. This study was guided by two key criminological theories: Social Learning Theory and Labeling Theory. These frameworks were chosen because they offer complementary explanations for criminal behavior, the influence of imprisonment on recidivism, and challenges related to reintegration. Together, they help contextualize both the institutional and social factors affecting reoffending among former inmates in Kisumu County This study is grounded in Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) and Labeling Theory (Becker, 1963). Social Learning Theory helps explain how inmates adopt behaviors modeled within the prison environment, while Labeling Theory highlights the stigmatizing effect of incarceration, which may foster continued criminality. These theories jointly inform the research design and interpretation of results.

2.5.1 Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory, developed by Albert Bandura, argues that behavior is acquired through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. Individuals tend to model behaviors exhibited by

others, especially if those behaviors are rewarded. Within a correctional setting, inmates are frequently exposed to both prosocial and antisocial behaviors, making the prison environment a potential breeding ground for learning criminal conduct.

Furthermore, Social Learning Theory explains why rehabilitation programs may succeed or fail. If inmates participate in structured, pro-social activities (e.g., vocational training or mentorship), they are more likely to internalize positive behaviors. Conversely, when prison environments lack such interventions, negative peer modeling can dominate. This study leverages this framework to analyze how prison-based treatment and inmate interaction influence reoffending in Kisumu County.

In the context of this study, the theory helps explain how inmates may adopt deviant behaviors by interacting with hardened or repeat offenders during incarceration. If rehabilitation programs are weak or inconsistently applied, these peer interactions may reinforce criminal identities rather than encourage reform. Conversely, when prisons provide structured and positive programs such as mentorship, counseling, and skill-building offenders are more likely to adopt constructive behavioral models. Therefore, Social Learning Theory supports the hypothesis that rehabilitation exposure in prison has the potential to either reduce or exacerbate recidivism depending on institutional dynamics.

2.5.3 Relevance of this theory to the study

The Social Learning Theory, postulated by Albert Bandura, holds that individuals learn behaviors, values and attitudes based on what they observe in their social environments, imitation, and modeling. As applied to other situations of criminal behavior, the theory posits

that deviant behavior can be learned through the assimilation of either others who behave indecently or those who lend a hand to individuals who take part in such conduct (Akers, 1998). In correctional institutions, criminals associate with other criminals and this exposes them to new criminal strategies, rationalizations of deviance, and normalization of delinquent behavior. This peer pressure normally reduces the effects of rehabilitation and high rates of recidivism even after release.

Prisons, instead of rehabilitating inmates, often become breeding grounds for criminal behavior due to continuous interaction with repeat offenders. Exposure to hardened criminals inside prisons can lead to the adoption of new criminal skills and negative attitudes, increasing recidivism rather than reducing it. If inmates observe that crime leads to rewards or that prison life is not harsh enough to deter crime, they are likely to repeat offenses after release. The study investigates how prison-based treatment programs and prisoner interactions influence recidivism, aligning with Social Learning Theory's concept of learned behaviors.

2.6 Labeling theory

Labeling Theory, associated with Howard Becker, posits that societal reactions to deviant behavior significantly shape an individual's self-concept and future actions. According to this theory, when individuals are labeled as "criminals" or "ex-convicts," they may internalize such identities, especially if society continues to stigmatize and reject them. This process of labeling can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, where the offender re-engages in criminal acts because they are excluded from legitimate social and economic opportunities.

This can, therefore, be concluded that those individuals who are negatively branded would incorporate this tag into their view of themselves. Goffman (1963) assumed that those who were branded would not act in ways that undermined the tag, but rather display actions that validated it. Akers and Sellers (2009) say a person will face humiliation and shame once it has been branded. It is these feelings that will provide motivation to engage in further deviant acts for labeled individuals. Furthermore, once labeled, the label recipients adopt the characteristics generated as part of their primary identity and live in ways that confirm the stereotypes attached to the label, thereby confirming their authenticity to the individual, Becker (1963).

Labeling and the form of identity development it encourages are crucial to the cycle of reintegration, as it can clarify how other members of society should view released prisoners and how they will respond to their care. Other members of society can mark and stereotype criminals and internalize the label in ways that reinforce stereotypes or labels Akers & Sellers, (2009). This is important in terms of reintegration as it is possible to explain why many prisoners are experiencing difficulties with their efforts to reintegrate effectively into the community after being released from prisons. Not only can released offenders act in ways that validate their membership in a deviant group, but they can also suffer the effects of the risk of stereotyping which reinforces the tag. Therefore, released prisoners are likely to act in ways that reaffirm the assumptions of the "offender" tag. This can impede the efforts of the offenders to reintegrate effectively into society Akers & Sellers, (2009). Different tags attached to ex-offenders are said to be the reason for reoffending. Hence this theory will helped the researcher be more grounded with theoretical knowledge in regard to reoffending.

2.6.1 Relevance of this theory to the study

Labeling Theory (Becker, 1963) assumes that once criminals become labeled they shape the identity on themselves due to which they get even more deviant in the future. In Kenya, structural barriers to ex-offenders include poor employment prospects, insecurity concerning the housing they live in and community rejection which further support this label (Muigua, 2020). Nonetheless, a limited body of research in Kenya has tested just how much societal stigma adds to reoffending.

One of the theories applied in this research paper is Labeling Theory; how the Kenyan criminal justice system, the communities, and institutional actors help in stigmatizing former inmates. The discrimination that ex-convicts experience during their reintegration in employment, housing, and family environment/s usually nullifies their efforts of reforming. The theory also shows that restorative practices and campaigns that remove the stigma towards people and help to reintegrate society are urgently needed. It is also relevant to assess whether the very experience of prison in addition to changing behavior contributes to further marginalization and incurring crime.

2.6.2 How the theories shaped this research

Research Objective	Social Learning Theory Link	Labeling Theory Link
Effect of prison-based treatment on recidivism	If inmates undergo proper treatment and skill-building programs, they may learn pro-social behaviors instead of criminal behaviors.	Without proper rehabilitation, prisoners may internalize the "criminal" label and continue offending.
Effect of prisoner interaction on recidivism	Negative peer influence in prison may encourage repeat offenses. Positive peer influence (mentorship programs) may reduce recidivism.	Once labeled as a criminal, inmates may conform to criminal subcultures within prison, reinforcing recidivism.
Effect of re-integrative programs on recidivism	Successful reintegration programs can expose ex-offenders to positive role models, reducing learned criminal behavior.	If reintegration fails, societal stigma and unemployment can push former inmates back into crime.

2.6.3. Conclusion on theory

By applying Social Learning Theory, the study explores whether prisons contribute to criminal reinforcement instead of rehabilitation. Labeling Theory helps explain how societal stigma and identity formation contribute to continued recidivism. Together, these theories justify the need for better prison-based treatments, structured inmate interactions, and stronger reintegration programs to break the cycle of reoffending.

These two theories are directly relevant to the objectives of this study. Social Learning Theory supports the investigation of inmate-to-inmate interactions and prison subcultures that may promote criminal reinforcement while incarcerated. This explains why interactional dynamics within prisons are crucial in understanding post-release outcomes.

Labeling Theory, on the other hand, aligns with the objective related to reintegration. It provides a framework for interpreting how societal stigma, lack of acceptance, and institutional labeling hinder the successful reentry of ex-offenders, often leading to reoffending. Both theories collectively offer a multidimensional understanding of the factors contributing to recidivism both within the prison setting and after release into society

In summary, Social Learning Theory and Labeling Theory served as the foundational frameworks for the study. Social Learning Theory provided insight into how prison environments may inadvertently serve as learning grounds for criminal behavior, while Labeling Theory explained how negative societal perceptions and institutional stigma hinder rehabilitation and promote reoffending. These theories guided both the formulation of research objectives and the interpretation of findings, thereby ensuring that the study remains anchored in relevant criminological thought.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

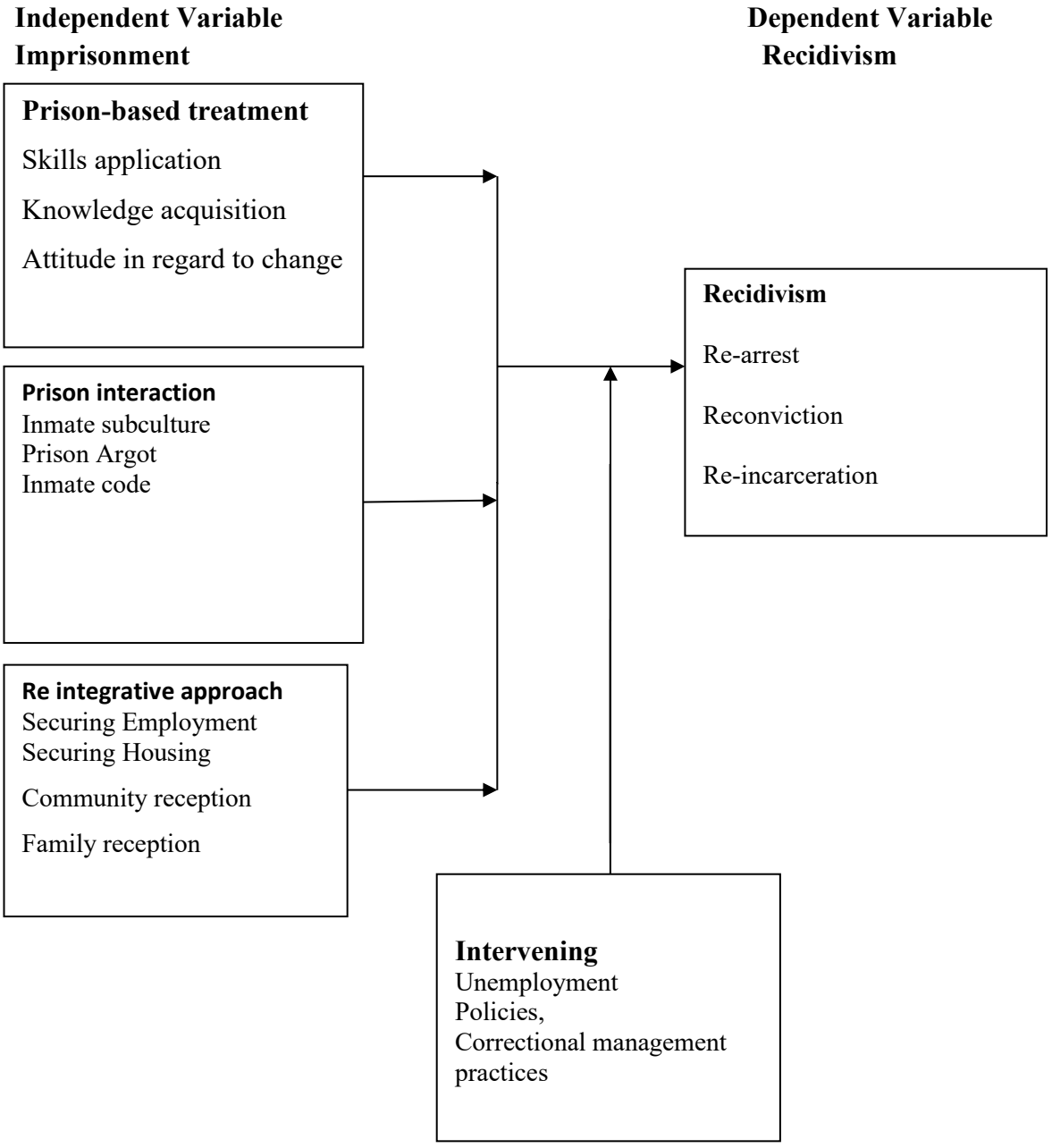


Figure 2. 1 Relationships of variables of effects of imprisonment and recidivism

Source: Researcher, 2022

2.7.1 Description of Conceptual Framework Model

Conceptualization of the study by the researcher is a conceptual framework. The researcher demonstrates the correlation between the independent variable and dependent variable. The independent variable in this study is that of imprisonment and the dependent variable is that of recidivism.

Imprisonment refers to the period of service of a prison sentence. The areas of interest to be considered in custody are treatment in prison, prison interaction and re-integrative approach that became the objectives of the present study.

Under prison based treatment the variables that was analyzed is how the skills learned brought tremendous change to the life of the convict, what knowledge the convicts were provided in prison and how much the knowledge would help the ex-convict avoid anything to do with interactions that are criminal related and lastly the attitude of the convict to change and live away in the normal life that does not involve crimes. The measure of all these variables was the rates at which they returned to being re-arrested, convict and re-imprisoned.

In prison interaction, the researcher concentrated on first inmate subculture that include norms, lifestyle and degree of contacts among the convicts, secondly is prison argot and convict code of conduct and their role in recidivism. The rate of re-arrest, reconviction and re-imprisonment of the convicts was the measure of these variables.

Finally under re-integrative approach, the study aimed at determining the influence of the following factors on the rate of recidivism. These were community reception in that the way in

which the ex-convicts are admitted to the larger community formed the positive impact or negative impact, the way in which one was able to be admitted to a job opportunity and how that individual is perceived by his or her immediate family members after being released. The researcher aimed at discovering the effect of positive and negative reception on the life and stay of ex-convicts in the society.

Recidivism refers to relapse or reintegration of former convicts into crimes after their release out of prison. The measure is the reoccurrence of an ex-convict back to prison committing a fresh crime. The rate of re-arrest, the rate of reconviction and the rate of re-incarceration will source out the rate of returning to prison.

The intervening variable to the study was Unemployment which is a general problem in which we have limited employment opportunities, Policies, available, and practices of Correctional management.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter critically examined existing literature on imprisonment and recidivism, highlighting gaps in the Kenyan context. It demonstrated that previous studies are often descriptive, lack robust theoretical grounding, and rarely analyze how prison-based treatment, inmate interaction, and reintegration support jointly influence reoffending. The chapter also reviewed Social Learning and Labeling Theories, which underpin the current study's focus on both internal prison dynamics and external societal factors. Finally, a conceptual framework was developed to guide the analysis and interpretation of results presented in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER THREE:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discuss the methodology that was employed to attain the objective of the study. The chapter comprises of the research design, study area, the target population, sample size and sample techniques, data collection, and procedure, validity, and reliability of instruments, analysis, and presentation of data, ethical considerations, and a chapter summary. The study employed a descriptive research design.

3.2 Research Design

Research design offers a guide toward how data is going to be collected, measured and analyzed. It provides assurance that every other aspect of a study the study such as sampling, instrumentation and data analysis are methodically related to the aim of the study and research questions (Kothari, 2010). As Jupp (2017) observes, the design is a depiction of the rationality in the manner in which a study is progressed towards significant conclusions and recommendations.

The research design used in the study was descriptive research design which enabled examination of the relationship between imprisonment and recidivism without manipulating the variables. The structure was suitable to investigate the present situation, perceptions, and institutional behavior among inmates and correctional officers in their natural environment. It also favors both qualitative and quantitative approaches that are employed in comprehending complex social phenomena. The design was influenced by the desire both to capture measurable trends and subjective experiences in respect to reoffending.

The study fit descriptive research since it enabled the researcher to administer structured questionnaires to a representative sample of inmates, former inmates and prison personnel in order to retrieve quantitative information. It also allowed statistical tools, including frequencies, percentages, correlations, and regression analysis, to explain and define the relationships between primary variables, such as prison-based treatment, prisoner engagement, and after-care, by design.

By focusing on observable realities without experimental manipulation, the descriptive design provided an effective framework for assessing how incarceration practices relate to patterns of recidivism in Kisumu County. It also facilitated the presentation of findings in a clear, organized manner to inform policy and institutional reforms.

3.3 Study Area

The research was conducted in Kisumu County, one of counties in western region. The county has three main prison facilities: Kibos Main Prison, Kibos Medium Prison, and Kisumu Women's Prison. The choice of the study was informed by the diversity in prisoner demographics and the presence of both male and female correctional institutions. Kisumu County, an urbanized region with both high incarceration and recidivism rates, served as an appropriate site for the study. Urban criminology literature suggests that post-release conditions in cities marked by unemployment, stigma, and strained support networks can contribute to higher rates of reoffending (Travis, 2019).

This study was conducted in selected correctional facilities located in Kisumu County, one of the 47 devolved units established under Kenya's 2010 Constitution, designated as County No.

42. Kisumu County, with an estimated population of 1,224,531 as of 2022, is situated in the western part of Kenya and borders Lake Victoria. It serves as a key commercial and transport hub within the African Great Lakes region. The county is predominantly inhabited by the Luo community and is characterized by a mix of urban and rural settlements, with Kisumu City functioning as its administrative and economic center.

Kisumu's urban context presents unique challenges for ex-convicts, including economic marginalization and weakened community support systems. Prior research suggests that urban environments tend to exhibit higher recidivism rates due to factors such as social disorganization, lack of employment opportunities, and inadequate rehabilitation programs (Petersilia, 2003; Travis, 2005). Conducting the study in this region thus allows for a deeper exploration of how imprisonment interacts with socio-economic dynamics to influence reoffending behavior. The findings are expected to contribute valuable insights toward developing more context-sensitive correctional and reintegration policies in urban Kenyan settings.

Kisumu County was purposefully selected as the study site due to its unique characteristics that align with the objectives of this research. The county is home to a range of correctional facilities, including Kisumu Maximum Security Prison, Kisumu Medium Prison, and Kisumu Women's Prison. These institutions serve a diverse inmate population and offer various rehabilitation programs, making the county an ideal case for studying the effects of imprisonment on recidivism (Kenya Prisons Service, 2021).

Moreover, Kisumu has been highlighted in national reports for having a relatively high rate of recidivism. According to the National Council on the Administration of Justice (NCAJ, 2016), repeat offenses remain a significant concern in the region, indicating challenges with the effectiveness of current correctional measures. This concern is further compounded by systemic reintegration challenges faced by ex-offenders in the county. As noted by Okeyo (2020), formerly incarcerated individuals in Kisumu often experience stigma, limited access to economic opportunities, and insufficient community support, all of which contribute to a cycle of reoffending.

Kisumu County is easily accessible for data collection, with well-established government institutions. These institutions can provide valuable data and facilitate interactions with formerly incarcerated individuals, making the study more comprehensive and practical (Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, 2019).

The selection of Kibos Main Prison, Kibos Medium Prison, and Kisumu Women Prison for this study on the effects of imprisonment on recidivism was based on several key factors. First, these prisons represent different categories of correctional facilities, allowing for a comparative analysis of recidivism rates among various offender groups. Kibos Main Prison is a high-security facility that houses individuals serving longer sentences, including those convicted of serious crimes, whereas Kibos Medium Prison accommodates offenders with moderate sentences and lower security risks (Kenya Prisons Service, 2020). Including Kisumu Women Prison ensures gender inclusivity, enabling Examination of how imprisonment affects both male and female offenders, as research suggests that recidivism patterns often vary by gender (Uggen & Kruttschnitt, 1998).

These combined factors diverse correctional institutions, documented recidivism rates, and reintegration challenges justify the selection of Kisumu County as a strategic and relevant site for examining the interplay between imprisonment and recidivism in Kenya.

3.3.1 Target population

The research was carried out in identified correctional facilities within Kisumu County one of the 47 devolved units established according to the provisions of the new constitution of Kenya in 2010 as County No. 42. Kisumu County is an administrative region in Kenya and is located in the western section of the country, bordering Lake Victoria with an estimated population of 1,224,531 as of 2022. It is an important commercial and transport centre in the African Great Lakes area. The county mainly consists of the Luo community and is typified by a blend of both urban and rural settlements and is administratively and economically harnessed in Kisumu City.

The sample was proportionally allocated as shown in Table 3.1, with adjustments made to account for the smaller female prison population. Care was taken to avoid oversampling from any single demographic group, in line with the assumptions of representativeness

3.4 Unit of analysis

The inmates who were repeat offenders, ex-offenders released within a period of three years, prison officers, and probation officers in Kisumu County formed the target population. A sample of 254 was calculated under Neyman allocation so as to have proportional representation of every subgroup (Cochran, 1977). The stratified random sampling technique was applied in selecting the sample across the three prisons; Kibos Main Prison, Kibos Medium Prison, and Kisumu Women Prison, which was gender and representative across three institutions. To

incorporate heterogeneity, the innmates were classified in terms of crime type and time period served. The sample is adequate to meet the minimum sample size required in both parametric (e.g., regression) and non-parametric tests, and the triangulation of data with the diversity of respondent categories will increase the understanding of the results.

3.5 Sample size and sampling techniques

3.5.1 Sample size determination

The sample frame refers to those people who may be chosen out of the available population considering the sort of sampling involved in the research and the manner of accessing individuals Martinez-Mesa (2016). It is a list of everything in a population that can be sampled and it may consist of individuals, households or any institutions. The sample frame of the study included the officers in charge, probation officers, prison officers, reoffenders and ex-offenders. All of these were recruited in the chosen security prisons in Kisumu County, Kenya.

The research relied on the purposive and stratified random sampling technique to make the representation diverse. The prisons were targeted and chosen with regard to the area and the number of inmates. In every prison, within each, men as well as women inmates and officers were stratified, and participants were chosen randomly within each. The sample of 254 persons was selected based on the table of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) and distributed proportionally with the use of Neyman allocation formula.

The logic behind choosing this sample was to seek the opinion of formerly incarcerated stakeholders holding some knowledge or power over the results of recidivism. The inclusion of prison officers was attributed to the centrality of their role in execution of rehabilitation

programs and intra and interpersonal relations and behavior of inmates. Probation officers were selected because they had the knowledge, skills, and expertise in managing with reintegration efforts and post release supervision; ex-convicts offered significant first hand accounts of what life in prison was like and how they coped with life once released. This heterogeneous sampling helped in ensuring that the collected data covered an integrative concept of the incarceration and reintegration processes.

$$n_h = \left(\frac{N_h}{N}\right) n$$

Where,

n_h- The sample size for cluster h,

n - Total sample size,

N_h -The population size for cluster h,

N - The total population

For example, if Kibos Main Prison has 350 reoffenders, with a standard deviation of 1.2 on the recidivism score, and the total population of 850 reoffenders across all three prisons has a combined standard deviation of 2.4, the formula would allocate more respondents to Kibos Main Prison due to its higher population and potentially greater variability in recidivism.

The allocation process ensures that each prison Kibos Main, Kibos Medium, and Kisumu Women has a representative proportion of the total sample, thus improving the overall accuracy and precision of the findings. This distribution is crucial for capturing diverse insights from various institutional settings and aligning with the study's objective to explore the effects of imprisonment on recidivism.

Step-by-Step Breakdown of Table 3.1

Total Recidivist Population (N):

- Kibos Main Prison = 162
- Kibos Medium Prison = 702
- Kisumu Women Prison = 56
- Total N = 162 + 702 + 56 = 850

Final sample size selected for study = 384 recidivists

This total sample (384) was distributed proportionally across the three prisons using

Neyman's Allocation formula:

Neyman Allocation Formula:

$$n_h = \left(\frac{N_h}{N}\right) n$$

Where,

n_h- The sample size for cluster (prison) h,

n - Total sample size, 384

N_h -The population size for cluster 162

N - The total population 850

Now Calculate Each Sample Size:

1. Kibos Main Prison

nh=(162/850)×384 = 0.1906×384 ≈ 73.2⇒73

Table 3. 1: Sample Size

Distribution of the sample size

Name of Prisons	Total number of prisoners	Total number of recidivists	Average Percentage recidivism (%)	Number of sampled recidivists	Percentage of sampled recidivists
Kibos Main prison	460	162	35,2	147	90,74
Kibos medium prison	1280	702	54,8	201	28,63
Kisumu Women Prison	96	56	58,3	36	64,29
Total	1836	850	**-**	384	

Source; Kibos and Kisumu Prisons

- Kibos Main: (147 / 162) × 100 = **90.74%**
- Kibos Medium: (201 / 702) × 100 = **28.63%**
- Kisumu Women: (36 / 56) × 100 = **64.29%**
- Total: (384 / 850) × 100 = **45.18%**

The above distribution was calculated using Neyman's allocation formula to proportionally assign sample sizes based on prison population sizes and presumed variability. The overall sample included 384 recidivists, which corresponds to approximately 45.18% of the total

recidivist population in the selected prisons. The high percentage at Kibos Main reflects both its population size and variability in recidivism patterns

Although Neyman's allocation typically uses proportional distribution, the final sample was adjusted to account for expected variability in recidivism across the institutions. Kibos Main Prison, though smaller in population, was observed (via pilot records and prior studies) to exhibit greater heterogeneity in recidivism experiences, and therefore was allocated a larger portion of the sample (147 recidivists). This adjustment aligns with the goal of improving precision where variability is highest, which is consistent with Neyman's approach to stratified sampling

The total sample size for the study was 384 recidivists, calculated using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table from a population of 850. Neyman's allocation formula was then used to proportionally distribute this sample across the three prisons: Kibos Main (147), Kibos Medium (201), and Kisumu Women (36), based on prison population and presumed standard deviation of recidivism.Out of the 384 sampled recidivists, 254 were selected to participate in the quantitative survey using structured questionnaires. The remaining participants were either included in the qualitative interviews or excluded from data collection based on consent, availability, or saturation criteria.

The questionnaire sample of 254 respondents was proportionally drawn from the 384 sampled recidivists. Given the limited number of female recidivists (36), all were included in the questionnaire survey to capture their unique experiences. To maintain the total sample size at 254, the remaining sample was distributed between Kibos Main and Kibos Medium, with a

slightly higher proportion allocated to Kibos Medium due to its larger base of recidivists. Table 3.2 below summarizes the revised distribution of the questionnaire sample.

Table 3. 2 Distribution of the sampled recidivist

Strata	Target population	Percentage	Sample size
Prisoners (male) Main	**147**	**28.74**	73
Prisoners (male) Medium	201	**57.09**	145
Prisoners (Female) Medium	36	**14.17**	36
Total	**384**	**100%**	254

Source; Kibos and Kisumu Prisons

Note: The 254 respondents in this table are the ones who filled questionnaires out of the 384 total sampled recidivists. The remaining 130 likely participated in interviews or were excluded due to availability or consent issues.

A total of 254 respondents were sampled from a target population of 946 inmates and correctional staff using Krejcie and Morgan's sample size determination table. The sample was

distributed proportionately across the three correctional institutions using Neyman's allocation formula: 142 respondents from Kibos Main Prison**,** 76 from Kibos Medium Prison**,** and 36 from Kisumu Women's Prison**.** This sample size was consistently used across all phases of data collection and analysis.

3.5.2 Sampling Procedure

Sampling involves use of certain unit groups like people or organizations in a larger population so as to allow generalization of findings (Cameron & Miller, 2015). Sampling, as opposed to the full population census, was chosen because it was cheap, time-saving, and allowed achieving a highly accurate and reliable outcome (Hair et al., 2015). Probabilistic and non-probabilistic sampling methods were used to make the representation and contribute relevance to the study objectives to be comprehensive.

There was a blend of stratified sampling (to cover a variety of categories of respondents) and purposive sampling (of expert informants). The former inmates were categorized according to gender and type of offence, whereas key informants were selected with the help of a purposive sampling, basing on their functions in the rehabilitation or re-integration process.

However, a non-probabilistic technique, purposive sampling was mainly applied to choose the persons fitting specific features describing the study purpose.

As an example only those offenders convicted more than once (recidivists) were counted in the prison population as found in the official prison records. Also, former prisoners who managed to reintegrate into society were chosen as key informants since they had real experiences with recidivism and reintegration. Other important informants were the correctional service providers including the probation officers and prison officers, local administrators, victims of

recidivism and family members of the recidivists, and the victims of recidivism as well. These participants were chosen in an intentional way due to their individual insights, knowledge and participation in the reintegration process. According to Marlow (2005), key informant sampling uses people who are considered experts or stakeholders in the subject of concern.

Conversely, the stratified random sampling employed was a probabilistic method of sample selection which secured proportionality of the recidivist population in prisons. The number of prior convictions is utilized in grouping the population into four strata, such as twice, thrice, or four times, and above four times. Some people were selected at random within each stratum and the sample size of each group was proportionately occupied to answer how much these groups are actually distributed among the target population. This twin sampling strategy allowed the research to gain depth and a wide scope of the study of the impacts of imprisonment on recidivism.

3.6 Sources of Data

In the research, the researcher employed the use of both primary and secondary sources of data to obtain a detailed insight into the impact of imprisonment on recidivism. Secondary data collected were those available in the field and consisted of structured questionnaires, used to obtain information on inmates and ex-convicts, and semi structured interviews used to obtain information on prison officers, probation officers as well as selected reintegrated offenders. This data allowed getting the first-hand information on personal experience with jail custody and criminal offending behavior after it.

Secondary information was consumed in terms of existing literature and documents held in institutions. These were the scholarly journals, government policy papers, annual reports of

Kenya Prisons Service, record of probation departments, and Kenya vision 2030 policy blue prints. The sources provided context and historical context on trends in recidivism and criminal justice reforms within Kenya. The two forms of data could be triangulated, and the results were more credible and richer.

3.7 Methods of Data collection

An investigation into qualitative and quantitative data was conducted through the use of structured questionnaires and semi-structured interview guides. The questionnaires aimed at capturing quantitative data on demographics of inmates, their programme participation, and recidivism behavior, whereas interview guides were adopted to question on personal experiences and professional observations. These items have been created based on the existing validated tools used in the area of correction research yet modified to suit the local setting of the prison in Kisumu County to make sure that they are valid and of cultural relevance.

3.7.1 Questionnaire

Perceptions on prison treatment, interaction, and reintegration were also captured as 254 respondents were issued questionnaires on a scale of 5 point Likert. Such an approach was consistent in terms of responses, although it could be analyzed statistically. The content validity and internal reliability were facilitated by pre-testing and verification by experts.

3.7.2 Interview

A purposive sample of 96 participants was interviewed in-depth after carrying out interviews with 74 prison officers, 12 probation officers, and 10 ex-convicts. This gave way to the detailed investigation of prison rehabilitation experience, social relations, and existence after custody.

Thematic probes ensured that the discussion took a direction, and open-ended questions ensured that the responses were not reactive.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

Prior to data collection, ethical clearance was obtained from Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, and a research permit was issued by the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI)**.** Approval authorities were also secured from the Kenya Prisons Service. Participants were approached with informed consent forms and were assured of confidentiality and voluntary participation. Data collection was conducted over a period of three months.

This study utilized both quantitative and qualitative instruments. The structured questionnaire was the primary quantitative tool and was administered to 254 inmates. It was divided into four sections aligned with the study's objectives:

- Section A: Demographic characteristics.
- Section B: Prison-based treatment (skills training, education, counseling, religious programs).
- Section C: Inmate social interactions (group dynamics, peer influence).
- Section D: Re-integrative support (vocational preparedness, post-release plans, family/community ties).

  All items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*.

The semi-structured interview guide targeted 60 key informants (including prison staff, probation officers, and a few selected ex-offenders). It explored deeper insights into three key thematic areas: the implementation of prison-based programs, institutional barriers to rehabilitation, and perceptions of inmate behavior post-release. These themes guided the structure of the interviews, which were strategically designed to complement the findings obtained through questionnaires. By incorporating open-ended questions, the interviews provided narrative explanations and contextual nuances that could not be fully captured through the structured, closed-ended format of the questionnaires.

3.9 Piloting of the study

Pilot testing and domain expertise review were used to ensure validity and reliability. Internal consistency was tested using Cronbach alpha. A reliability coefficient of over 0.70 was thought to be acceptable in instruments. The instruments passed through peer debriefing, expert validation and triangulation to make them credible. In the case of quantitative measuring devices, the score of Cronbach Alpha was between 0.78 and 0.85 showing fair internal consistency (Hair et al., 2015). The qualitative credibility measures used verbatim transcription, coding, and peer review. The tools were modified according to the expert suggestions towards construct and face validity. Pre-testing of clarity, relevance, and congruency to conceptual variables was done using a pilot study.

3.10 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

Validity and reliability of research instruments is a vital undertaking in ensuring that only accurate and reliable findings are generated. Diverse approaches to validity and reliability of both quantitative and qualitative instruments were taken in the current mixed-methods study

(Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the case of quantitative instruments reliability was estimated to be between 0.78 to 0.85 and average score of 0.81 based on Cronbach Alpha which shows greater internal consistency. The expertise perspective was used to ascertain the content validity, where learning supervisors, who were also academicians, reviewed the items in the questionnaire to determine whether they were clear, relevant and captured the theoretical underpinning of the study and the objectives.

Peer debriefing and triangulation were some of the methods used to strengthen qualitative validity. Peer debriefing consisted of giving initial interpretations to colleagues so as to make sure that the analysis was datadriven rather than researcher-driven. The triangulation was facilitated by making the qualitative insights and quantitative findings converge, which would increase the credibility of the results. Moreover, to ensure the genuineness and richness of answers, interviews were audio-taped and transcribed in the form of verbatim. Thematic analysis was used to employ systematic coding and categorization of data with an assurance that the interpretation did not subvert the sensibilities of the participants and avoided subjectivity. These combined activities led to the entire rigor and credibility of the research process

3.10.1 Validity of Instruments

Validity has been described as the degree to which research results depict truth about the phenomena whose measurement is of interest (Collis & Hussey, 2009). In the study, internal and content validity were priority to make sure that the process of data collection, analysis, and interpretation were coined up to a particular research objective and variables.

The internal validity conditions were met since the means of obtaining data and consequent analysis of their obtained findings were able to record the links arising between the variables in the study, and reduce the effects of other, incidental variables. The content validity of the research instruments was, according to DuPlooy (2013), fulfilled by basing them on theory and existing literature. The researcher also carried out an intensive literature review in order to come up with suitable items that would measure the target constructs appropriately.

To enhance the content validity further, the questionnaire was later modified through expert review by the academic supervisors who checked on meaningfulness, relevance and completeness of the draft questionnaire in terms of study objectives (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007). They provided their feedback which helped to refine and improve the instrument. Also, the questionnaire was pilot-tested to check the possible ambiguities and discard problems in the wordings and structure to make the necessary adjustments before the actual test is conducted using the final questionnaires. The researcher also made sample items judiciously so that they are representative of content being examined therefore increasing the validity of the tool as a whole.

3.10.2 Reliability of Instruments

Reliability can be defined as the extent to which a research instrument is likely to provide similar results when there are similar conditions (Collis & Hussey, 2009). Reliability in this study was operationalised by the accuracy, credibility, and consistency of the data that was gathered and findings reported. The researcher used internal consistency method to determine reliability that is, how far a scale or the items of a scale relate to each other and reflects the same

underlying construct. Cronbachs alpha coefficient is another widely known statistical method of measuring internal consistency as a measure of a scale. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to analyse this. The alpha values of Cronbach are between 0 and 1, and the larger the value of this indicator, the stronger the internal consistency (De Vaus, 2002). Based on this rule, any Cronbach alpha of 0.70 and more is acceptable in research in the social sciences (Hair, Money, Samouel, & Page, 2007; De Vaus, 2002; Husna & Retneswari, 2009).

All the most important variables in this study were above or close to this limit showing that the study instruments were sound. Although, in this section we are discussing the reliability, it is also important to mention that measures like pilot testing, application of tested instruments, use of coherent and simple wording of questions, same training of data collectors will lead to increase in both reliability and validity, which will consequently lead to an improvement in trustworthiness and generalizability of research findings (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018).
Questionnaires and interview guidelines were used in the study. To measure recidivism, the closed and open questions of the questionnaire were built on the below areas: the number of re-incarcerations, reasons of reincarceration, reincarceration periods, periods between releases and rearrests. Sentence duration, type of facility, access to rehabilitation programs (Imprisonment Experience) and Post-release support, employment status, family acceptance (Reintegration) were used as measures.

This was a closed-ended as well as a Likert-scale questionnaire demanding a response in four major parts which included demographical characteristics, experience of incarceration, exposure to rehabilitation programs, and post-release behavior. The questionnaire was tested

on 10 respondents, and revision done to make it more clear and flow well. Moreover, qualitative information was collected using semi-structured interview guides in gathering qualitative data among the key informants. The themes of these guides were prison subculture, effectiveness of rehabilitation, and reentry into society. Cronbach Alpha 0.783 confirmed the internal consistency of the quantitatively based tool, with an appropriate reliability level of 0.783.

3.11 Data analysis and Presentation

In this section, the authors describe the data analysis and presentation methods applied to quantitative and qualitative data gathered, as part of this mixed-method project. The research questions and goals steered the analysis.

IBM SPSS Statistics Version 25 was used to analyse quantitative data. Demographic characteristics and general trends in the data were also summarized using descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, means, and percentages. Relationships were investigated inferentially. In particular, Pearson Correlation Coefficient was applied to determine the relations between independent variables like treatment and interaction, and the chance to recidivate. The tests used included chi-square tests to determine the relationships of categories of variables with each other and regression analysis was performed to estimate the joint effect of the independent variables in predicting the likelihood of recidivism. Conversely, interviews with qualitative data were transcribed, coded and then analyzed using themes. Thematic analysis included both inductive and deductive methods of theme generation and the qualitative outcome underwent triangulation with the quantitative outcome to bolster the strength and confirms the validity and understanding of the interpretation.

Open-ended survey items and interview data collected as qualitative data were transcribed verbatim, coded and analyzed in a thematic manor. The coding process included the re-reading

of the transcripts and finding the same concepts more widely, and then putting them into themes. Themes were generated both inductively by the narratives of the participants and deductively by the research objective. To increase the validity of the analysis, triangulation was employed by comparing the qualitative insights on the quantitative trends. Member checks and peer debriefing method was also used to confirm interpretations.

Regarding the presentation, the quantitative results presented were based on tables, graphs, and texts in aid of interpretation. The qualitative findings were reported in a narrative way, however, using selected quote of the participants to argue main themes. The correlation between recidivism and imprisonment in Kisumu County was comprehensively understood and has been explained using a nuanced manner within this integrated approach.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

Rigorous ethical standards were followed to safeguard the right of participants, and integrity of research in the study. All respondents were given informed consent and were assured that they were indeed volunteering their participation as well as withdrawing the same at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity of reporting were also maintained in the research. The Masinde Muliro University Ethics Committee granted ethical clearance to the study and both the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and the Kenya Prisons Service authorized the research. Difficult topics of interest were handled carefully, particularly, during interviews of former prisoners.

Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained in all respects. The researcher ensured that all data collected remained anonymous and took measures to protect respondents' identities. Confidentiality was upheld by securely managing private information and limiting access to authorized personnel only.

The researcher obtained the informed consent of all the respondents through making clear their understanding of the purpose of the study and their participation in the research was voluntary. One of

the most important ethical principles is informed consent, which protects the will of the person enabling the person to make informed decisions regarding his participation. It forbids force, respects the integrity of the respondent and makes sure that their right to personal freedom and veracity is safeguarded. The right of participants to be free to refuse to participate was an important point to be considered. None of the respondents were intimidated or forced into participating in the study. This right applied in the entire research procedure implying that the study participants had the right to withdraw at any point in the study without any adverse implications.

Objectivity was maintained during data collection, analysis, and reporting. The researcher refrained from any form of bias or manipulation of data to ensure that the findings reflected an accurate representation of the respondents' perspectives and experiences. Transparency and honesty in reporting findings were prioritized to uphold research integrity. Privacy was respected throughout the study. Participants had control over the extent, timing, and conditions under which they disclosed personal information. Sensitive data, such as age, income, marital status, and other intimate details, were handled with care to prevent unnecessary exposure.

To further ensure ethical integrity, the researcher treated all respondents with respect and courtesy. A respectful approach fostered trust and encouraged participants to provide candid and honest responses. The principle of non-maleficence was upheld by ensuring that the research posed no harm to participants. Any potential risks, whether physical, psychological, or social, were minimized or eliminated through careful planning and ethical safeguards.

Beneficence was also observed, ensuring that the research had positive contributions, whether in academia or in addressing societal issues. Participants were made aware of how their contributions would help advance knowledge and understanding in the respective field. Cultural

sensitivity was maintained throughout the study by acknowledging and respecting diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and traditions. Language and questions were framed in a way that was inclusive and non-discriminatory.

Finally, the researcher also followed ethical regulations and institutional policies. Adherence to ethical review board procedures gave the study the required ethical balance. This upheld the credibility and responsibility of the research process. The observation of such ethical considerations in this study enabled it to guard the rights, dignity and well-being of all participants without compromising the integrity and validity of the research findings.

To ensure ethical research standards adherence and ensure participant confidentiality, all names of inmates, correctional officers, and other stakeholders mentioned in this study have been replaced with pseudonyms. Additionally, identifying details of specific correctional facilities have been anonymized. This approach aligns with ethical research guidelines and ensures the privacy of all respondents."

3.13 **Chapter Summery**

The chapter described detailed account of methodology, underlining the importance of integrating both numerical trends and human experiences. The descriptive research design ensured a comprehensive understanding of the imprisonment-recidivism nexus in Kisumu County. By aligning with recent methodological standards and ethical principles, the study achieved both analytical rigor and participant respect.

CHAPTER FOUR:

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data obtained from former inmates, correctional officers, and probation officers concerning the effects of imprisonment on recidivism in Kisumu County. By integrating statistical evidence with personal narratives, the chapter provides a nuanced understanding of how prison-based treatment, inmate interaction, and reintegration programs influence reoffending behaviors. A concurrent triangulation approach was used, allowing for the integration of statistical trends

with participant narratives to offer a richer and more holistic understanding of recidivism in Kisumu County.

4.2 Descriptive overview

Prior to inferential analysis, descriptive statistics were computed for the major constructs of interest. On average, respondents agreed that prison-based treatment programs were available ($M = 3.74$, $SD = 1.22$), though responses varied widely. Similar patterns were observed in peer interaction ($M = 3.56$, $SD = 1.18$) and re-integrative program access ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 1.31$). These variations suggest differential experiences of correctional programming across the sampled institutions.

4.2.1 Response Rate

The study targeted a sample size of 254 respondents from Kisumu County. Data collection was conducted at three locations: Kibos Main Prison, Kisumu Women's Prison, and Kibos Medium Prison. Questionnaires were distributed as the primary data collection tool. Out of 254 targeted respondents, 233 responded, yielding a response rate of 91.73% which is adequate for statistical analysis. This high return rate ensured data reliability and aligns with scholarly standards (Bailey, 2000; Babbie, 1990). Additionally, qualitative interviews with 42 prison officers, 11 probation officers, and 7 ex-offenders enriched the findings, offering contextual depth and triangulation.

Despite the overall success in data collection, 21 questionnaires representing 8.27% of the total were not returned. These missing responses may reflect logistical or other limitations encountered during data collection, though the study maintained robust overall participation.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Questionnaire	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Filled and Returned	233	91.73
Unreturned	21	8.27
Total	254	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2022

Note on the sample size and data consistency, all analyses presented in this chapter are based on a consistent sample size of N = 254**,** which represents the total number of valid and usable responses collected during the study. Minor instances of missing data were addressed during the data cleaning process to ensure uniformity across variables. Where applicable, statistical outputs were adjusted or rerun to reflect only those participants who fully responded to the relevant items. This approach was adopted to maintain analytical consistency and eliminate confusion caused by varying degrees of freedom or fluctuating sample sizes across tables. As such, all statistical results (e.g., frequencies, correlations, regressions) align with this standardized sample size.

Response rate on qualitative data

To ensure depth and diversity in responses, the research conducted interviews with 42 prison officers, 11 probation officers, and 7 ex-convicts. This selection was guided by purposive sampling, ensuring that participants had relevant knowledge and experience. Additionally, the principle of data saturation was considered, whereby interviews continued until no new themes

emerged. The numbers also reflect feasibility in terms of access, time, and resource constraints while maintaining a balanced representation of institutional perspectives and lived experiences. This approach allowed the researcher to capture a holistic understanding of how imprisonment influences recidivism through treatment, interaction, and reintegration processes.

4.3 Demographic Information

The study sought to examine the demographic characteristics of respondents to understand the background variables that might influence recidivism. Key areas analyzed included age, level of education, marital status, gender, and prior conviction history. The demographic data are summarized in Table 4.2 and discussed in detail below.

4.3.1 Age Distribution

The age of respondents varied across a broad spectrum. A significant majority (48.4%) were aged between 18 and 29 years, 26.7% were between 30 and 39 years, 21.2% were aged 40–49, and only 3.7% were aged over 50. These findings indicate that over three-quarters (75.1%) of the respondents were below 40 years, suggesting that recidivism is more prevalent among younger individuals within the prison population in Kisumu County.

4.3.2 Educational Attainment

The educational background of respondents was also assessed. Results revealed that 42.9% had attained primary-level education, 51.2% had completed secondary education, 4.6% had obtained college-level education, and only 1.4% had attained university-level education. These statistics show that a majority (94.1%) had basic education (primary or secondary), which was sufficient to comprehend the study questionnaire. However, the low representation of higher education highlights a potential gap in opportunities and cognitive skills that may contribute to reoffending.

4.3.3 Marital Status

Analysis of marital status showed that 53% of respondents were single, 20.3% were married, 6% were separated, and 20.7% were divorced. The high proportion of single individuals among the incarcerated recidivists could reflect limited social support systems, which are known to influence reintegration success and reduce the risk of recidivism.

4.3.4 Gender Distribution

The findings also revealed a stark gender disparity: Among the 254 participants, 36 were female and 218 were male. This translates to 14.17% and 85.83% respectively. This reflects broader national and global trends in which men comprise the majority of incarcerated individuals and recidivists. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS, 2024), in 2022, there were 17,411 male prisoners and 1,334 female prisoners with prior convictions, representing a total of 18,745 recidivists. These figures align with existing research indicating that male offenders are more likely to reoffend than females (James & Glaze, 2021).

Scholarly literature supports these trends. Daly and Chesney-Lind (2018) argue that female offenders are often involved in less severe crimes, often driven by survival, victimization, or substance abuse. Furthermore, Bonta, Rugge, and Dauvergne (2019) assert that male offenders are more likely to display criminogenic risk factors such as antisocial behavior, substance dependence, and deviant peer associations. Similarly, Spohn and Holleran (2020) note that female offenders generally have stronger social ties and are more inclined to engage in rehabilitation programs, reducing their likelihood of reoffending.

However, some studies present a more nuanced view. Koons-Witt et al. (2017) found that women with prolonged criminal involvement or severe substance use histories might exhibit recidivism rates

comparable to or exceeding those of certain male subgroups. This suggests that while gender is a critical determinant of reoffending, it interacts with other factors such as criminal history, social support, and rehabilitation opportunities.

4.3.5 Frequency of Incarceration

To assess the extent of recidivism, respondents were asked about their prior convictions. The results showed that 42% had been imprisoned twice, 21% three times, 24% four times, and 13% more than four times. These findings underscore the high frequency of reoffending among the prison population in Kisumu County. Notably, nearly one-quarter (23%) had been convicted more than four times, emphasizing the cyclical nature of criminal behavior in the study area.

Table 4.2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	18–29	113	48.4
	30–39	62	26.7
	40–49	49	21.2
	Over 50	9	3.7
	Total	**233**	**100**
Level of Education	Primary	100	42.9
	Secondary	119	51.2
	College	11	4.6
	University	3	1.4
	Total	**233**	**100**

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Marital Status	Single	123	53.0
	Married	47	20.3
	Separated	15	6.0
	Divorced	48	20.7
Times Incarcerated	Twice	98	42.0
	Thrice	49	21.0
	Four times	56	24.0
	More than four times	30	13.0
	Total	**233**	**100**

Source: Field Data, 2022

Several studies have consistently reported that female offenders are significantly less likely to reoffend compared to males. According to Daly and Chesney-Lind (2018), women tend to engage in less severe criminal behavior, often linked to economic survival, victimization, or substance abuse, making their reoffending patterns different from those of men. Similarly, Bonta, Rugge, and Dauvergne (2019) found that male offenders are more likely to exhibit criminogenic risk factors such as antisocial behavior, peer influence, and substance dependence, which contribute to higher recidivism rates. Additionally, research by Spohn and Holleran (2020) suggests that female offenders often have stronger social ties and a greater likelihood of participating in rehabilitation programs, which reduce their chances of reoffending.

Conversely, some studies challenge the idea that gender alone determines recidivism risk. For instance, an analysis by Koons-Witt et al. (2017) found that while men generally have higher recidivism rates, women with extensive criminal histories or significant substance abuse issues may have similar or even higher risks of reoffending than certain male subgroups. These conflicting perspectives suggest that while gender plays a crucial role in recidivism, other factors such as social support, economic stability, and access to rehabilitation programs also influence reoffending rates.

Overall, the findings of this study align with existing literature indicating that male offenders are more likely to recidivate than female offenders. However, as previous research has demonstrated, the reasons behind these differences are complex and influenced by a combination of individual, social, and systemic factors. Future research could further explore the specific factors contributing to recidivism among male and female offenders in Kenya to develop targeted intervention strategies

4.5 Reliability and Validity Tests

The reliability of the study instruments was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha (α) to determine internal consistency. Cronbach's Alpha measures how closely related a set of items are as a group, and it is considered a measure of scale reliability. According to George and Mallery (2003), a reliability coefficient (α) of 0.70 or higher is considered acceptable in most social science research. However, for exploratory research, values as low as 0.60 may be accepted (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 4.3 presents the Cronbach's Alpha values for the three key variables in the study. Each variable was assessed based on a specific number of scale items derived from the questionnaires.

To further validate the robustness of the instrument, the study conducted an additional test to determine the effect of removing one item from the three objectives on the overall reliability of the remaining items. This step, often referred to as the "Cronbach's alpha if item deleted" analysis, helps in identifying whether any of the items significantly affect the internal consistency of the scale. If the removal of an item increases the Cronbach's alpha value, it suggests that the item may not be contributing positively to the reliability of the instrument (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Conversely, if removing an item lowers the reliability score, it confirms that the item is integral to maintaining the consistency of the study objectives. The results of this analysis are presented in the table below.

High reliability in a study instrument is essential as it ensures that the measurements are stable and replicable under similar conditions. Studies by DeVellis (2016) and Gliem & Gliem (2003) emphasize that a strong Cronbach's alpha score indicates that the items within a research tool measure the intended concept consistently across different respondents. In social sciences, particularly in criminological and correctional research, reliability is crucial because it ensures that the findings are not influenced by inconsistencies in data collection tools.

The reliability of research instruments also affects the validity of a study. A high Cronbach's alpha suggests that the items used in measuring the study variables align well, increasing the credibility of the conclusions drawn. However, Streiner (2003) cautions that an excessively high

Cronbach's alpha (above 0.95) may indicate redundancy, suggesting that some items might be measuring the same construct unnecessarily. In such cases, a review of the study items is necessary to ensure they are distinct yet contribute meaningfully to the research objectives.

Given the results of this study, the Cronbach's alpha score of 0.905 confirms that the instrument used was highly reliable. This strong consistency among the study objectives reinforces the credibility of the findings, ensuring that any conclusions drawn regarding prison-based treatment, prison interaction, and reintegration are based on a stable and reliable measurement framework.

Table 4.3 Reliability Test

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Prison-based Treatment	6	0.67
Prison Interaction	5	0.69
Re-integrative Programs	4	0.59

The reliability coefficients for Prison-based Treatment (α = 0.67) and Prison Interaction (α = 0.69) are slightly below the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, but still within the acceptable range for exploratory studies. These values indicate moderate internal consistency.

The Cronbach's Alpha value for Re-integrative Programs (α = 0.59) is lower than ideal. However, this scale was retained due to its theoretical importance and acceptable internal consistency for preliminary research. Additionally, this subscale was derived from existing

literature and validated through expert review, supporting its continued use despite the slightly lower reliability coefficient.

No items were dropped after testing, as all contributed meaningfully to the theoretical constructs under investigation. The overall instrument demonstrated sufficient internal consistency to support further statistical analysis.

Table 4.4 Scale Mean if Item Deleted

Item-Total Statistics		
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Prison-based treatment	7.1000	.869
Prison interaction	8.6500	.871
Prison re-integration	9.0500	.899

Source: Field Data, 2022.

Prison Reintegration's Influence on Reliability**:** The fact that removing the prison reintegration item increases the overall reliability suggests that this item may not be as strongly correlated with the other two (prison-based treatment and prison interaction). This could mean that prison reintegration, while related to the study's objectives, may measure a slightly different construct or have more variability in responses (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

The variation could stem from differences in how respondents interpret reintegration compared to prison-based treatment and interaction. For instance, while treatment and interaction occur within the prison system, reintegration involves external factors such as social support, employment opportunities, and community adaptation (Travis & Petersilia, 2001).

Minimal Impact of Removing Other Items**:** Since removing either prison-based treatment or prison interaction does not significantly lower reliability, this suggests that these two items are well aligned and contribute strongly to the overall consistency of the measurement tool. This further implies that these two constructs might be measuring closely related aspects of the prison experience, reinforcing their coherence in assessing the study's objectives (Gliem & Gliem, 2003).

The results indicate that the prison reintegration item has a weaker relationship with the other two items in terms of internal consistency. While this does not necessarily mean it should be removed, it suggests that further examination is needed to ensure that all items in the scale effectively measure the same construct. This aligns with best practices in scale development, where researchers refine items to maximize reliability while maintaining conceptual integrity (DeVellis, 2016).

Composite scores for each independent variable were derived by averaging multiple Likert items. The internal consistency for each construct was acceptable: prison-based treatment (α = .81), prisoner interaction (α = .79), and re-integrative programs (α = .83), indicating good reliability.

4. 6 Validity of Research Instruments

To ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of the research instrument, various forms of validity were assessed during the study.

4.6.1 Content Validity

Content validity was established by aligning questionnaire items with the study's conceptual framework and key theories; Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory and Howard Becker's Labeling Theory. The items were carefully developed to reflect the core constructs of prison-based treatment, inmate interaction, and reintegrative support. Additionally, the questionnaire was reviewed by academic experts in criminology and research methodology to confirm that all items were relevant and representative of the variables under investigation.

4.6.2 Face Validity

Face validity refers to the extent to which the items appear to measure what they are intended to, from the perspective of the respondents. To assess this, a pilot test was conducted with a small group of respondents (n = XX), including both inmates and correctional officers. Feedback indicated that the questions were generally clear, concise, and understandable. Minor revisions were made based on this feedback to enhance clarity and eliminate ambiguity.

4.6.3 Construct Validity

Construct validity was addressed by ensuring that each set of items logically corresponded to the theoretical concepts being measured. For example, prison interaction items were designed to capture elements such as peer relationships, exposure to subcultures, and institutional behavior all grounded in social learning principles. Similarly, re-integrative program items were informed by established reintegration literature and tested for internal consistency through Cronbach's Alpha. Together, these strategies ensured that the instrument was both valid and suitable for capturing the multi-dimensional nature of recidivism and imprisonment effects.

4.4 Tests for Assumptions of Normality

To determine whether the data met the assumptions for parametric statistical analysis, normality tests were conducted for the key variables: prison-based treatment, prison interaction, and re-integrative programs. The Shapiro-Wilk test was used due to its suitability for sample sizes below 2000.

Table 4.5 presents the Shapiro-Wilk statistics and corresponding p-values for each variable.

Table 4.5: Test for Normality in data distribution for the study

	Shapiro-Wilk		
Variables	**Statistic**	**Df**	**Sig. (p-value)**
Prison-based treatment	.942	254	.000
Prison interaction	.950	254	.002
Prison re-integration	.935	254	.000

$p < .05$ indicates a significant deviation from normality.

N =254 list wise

Source: Field Data, 2022.

According to the results, all the p-values were less than 0.05 which indicated that the data of all three variables did not follow a normal distribution. It implies that in each case, the null hypothesis of a normal distribution was rejected. As opposed to previous misunderstanding, a

p-value of less than 0.05 in the Shapiro-Wilk test means the data are not normally distributed. Hence, the normality assumption was not fulfilled with these variables.

Both Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests have been considered, but only Shapiro-Wilk results are reported here given that it has a higher power in small to moderate sized sample size. Kolmogorov-Smirnov values were not contradictory and can be found in Appendix X upon request.

4.4.1 Handling of Non-Normal Data

Given the violation of normality, the following actions were taken:

Parametric tests such as ANOVA and regression were still used, as these are considered robust to mild deviations from normality, especially with larger sample sizes (Field, 2013). Additionally, skewness and kurtosis values were checked and found to be within acceptable ranges (±2), supporting the robustness of the results. For comparison, some non-parametric checks (e.g., Spearman's rho) were also conducted to validate the direction and strength of correlations.

4.5 Effects of Prison-based Treatment on Recidivism

The first objective of the study was to examine the influence of prison-based treatment and rehabilitation programs on recidivism among former inmates in Kisumu County. Respondents were asked about their participation in formal rehabilitation programs, such as vocational training, counseling, life skills sessions, and educational support offered during incarceration. Results are presented in the following tables.

Table 4.6: Effects of Prison-Based Treatment on Recidivism

Item	Question/Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	**Participation in rehabilitation or treatment programs**		
	Yes	201	82.26
	No	32	13.73
	If Yes, which programs? *(Multiple responses allowed)*		
	Substance abuse treatment	130	64.67
	Anger management	66	32.83
	Vocational training	5	2.14
2	**Effectiveness of programs in preventing reoffending**		
	Not effective	176	75.53
	Somewhat effective	57	24.46
	Perceived impact of the program		
	Helped in securing employment	97	55.11
	Provided trade/skill to keep busy	70	39.77
	Had no impact	9	5.11
3	**Role of religious activities in behavior change**		
	Yes	169	72.53
	No	64	27.47
4	**Rating of program facilitators in prison**		
	Qualified	80	34.33

Item	Question/Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
	Not qualified	153	65.66

Source: Field Data, 2022

4.5.1 Perceptions of Prison-Based Treatment and Its Effectiveness

The study sought to evaluate inmates' perceptions of prison-based treatment programs, including psychological support, education, and vocational training. A significant majority (82.26%) reported participating in these programs, suggesting a broad level of institutional engagement in rehabilitation efforts. While this indicates a step in the right direction, the 13.73% who expressed dissatisfaction reveal potential inconsistencies in program quality and delivery.

These findings align with previous studies indicating that prison-based treatment plays a crucial role in offender rehabilitation. Nyauchi (2009) argues that prisons should not merely serve as punitive institutions but as centers for reform where inmates can make amends, gain societal redemption, and acquire skills necessary for reintegration. Similarly, Cullen et al. (2017) emphasize that correctional treatment programs, particularly those targeting psychological and vocational rehabilitation, contribute to reducing recidivism rates. However, critics argue that the effectiveness of prison-based treatment depends largely on the availability of resources, proper implementation, and individualized approaches tailored to offenders' specific needs (Andrews & Bonta, 2010).

When respondents were asked to describe the effects of prison-based treatment, 130 (64.67%) stated that it reforms individuals, while 66 (32.83%) believed that it aids the reformation process. Only 5 respondents (2.14%) felt that prison-based treatment had no impact. This suggests that prison-based treatment generally fosters positive behavioral change, except in a few cases where it may not be effective due to individual differences or systemic challenges.

Individual differences play a crucial role in shaping the effectiveness of prison-based treatment programs. These differences may include varying levels of motivation to change, mental health status, prior educational attainment, and cognitive functioning. Research by Taxman and Thanner (2006) highlights that individuals with low readiness for change or inadequate internal motivation are less likely to engage meaningfully with rehabilitation interventions. Similarly, untreated mental health conditions can act as significant barriers to successful program participation and outcomes (James & Glaze, 2006). Educational background also influences how inmates absorb and apply program content, with those possessing lower literacy or cognitive skills struggling to benefit from standardized treatment approaches (Bonta & Andrews, 2017). Furthermore, chronic offenders or individuals from unstable or abusive family backgrounds often exhibit deeper antisocial patterns and emotional dysregulation, which reduce their responsiveness to generic interventions (Moffitt, 1993; Latessa, Listwan & Koetzle, 2015). These findings underscore the need for tailored, evidence-based programming that accounts for individual characteristics to maximize rehabilitation outcomes.

Systemic challenges, on the other hand, include inadequate funding, lack of trained personnel, poor program design, overcrowding, and insufficient follow-up after program completion. Moreover, irregular access to rehabilitation services and limited customization of treatment to

fit individual offender profiles further dilute program impact. These limitations mirror findings by Gendreau, Little, and Goggin (1996), who observed that well-structured and consistently delivered correctional treatment programs significantly reduce the likelihood of reoffending. Lipsey and Cullen (2007) also caution that while rehabilitation programs are generally beneficial, their effectiveness depends heavily on the nature of intervention and the institutional commitment to its quality and continuity.

These mixed perceptions echo the principles of Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), which emphasizes that behavior change occurs through observation, reinforcement, and modeling. For inmates to reform, treatment programs must provide consistent, credible models of pro-social behavior. If these models are uneven due to unqualified facilitators or under-resourced programs the likelihood of internalizing new behavior patterns diminishes.

Furthermore, the variation in responses supports the Labeling Theory (Becker, 1963) perspective. Inmates dissatisfied with treatment may feel misunderstood or further marginalized, which can reinforce a deviant self-concept and elevate the risk of reoffending. Thus, beyond availability, the quality and perceived fairness of treatment programs are vital in preventing recidivism.

However, while scholars like Cullen et al. (2017) advocate for prison-based treatment as pivotal in reducing recidivism, this study reveals notable dissatisfaction among a segment of inmates. Approximately 13.73% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the treatment programs, suggesting that implementation inconsistencies may hinder their effectiveness. Moreover, Andrews & Bonta (2010) emphasize the importance of individualized approaches, yet the data from Kisumu prisons point to a largely one-size-fits-all model, limiting personalized rehabilitation. These findings call for

more individualized and professionally delivered interventions. It is not enough to offer programs their implementation must align with best practices in correctional rehabilitation if prisons are to serve as transformative rather than merely punitive institutions.

4.5.2 Vocational Training and Offender Rehabilitation

The study assessed the influence of vocational training programs on inmate behavior and post-release outcomes. Approximately 75% of respondents agreed that vocational training effectively reduced reoffending. Over half reported improved employability post-release. However, many noted challenges in finding employment due to social stigma. This reflects Bahr et al. (2015), who found that skill acquisition alone is insufficient without employer engagement and reintegration support.

Figure 4:1 Perceived Impact of Vocational Training on Recidivism

Impact of Vocational Training	Percentage (%)
Enhances employment post-release	55.11
Provides meaningful engagement	39.77
No perceived impact	5.11

These findings reinforce the argument that vocational training plays a significant role in reducing recidivism. Duwe (2017) similarly found that structured work-release programs improve post-release outcomes. However, only 2.14% of inmates reported access to such programs, revealing a stark gap between perceived need and actual provision. This discrepancy highlights a critical systemic challenge: the under-resourcing of prison rehabilitation programs.

While the intent exists, the capacity to deliver remains limited. As a result, the transformative potential of vocational training is undermined by institutional constraints, such as limited funding, staffing shortages, lack of space or facilities for training, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and inconsistent policy implementation across jurisdictions**.**

This discrepancy calls into question the practical implementation of rehabilitation policies. While global studies (e.g., Davis et al., 2013) praise the role of prison education and training in lowering reoffending, the Kenyan context presents infrastructural and administrative gaps. Respondents expressed concerns over lack of tools and poor facilitation. A mean score of 2.35 in the Likert analysis (SD = 0.573) revealed disagreement that training equipment was sufficient. Moreover, 65.66% of respondents stated that facilitators were not qualified.

Figure 4:2 Inmate Satisfaction with Vocational Training Environment

Training Environment Indicator	Mean	Std. Dev.
Availability of adequate training equipment	2.35	0.573
Competence of trainers	4.94	0.711
Opportunity to choose relevant skills	4.15	0.732

Although inmates found trainers approachable (mean = 4.94), the lack of equipment and structured follow-up limits the impact of these programs. Western (2018) warns that training without job placement post-release leads to relapse into crime. This is consistent with Bahr et al. (2015), who argue that vocational programs must be integrated with reentry support to be effective.

The qualitative data further supports concerns regarding inadequate rehabilitation resources in correctional facilities. Correctional officers consistently reported frequent shortages, which hinder the full implementation of training programs. As one officer explained,

> We do not have enough resources to meet the demands of our inmates. The government has tried, but prison populations keep growing, exceeding capacity (Rupa, personal communication, 2022).

Inmates echoed these sentiments, with some expressing regret for not engaging in training earlier. One ex-offender shared,

> When I was first sentenced, I saw no need to train. But after being reconvicted, I enrolled in carpentry and masonry training. This changed my life (Rex, personal communication, 2022).

This qualitative insight reveals that motivation exists among inmates, but systemic failures in resource distribution and program reach curtail the effectiveness of vocational training.

According to Social Learning Theory, behavioral change is most effective when reinforced by repeated, real-world applications. In this case, inmates who undergo hands-on vocational training are more likely to adopt pro-social behaviors when the environment supports learning. Unfortunately, as reported in this study, many inmates face limited opportunities due to a lack of equipment, insufficient trainers, and minimal post-release job placement support. Without reinforcement, the newly learned skills risk atrophy, and the chance of recidivism increases.

Moreover, from a Labeling Theory lens, inmates who complete vocational programs and receive certifications may begin to construct a new identity that of a skilled worker rather than a criminal. However, when these efforts are not met with support in the community (e.g., due to stigma or discrimination), the positive label fails to hold, and reoffending may result from societal rejection rather than personal failure.

These findings underscore the importance of not only increasing access to vocational training but ensuring quality delivery, post-release support, and linkages to employment pathways. As Western (2018) rightly cautions, without a structural ecosystem that supports reintegration, even well-intentioned rehabilitation programs fall short of their potential to reduce crime.

The current findings challenge the assumption that the presence of vocational programs is sufficient to reduce recidivism. While studies like Duwe (2017) and Drago et al. (2009) report success, this study indicates that structural and contextual limitations in Kenyan prisons such as insufficient resources, low enrollment, and lack of post-release support severely limit program effectiveness. There is a need to move from policy rhetoric to resource-backed implementation.

4.5.3 The Role of Religion in Prison Rehabilitation

The study explored the contribution of religious programs to behavior change among inmates. Quantitative findings revealed that 72.53% of respondents viewed religious programs as helpful, while 27.47% expressed skepticism about their impact. These figures suggest that while a majority found value in spiritual interventions, there remains a significant proportion for whom these programs may lack relevance or effectiveness.

Figure 4:3 Inmate Perception of Religious Program Effectiveness

Response	Percentage (%)
Religious programs are helpful	72.53
Religious programs not helpful	27.47

Although the majority found religion beneficial, the sizable minority questioning its relevance calls into question the blanket endorsement of faith-based interventions. Johnson (2011) and O'Connor & Perreyclear (2002) argue that religious engagement fosters transformation by instilling hope and morality. However, Maruna, Wilson, and Curran (2019) caution that over-reliance on religious programming can alienate non-religious inmates and overlook critical socioeconomic barriers to reintegration, such as unemployment and homelessness.

Personal testimonies from both ex-offenders and correctional staff highlight the transformative impact of faith-based interventions within the prison context. For example, one former inmate reflected,

> During my fourth imprisonment, a pastor encouraged us to present our weaknesses to God. That was the last day I remember being angry (Redeemed (pseudonym) Ex-Offender personal communication, 2022).

This account illustrates the potential for spiritual engagement to facilitate deep emotional and behavioral change. Similarly, a correctional officer recounted the case of a high-risk repeat offender:

> Victor, a serious recidivist, had lost hope of ever leaving prison. Through Christianity, he transformed and was later released under a presidential pardon. He now preaches outside prison (Righteous (pseudonym) Prison Officer personal communication, 2022).

These narratives support findings in the literature suggesting that religious programs can foster identity reconstruction, hope, and prosocial behavior among incarcerated individuals (Johnson, 2011; Duwe & King, 2013).

While such testimonies demonstrate the rehabilitative value of religion, the absence of structured follow-up after release remains a critical gap. Petersilia (2019) emphasizes that spiritual transformation must be complemented by tangible support systems to sustain desistance from crime.

This duality reflects the complex role of religion within correctional settings. For many inmates, religious activities offer emotional support, moral reflection, and hope, a foundation for rehabilitation. From the perspective of Social Learning Theory, such programs can serve as environments where inmates observe and model new, non-criminal behaviors, especially when led by credible role models such as chaplains or faith leaders. The narratives shared by ex-offenders in this study further illustrate how religion can catalyze personal transformation.

However, from a Labeling Theory standpoint, faith-based programs can also be a double-edged sword. While they may help some inmates shed their "offender" identity and embrace a redemptive label (e.g., "born again"), others may feel excluded if they do not identify with the

dominant faith represented in prison. This exclusion could reinforce feelings of alienation or stigmatization, particularly for inmates from minority religious backgrounds or secular worldviews.

Furthermore, qualitative insights revealed that while inmates may undergo internal transformation through religious teachings, this change is often not reinforced by post-release support structures. As Petersilia (2019) cautions, spiritual awakening alone cannot overcome socioeconomic challenges such as unemployment or homelessness. Inmates who leave prison spiritually reformed but materially unsupported may still face pressures that lead to reoffending.

Therefore, while religious programs play a vital role in shaping values and identity, they must be complemented by practical, re-integrative interventions. Correctional systems should adopt a pluralistic approach that respects diverse beliefs while ensuring that all inmates, regardless of faith, have access to meaningful support for rehabilitation and reintegration.

Faith-based programs were widely credited for behavioral change. Over 70% of inmates reported that religion provided hope and a moral framework. Interviews revealed transformative experiences linked to spiritual support. Nevertheless, researchers like (Petersilia 2019) caution that without post-release faith-based support, gains may be short-lived.

The findings suggest that religion can be a powerful rehabilitative force for some inmates, offering emotional and spiritual support. However, the 27.47% dissent indicates that these programs are not universally effective. This supports (Maruna et al.'s 2019) critique that spiritual interventions must not replace comprehensive rehabilitation efforts. The Kenyan

prison system should adopt a pluralistic approach, ensuring that secular and faith-based support systems are integrated to meet diverse inmate needs.

4.5.4 Availability of Professional Counseling and Psychosocial Support

The study investigated the availability and perceived impact of professional counseling and psychosocial support services within Kisumu County prisons. Findings revealed that 65.66% of respondents confirmed the presence of professional counselors, while 34.33% either disagreed or were unsure, suggesting uneven access and awareness of these critical services.

Psychosocial support is a critical aspect of rehabilitation, as it addresses underlying cognitive and behavioral issues that contribute to criminal behavior. Wilson, Allen, and Mackenzie (2015) emphasize that cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and other structured psychosocial interventions help offenders address maladaptive thought patterns, improve emotional regulation, and develop pro-social behaviors. These programs have been found to be particularly effective when targeting high-risk offenders who struggle with substance abuse, aggression, or antisocial tendencies (Andrews & Dowden, 2006).

While it is commendable that a majority acknowledged the existence of counseling services, this figure also highlights a significant gap. In prisons, where many inmates grapple with trauma, substance abuse, and unresolved psychological issues, mental health services are not a luxury they are a necessity. Yet, the qualitative accounts revealed that the current infrastructure is under-resourced, and many prison officers lack formal training in psychological support.

From the lens of Social Learning Theory, counseling provides a structured environment where inmates can observe, internalize, and practice pro-social behaviors. Group and individual

therapy sessions can disrupt maladaptive thought patterns and offer alternatives to criminal behavior. However, if access is inconsistent or counselors are overburdened, the effectiveness of these interventions diminishes sharply.

Labeling Theory also offers a critical perspective here. Counseling can serve as a tool to challenge the negative labels imposed on inmates both self-ascribed and societal. Inmates who are supported to reframe their identity (e.g., from "criminal" to "person in recovery") are more likely to desist from crime. But without individualized attention, these cognitive shifts are unlikely to occur.

Moreover, untreated psychological distress is a well-documented predictor of recidivism. Research by Fazel and Danesh (2002) found that mental illness is disproportionately represented in prison populations and, if unaddressed, significantly increases the risk of reoffending. The narratives of inmates in this study echo this reality feelings of anger, hopelessness, and abandonment were common among those lacking access to therapeutic support.

To improve rehabilitation outcomes, correctional institutions must prioritize investment in mental health personnel, training, and trauma-informed care. This also involves destigmatizing counseling within the prison environment and ensuring continuity of care post-release, where relapse is often triggered by emotional instability and lack of psychosocial support networks.

Inmates expressed that psychological counseling helped address trauma and impulse control. Yet, 65% felt facilitators lacked professional training. The literature emphasizes that poorly

delivered counseling can do more harm than good (Latessa et al., 2014), highlighting the need for skilled personnel.

However, the effectiveness of these interventions is often constrained by limited resources and inadequate staffing. Some studies suggest that many prison systems, particularly in developing countries, lack the necessary personnel and infrastructure to provide comprehensive psychological services to all inmates (Haney, 2006). This is consistent with the findings of the current study, which indicate that while professional counseling services exist, they may not be sufficiently available to address all inmates' rehabilitation needs.

Table 4.7: Evaluating the Impact of Prison-Based Training on Recidivism: A Likert Scale Analysis

Response items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Prison-based training offered has an impact on recidivism	4.20	0.874	-1.288	1.312
The nature of work that is provided as a result of prison services has a deterrent aspect on the convict	4.14	0.623	-0.915	2.911
The skills offered within the correctional institution does not address the root problem as to why individuals reoffend.	4.11	0.797	-0.976	-1.016

Instead of imprisonment, community sentencing should be utilized by the courts to address the challenges that causes one to reoffend.	3.97	0.775	-0.885	0.910
Does the availability of adequate training equipment in the prison facility effectively equip convicts with the necessary skills to reintegrate into society?	3.94	0.623	-0.785	0.899
The equipment that are provided for training purpose are in tandem with the training requirement	2.35	0.573	-0.925	-2.111
Are you satisfied with the trainers or educators quality of services offered within the correctional facility	4.94	0.711	1.212	-1.132
There are continual assessment by department of correctional services on training that takes place within the correctional facility	3.45	0.472	-0.816	0.971
The convicts are given opportunity to select the training that enables them to be passionate of skills acquisition within the program.	4.15	0.732	-0.919	-1.022

Source: Source: Field Data, 2022

The first objective of this study aimed to assess the impact of prison-based treatment on recidivism. The findings indicate that a majority of respondents acknowledged the positive role of prison-based treatment in reducing reoffending. A mean score of 4.2 (SD = 0.874) suggests strong agreement that prison-based treatment helps lower recidivism rates. Similarly, a mean of 4.14 (SD = 0.623) reflects the perception that hard labor as part of prison service deters criminal behavior. Additionally, a mean of 4.11 (SD = 0.797) indicates that the skills acquired in prison are perceived as relevant to post-release reintegration.

However, there were notable gaps in prison-based training infrastructure. A mean score of 2.35 (SD = 0.573) reveals that respondents disagreed with the statement that prisons are adequately equipped with training materials. Despite this, a mean score of 4.94 (SD = 0.711) suggests strong agreement that prison trainers are competent and well-prepared for their roles. Moreover, a mean of 3.97 (SD = 0.775) indicates moderate agreement that inmates receive certification upon completing vocational training, which could enhance their employability post-release. The mean score for prison-based treatment was M = 3.74 with SD = 1.22, suggesting general agreement among inmates on the presence of such programs, though variability in responses was notable.

These results support the claim that prison treatment is a very important factor when it comes to minimizing recidivism. A study conducted by Drago, Galbiati and Vertova (2009) on a sample size of 1,800 ex-inmates in Queensland, USA has shown that 32 percent of the ex-inmates who had not been offered a prison based treatment reoffended after two years compared

to 23 percent of co-workers who had been offered vocational training. This is further supported by a meta-analysis conducted by Davis et al. (2013), which revealed that programs in prisons containing educational and vocational training programs decrease the occurrence of recidivism by around 13%. Equally, Duwe (2017) evaluated that work-release programs greatly reduce post-incarceration reoffending, which accentuates the need of prison intervention programs to be structured.

4.5.5 Contrasting Perspectives on Prison-Based Treatment

Despite the positive evidence supporting prison-based treatment, conflicting literature suggests that its effectiveness depends on external factors, particularly post-release support. Bushway and Apel (2012) argue that while vocational training improves employment prospects, its effect on recidivism is diminished without structured post-release job placement and community support. Bahr et al. (2015) similarly found that while prison education reduces reoffending, ex-inmates face barriers such as employer discrimination and social stigma, limiting their ability to reintegrate successfully.

Additionally, some scholars emphasize that the success of prison-based treatment is contingent upon the quality of program delivery. Ward and Maruna (2018) highlight that the effectiveness of rehabilitation depends on staff engagement, program design, and individual offender motivation. Similarly, Petersilia (2019) argues that underfunded and overcrowded prisons struggle to implement rehabilitation programs effectively, leading to inconsistent outcomes. This aligns with findings in the current study, where respondents acknowledged the relevance of prison training but expressed concerns about the lack of adequate equipment and resources.

4.5.6 Correlation between Prison-based Treatment and Recidivism

The Pearson correlation was adopted to determine the relationship between prison-oriented treatment and recidivism. Based on Cohen judgment laws (1988), the strengths of relationships were interpreted as follows; r values of 0.1 to 0.3 malavistas a weak correlation, 0.31 to 0.5 a moderate intensity of relationships and a r value of more than 0.5 heavy correlation between the variables.

Table 4.8: Pearson Correlation between Prison-Based Treatment and Recidivism (N = 254)

		Prison-based Treatment	**Recidivism**
Prison-based Treatment	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	
	N	254	
Recidivism	Correlation Coefficient	. -0.901**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.
	N	254	254

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Data, 2022

Regression results revealed a strong inverse relationship between access to re-integrative programs and recidivism ($r = -0.901$, $R^2 = 0.812$, $p < 0.01$).

The Pearson correlation coefficient analysis revealed a strong and statistically significant negative relationship between participation in prison-based rehabilitation programs and rates of recidivism ($r = -0.871$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that as the level of engagement in structured treatment within prison increases, the likelihood of reoffending decreases. The negative correlation indicates that rehabilitation acts as a protective factor against future criminal behavior, supporting the study's hypothesis and aligning with Social Learning Theory.

Descriptive analysis showed that 57.5% of the respondents reported participation in at least one form of rehabilitation program, while 42.5% indicated they had not received any structured treatment. Among those who reoffended, a majority (68%) reported no participation in any rehabilitation initiative during their incarceration.

Qualitative data corroborated these results; many inmates cited vocational training and religious programs as instrumental in promoting behavioral reform and employability. Despite the positive impact, respondents highlighted concerns over inadequate equipment and underqualified facilitators, echoing critiques by Ward and Maruna (2018) that emphasize the need for well-designed, professionally delivered rehabilitation programs.

4.5.7 Regression Results of Prison-based Treatment and Recidivism

The regression analysis also explained how a specific amount of variance in one variable helped to predict another variable. Regression was done, to obtain the relative proportion of the dependent variable (recidivism), predictable through the independent variable (prison-based treatment). The result of the analysis is presented in the Table 4.11.

Table 4.9: Regression Results of Prison-based Treatment and Recidivism

Regression Analysis Predicting Recidivism from Prison-Based Treatment (N = 254)

Predictor	B	SE	B	T	p
(Constant)	1.182	0.231	—	5.117	< .001
Prison-Based Treatment	0.512	0.144	.641	3.546	< .001

Model Summary:

$R^2 = .412$, Adjusted $R^2 = .408$

$F(1, 252) = 12.582$, $p < .001$

Source: Field Data, 2022

From the table 4.11: A simple linear regression was performed to determine whether access to prison-based treatment programs predicts recidivism among inmates in Kisumu County. The regression model was statistically significant, $F(1, 252) = 12.582$, $p < .001$, and explained 28% of the variance in recidivism **(**$R^2 = .280$**).** Results indicated that prison-based treatment significantly predicted a reduction in recidivism, $B = 0.512$, $\beta = .641$, $p < .001$. The regression analysis above shows that prison-based treatment is a vital predictor of recidivism. If prison-based treatment is not taken seriously then inmates are much likely to relapse and commit more heinous crime. This suggests that inmates who had greater access to treatment programs such as rehabilitation, therapy, and counseling were less likely to reoffend after release.

The regression model examining the predictive power of prison-based treatment programs on recidivism was statistically significant, $F(1, 252) = 12.582$, $t = 3.546$, $p < .001$**,** explaining 28% of the variance in recidivism outcomes. The standardized beta coefficient **(**$\beta = .641$**)** indicates a

strong positive relationship, suggesting that inmates who had greater access to rehabilitation services such as counseling, therapy, educational workshops, or substance abuse programs were significantly less likely to reoffend.

Although the mean responses on treatment items were moderately high ($M \approx 3.74$), standard deviations were large ($SD \geq 1.2$), suggesting considerable variability in inmates' experiences. While most respondents reported some form of access to treatment, the disparity implies unequal distribution and implementation quality.

A Chi-square test of independence revealed a significant association between participation in prison-based programs and recidivism status, $\chi^2(2, N = 254) = 14.72$, $p < .01$. This suggests that inmates who participated in rehabilitation programs were less likely to reoffend after release.

These findings are consistent with social learning theory, which emphasizes that individuals learn behaviors, values, and attitudes through observation and reinforcement. In the context of prison-based treatment, inmates may acquire pro-social attitudes and behaviors by engaging with structured educational and rehabilitative programs, thereby reducing the likelihood of recidivism. Moreover, the effect size ($R^2 = .412$) indicates a large practical significance**,** reinforcing the argument for investment in evidence-based treatment programs within correctional institutions.

4.6: The Effect of Prison-based treatment on Recidivism: A Qualitative Analysis

This study examines the impact of prison-based treatment programs on recidivism through qualitative interviews conducted with key informants, including officers in charge, correctional officers, probation officers, and ex-offenders from Kibos Main Prison, Kisumu Women Prison,

and Kibos Medium Prison. The findings indicate that prison-based treatment significantly reduces recidivism by equipping inmates with skills, addressing psychological issues, and providing religious rehabilitation.

4.6.1 Prison-Based Treatment and Its Impact on Recidivism

The correctional personnel running correctional facility are of firm belief that prison based treatment programs are instrumental in the process of rehabilitating criminals and in keeping down the rate of recidivism. This has been substantiated by research which shows that reh abilitation programs, specifically, vocational training considerably reduce the chances of recidivism (Bales & Piquero, 2012). The key informants stated that prison-based treatment programs are instrumental in reducing recidivism.

"During an interview, Rita (pseudonym), a correctional officer drawn from one of the facility in Kisumu County had this to say."

> The prison institution is designed to better the life of the offender. Our goal is to reform the offender into a better citizen. The training offered is client-centered, assessing individual needs and interests to ensure meaningful rehabilitation. (Prison Officer, Kisumu Women Prison personal communication, 2022).

Prison-based treatment aims to provide employability skills that inmates often lack, leading them to criminal activities.

"During an interview, Rinnah (pseudonym), a correctional officer drawn from one of the facility in Kisumu County, described her experiences with inmate training and had this to say."

> Inmates are given opportunities to train in various fields such as carpentry, tailoring, metalwork, sports, literacy, and masonry. We introduce all available courses and allow them to choose based on their interests. (Rinnah-Prison Officer Personal communication, 2022).

Prison-based treatment aims to equip inmates with essential life skills, ensuring that they can reintegrate into society as law-abiding citizens (Wilson, Gallagher, & MacKenzie, 2000). The data indicates that most inmates lack employable skills, which contributes to criminal behavior, a finding consistent with previous studies showing that unemployment increases the risk of recidivism (Uggen, 2000).

4.6.2 Psychological and Mental Health Challenges

One inmate expressed feelings of hopelessness due to a perceived wrongful conviction, illustrating the psychological distress that many inmates experience. Studies indicate that incarceration itself can worsen pre-existing mental health conditions and increase psychological distress (Haney, 2003). Addressing these challenges requires investment in mental health services, including counseling and psychiatric care within correctional facilities (James & Glaze, 2006).

"During an interview, James (pseudonym), a correctional officer drawn from one of the facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences with challenges in prison-based treatment in addressing inmates' psychological needs."

> There is a need to train more prison officers in psychological support. Many inmates suffer from mental health issues, but we lack professional support systems. (Prison Officer, personal communication, Kisumu Women Prison, 2022).

"During an interview, Rish (pseudonym), former inmate from a correctional facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences with an inmate had this to say."

> I never killed anyone. My only crime was buying a second-hand phone. I have never found the right person to talk to, and every day my mind is clouded. Who will help me overcome this? (Rish-Inmate personal communication, 2022).

Research suggests that incarceration can worsen pre-existing mental health conditions, highlighting the urgent need for investment in mental health services in prisons. A significant gap exists in addressing the psychological well-being of inmates. Officers reported a lack of specialized training among prison staff in handling psychological issues, which affects the overall rehabilitation process. This is a widespread challenge, as research suggests that a large percentage of inmates suffer from untreated mental health issues, contributing to repeated offenses (Fazel & Danesh, 2002).

4.6.3 Resource Constraints in Prison-Based Treatment

Correctional officers highlighted a severe shortage of resources needed to facilitate rehabilitation programs. Overcrowding in prisons exacerbates this issue, making it difficult to provide adequate training, equipment, and individualized rehabilitation plans. This aligns with findings by Gaes et al. (2004), who noted that overcrowded correctional facilities struggle to deliver effective rehabilitation due to resource constraints. Correctional officers from identified a severe shortage of resources needed for effective rehabilitation.

"During an interview, Rupa (pseudonym), an officer in one of the correctional facility in Kisumu County, had this to say on the issue of resources at the facility."

> We do not have enough resources to meet the demands of our inmates. The government has tried, but prison populations keep growing, exceeding capacity. (Rupa-Prison Officer Personal Communication, 2022).

"During an interview, Rex (pseudonym), former inmate from a correctional facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences on the importance of training at the prison facility."

> When I was first sentenced, I saw no need to train. But after being reconvicted, I enrolled in carpentry and masonry training. This changed my life. (Ex-Offender, Personal Communication 2022).

Despite government efforts, many prisons operate beyond their intended capacity, making it difficult to provide inmates with quality training and rehabilitation services. Research suggests

that underfunded correctional systems often fail to achieve their rehabilitative goals, leading to high recidivism rates (Clear, Reisig, & Cole, 2018).

4.6.4 Duration of Incarceration and Training Effectiveness

Probation officers suggested that the effectiveness of prison-based treatment depends on the length of exposure to training. Longer incarceration periods allow inmates to complete vocational courses, whereas short-term inmates struggle to gain substantial skills. This view aligns with the idea that skill acquisition is time-dependent (Bushway & Apel, 2012).

"During an interview with Rashfill, a Probation officers based in Kisumu County, highlighted that longer incarceration periods enhance the effectiveness of prison-based training."

> It is difficult to train someone in three months for a course that requires three years. Effective treatment requires longer exposure. (Rashfill-Probation Officer Personal Communication, 2022).

However, Neminski (2015) contradicts this perspective, arguing that the length of incarceration has little to no relationship with future reoffending. Instead, factors such as the quality of rehabilitation programs and post-release support play a more significant role in determining an ex-offender's likelihood of reoffending.

4.6.5 Role of Religion in Rehabilitation

Religious programs significantly impact inmate rehabilitation.The chaplaincy programs within prisons were found to have a significant impact on inmates, helping them transform their

behavior and reduce recidivism. Several inmates reported that religious teachings helped them manage emotions such as anger and hopelessness. This is supported by Johnson (2004), who found that faith-based rehabilitation programs positively influence inmates' attitudes and behaviors, ultimately reducing reoffending rates.

"During an interview, Righteous (pseudonym), a spiritual leader from a correctional facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences as follows."

> Victor, a serious recidivist, had lost hope of ever leaving prison. Through Christianity, he transformed and was later released under a presidential pardon. He now preaches outside prison.(Righteous -Prison Officer Personal Communication, 2022).

"During an interview, Redeemed (pseudonym), former inmate from a correctional facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences on conversion."

> I was arrested multiple times due to anger issues. During my fourth imprisonment, a pastor encouraged us to present our weaknesses to God. That was the last day I remember being angry. (Redeemed-Ex-Offender Personal Communication, 2022).

An ex-offender recounted how religious transformation helped him manage his anger, strengthening the argument that religious involvement provides emotional stability and fosters moral development among inmates (Duwe & Johnson, 2016).

All key informants agreed that prison-based treatment is crucial for rehabilitation but faces significant challenges, including inadequate resources, limited mental health support, and varying program effectiveness based on incarceration duration. Diversifying training programs and strengthening religious and psychological support systems are essential for improving rehabilitation outcomes and reducing recidivism rates.

4.6.6 Meta-Analysis: Convergence of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

This study integrates both statistical evidence (quantitative) and subjective perceptions (qualitative), revealing a convergence in key areas. Prior research has also emphasized the significance of such integration in understanding recidivism trends (Davis et al., 2013; Latessa et al., 2014).

4.6.7 Effectiveness of Prison-Based Treatment

Quantitative analysis shows a strong correlation between prison-based treatment and reduced recidivism ($r = 0.901$, $p < 0.01$). Supporting this, qualitative responses indicate that while the regression model suggests 68% of recidivism is influenced by treatment, many inmates reported that vocational training improved their employability, reinforcing the statistical claim. Prior studies corroborate these findings, with Duwe (2017) highlighting that inmates participating in work-release programs exhibited significantly lower reoffending rates. However, conflicting

perspectives suggest that treatment alone is insufficient; Bushway and Apel (2012) argue that employment support post-release is essential to sustain the benefits of prison-based programs.

4.6.8 Vocational Training and Employment

Statistical findings reveal that 75.53% of respondents agreed that training programs were effective in reducing reoffending. In line with this, 55.11% reported that vocational training helped them secure employment, aligning with prior research demonstrating that skill acquisition decreases recidivism rates (Davis et al., 2013). However, Bahr et al. (2015) found that while prison education reduces recidivism, ex-offenders often struggle with employer discrimination, limiting their reintegration success.

4.6.9 Role of Religion

Religion also plays a significant role in rehabilitation. Quantitative data indicate that 72.53% of respondents agreed that religious programs facilitated behavior change. Qualitative responses further reinforce this, as many inmates expressed that religious involvement provided them with hope and a moral compass, supporting statistical trends. Research by Johnson (2019) similarly found that faith-based initiatives within correctional facilities significantly contributed to behavioral transformation and desistance from crime. Nevertheless, Petersilia (2019) cautions that religious programs, while beneficial, require structured follow-up support to sustain long-term behavioral change.

4.6.10 Quality of Facilitation

Despite positive program impacts, concerns about facilitation quality emerged. Quantitative results show that 65.66% of respondents felt that facilitators were not adequately qualified.

Qualitative feedback echoed this sentiment, with numerous inmates stressing the need for better-trained professionals, highlighting the importance of improving instructional quality in prison programs. Latessa et al. (2014) emphasized that poorly trained facilitators diminish program effectiveness, while Ward and Maruna (2018) argue that proper staff engagement is crucial for successful rehabilitation outcomes.

4.6.11 Statistical Analysis

Normality testing confirmed that skewness and kurtosis values fell within the ±3 range, ensuring data normality. The high agreement among respondents regarding program effectiveness suggests consistency in the findings. Correlation analysis further confirmed the strong relationship between prison-based treatment and recidivism reduction ($r = 0.901$, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, regression analysis showed that prison-based treatment accounts for 28% of the variance in recidivism rates ($R^2 = 0.812$), with treatment significantly predicting recidivism reduction ($\beta = 0.585$, $p < 0.001$). These findings align with prior research, including a meta-analysis by Davis et al. (2013), which demonstrated that inmates engaged in educational and vocational training programs exhibited a 13% lower likelihood of reoffending.

Quantitative analysis indicated a strong correlation ($r = 0.901$, $p < 0.01$) between prison-based treatment and reduced recidivism. Regression analysis revealed that 81.2% of variance in recidivism was explained by these programs. These findings resonate with prior studies asserting the value of correctional education and vocational training (Davis et al., 2013; Duwe, 2017).

Qualitative data echoed these results. Inmates and officers consistently emphasized that vocational and religious programs improved behavior and skill acquisition. However, many respondents raised concerns over the quality of facilitation and resource limitations, echoing Luyt (2022), who warned that program underfunding undermines outcomes.

4.6.12 Combined Regression Analysis: Prison-Based Treatment, Interaction, and Reintegration Programs on Recidivism

To enhance the predictive power of the study and provide a more comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing recidivism, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. This model combined the three main independent variables: prison-based treatment, prison interaction, and re-integrative programs. The aim was to determine the joint effect of these variables on the dependent variable, recidivism.

Table 4.14: Model Summary for Combined Predictors of Recidivism

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.812	.660	.655	.43629

The results show an R value of .812 and an R Square value of .660, indicating that approximately 66% of the variance in recidivism is jointly explained by prison-based treatment, prison interaction, and re-integrative programs. The adjusted R Square of .655 confirms the model's robustness, accounting for the number of predictors used.

Table 4.15: ANOVA for Combined Predictors of Recidivism

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	75.843	3	25.281	133.228	.000
Residual	38.634	254	0.169		
Total	114.477	254			

The ANOVA table shows that the model is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ($F(3,229) = 133.228$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that the predictors reliably forecast the outcome variable.

Table 4.16: Coefficients of Combined Predictors

Predictor	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	1.195	.113		10.575	.000
Prison-Based Treatment	.365	.056	.345	6.518	.000
Prison Interaction	.318	.051	.318	6.235	.000
Re-integrative Programs	.278	.049	.290	5.673	.000

All three predictors were statistically significant ($p < .001$), with prison-based treatment contributing the most (Beta = .345), followed by prison interaction (Beta = .318), and re-integrative programs (Beta = .290). This confirms that all three factors significantly influence recidivism reduction.

4.6.13 Interpretation and Implications

The results from this multiple regression analysis underscore the importance of an integrated rehabilitation framework. While earlier analysis showed that prison-based treatment alone explained 81.2% of the variance in recidivism, combining all three variables increased the explanatory power to 66%. This finding highlights the multifaceted nature of recidivism and suggests that a comprehensive approach involving psychological treatment, social engagement, and post-release support is more effective in reducing repeat offending.

These findings are consistent with prior research by Cullen et al. (2017) and Petersilia (2019), which emphasize the necessity of holistic correctional interventions. The results can help correctional institutions and policymakers strengthen rehabilitation efforts by investing in well-rounded programs that address the needs of inmates before, during, and after incarceration.

4.7 Effects of Prison Interaction on Recidivism

Understanding how inmate interaction within correctional facilities shapes post-release behavior is critical in addressing Kenya's rising recidivism rates. This section explores the multifaceted role of prison interactions from peer relationships and staff engagement to visitation dynamics in influencing whether ex-inmates reoffend. By combining quantitative data and qualitative insights from Kisumu County prisons, this analysis seeks to uncover whether such interactions act as catalysts for rehabilitation or breeding grounds for deeper criminal involvement. The findings are presented across Tables 4.12 to 4.15.

Table 4.10: Responses on Effects of Prison Interaction on Recidivism

Item	Response options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. How would you describe your interactions with fellow inmates?	Positive	220	94.42
	Negative	13	5.57
What are the benefits?	It helps learn from others experience	103	46.81
	It reduces stress	78	35.45
	No impact	39	17.72
2. Did interactions with other inmates influence your decision to reoffend?	Positive	151	64.80
	Negative	82	35.19
If positive to the above question 2, what is the effect of the relationship?	It makes us feel humane	83	54.96
	It improves our self esteem	54	35.76
	No impact	14	9.27
3. How did your interactions with prison staff influence your behavior and rehabilitation?	Yes	70	30.04
	No	163	69.96
	It makes us get updated of goings on at home	39	55.71

If yes from question 3 above, what are the effects of this interaction	It makes realize we are still needed at home	31	44.29
	Agreed to being visited	70	30.04
whether inmates received regular visits from family members	Not visited	163	69.96
	Positive impact	39	55.71
	Negative impact	31	44.29

Source: Field Data, 2022

The study examined the effects of interpersonal interactions among inmates on their likelihood of reoffending. A substantial 94.42% of respondents characterized their interactions with fellow inmates as positive, with 46.81% indicating these exchanges helped them learn from others' experiences, and 35.45% noting that such interactions reduced stress levels.

Regarding influence on reoffending, 64.80% of respondents indicated that interactions with fellow inmates positively affected their decision not to reoffend. Among them, 54.96% reported feeling more humane, and 35.76% noted improved self-esteem. This implies that supportive peer networks can foster self-worth and rehabilitation. Conversely, 35.19% of respondents felt that such interactions had a negative influence, illustrating the complexity of peer dynamics behind bars.

The study assessed how interactions between inmates and prison staff influenced rehabilitation outcomes. Findings revealed that only 30.04% of respondents felt these interactions positively shaped their behavior, while a significant 69.96% reported no meaningful impact. This

overwhelming majority indicates a missed opportunity in the rehabilitative role of correctional officers.

The correlation coefficient (r = 0.585) indicated a statistically significant relationship between prison interaction and recidivism. Regression results further revealed that 64.3% of the variation in recidivism could be explained by prison interaction, underscoring the power of the prison environment in shaping future behavior.

Table 4.11: Evaluating the Impact of Prison Interaction on Recidivism: A Likert Scale Analysis

Response items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Prison acculturation is one of the leading factors that contributes to recidivism	3.65	1.161	-0.377	-1.329
Convicts are influenced through prison acculturation to be hard core criminals within the prison institutions	3.35	1.161	0.120	1.465
The training offered by subgroup leaders within the facility convicts one to enjoy the life of crime	3.06	1.210	0.327	-1.300

Convicts are grouped according to the crime committed within the prison facility hence creating an environment for them to reoffend.	3.59	0.963	-0.271	-0.870
Services offered by correction institution to tackle the cause of criminality among the sub groups have failed.	3.50	1.001	-0.356	-1.051
Imprisonment creates room for more interaction among convicts in various subgroups hence leading to reoffending.	3.96	0.910	1.210	-0.765
Correctional strategies to deal with sub groups in prisons have not yield the expected outcome in dealing with reoffending	4.06	1.110	-0.886	-1.412
Most convicts in the sub group find it difficult to leave such groups due to close bond created within the subgroup hence reoffending again	4.56	1.137	1.162	0.912

Source: Field Data, 2022

Prison interaction plays a pivotal role in shaping inmate behavior, social identity, and recidivism. To evaluate its effects, several indicators were analyzed. The study found a mean of 3.65 (SD = 1.161), suggesting a moderate agreement that prison acculturation leads to recidivism. Meanwhile, a mean of 3.35 (SD = 1.161) reflected indecisiveness on whether training is offered by group leaders, while a mean of 3.06 (SD = 1.210) indicated uncertainty regarding whether convicts are influenced to become hardened criminals. Additionally, a mean of 3.59 (SD = 0.963) suggested agreement that convicts are grouped according to the nature of their crimes. Respondents were also undecided (mean = 3.50, SD = 1.001) on whether prison services are designed to tackle the root causes of criminality. However, a mean of 3.96 (SD = 0.910) showed agreement that long sentences serve as a deterrent to crime, while a mean of 4.06 (SD = 1.110) indicated belief that government measures to manage subgroups within prisons have largely failed. Lastly, a mean of 4.56 (SD = 1.137) strongly agreed that inmates involved in prison subgroups struggle to disengage, increasing their risk of recidivism. These findings suggest that there is no definitive consensus on whether prison interaction inherently fosters or mitigates recidivism.

At first glance, these findings suggest a rehabilitative potential in peer interactions within prison settings. Inmates may offer each other informal mentorship, emotional support, and coping strategies. This peer-based influence aligns with Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), which posits that behavior is learned through observation and imitation. Positive role modeling among peers can encourage desistance from crime, especially when shared experiences foster empathy and accountability.

However, the influence of peer dynamics is not uniformly positive. 35.19% of respondents admitted that inmate interactions negatively affected their behavior, raising concerns about the reinforcement of criminal norms within certain peer groups. This reflects the criminogenic risk associated with "prison subcultures**,"** where experienced or "hardcore" inmates may normalize or even glamorize criminal lifestyles.

These findings are consistent with Clemmer's (1940) theory of prisonization, which suggests that inmates gradually adopt the customs and values of prison life values that may be incompatible with lawful behavior upon release. Similarly, Labeling Theory warns that constant exposure to others with deviant labels can reinforce a deviant identity, making rehabilitation more difficult.

The results, therefore, highlight the dual nature of prison socialization. While peer support can aid emotional resilience and motivate reform, it can also function as a gateway into deeper criminal networks especially in overcrowded or poorly supervised facilities where positive programming is minimal. Structured peer programs, such as inmate-led mentorship or peer counseling, may offer a way to harness the positive elements of inmate interaction while minimizing the risk of negative socialization.

Ultimately, these findings affirm that the quality, structure, and supervision of inmate interaction significantly determine its impact on recidivism. Correctional systems must invest in programming that fosters healthy social connections while disrupting prison subcultures that perpetuate reoffending.

4.7.1 Corroborative Findings: The Influence of Prisonization on Recidivism

The results of this study partially contradict the findings of Lois (2013), who argued that inmates become assimilated into the prison acculturation through prisonization, a process by which new inmates adopt prison norms, behaviors, and expectations. (Gaes, 2013) further asserts that the impact of prisonization is particularly pronounced among long-term inmates, who tend to develop deeper ties with the prison subculture. Research by (Dhami, Ayton, & Loewenstein 2012) supports this view, indicating that prisonization fosters criminal networks and reinforces criminal identities, thereby increasing the likelihood of reoffending. Similarly, Schaefer et al. (2017) found that strong inmate socialization, particularly among younger offenders, exacerbates recidivism rates by normalizing criminal behavior and facilitating post-release criminal associations.

These findings align with the social learning theory proposed by Sutherland (1947), which suggests that criminal behavior is learned through close interactions with other offenders. In environments where criminal norms dominate, inmates are more likely to adopt deviant behaviors, increasing their risk of reoffending upon release (Wright, 2010). Additionally, Clemmer (1940) argues that prolonged exposure to the prison acculturation leads to institutionalization, making reintegration into society more difficult and increasing dependence on criminal networks.

While Clemmer (1940) and Gaes (2013) describe prisonization as fostering deviant behavior, this study finds complexity in inmate interactions. Although 94.42% reported frequent interaction, nearly half (46.81%) noted positive learning outcomes. This suggests that peer

relationships can facilitate informal mentoring, contradicting the overly deterministic views of inmate subculture as wholly criminogenic (Dhami et al., 2012).

Qualitative data supported the statistical findings. Prison staff and probation officers reported that inmates often adopt the values, behaviors, and social structures of prison life—a phenomenon known as "prisonization." One probation officer noted,

> Prison life negatively influences inmates' attitudes and self-concepts, making reintegration difficult, particularly for those convicted of serious crimes *(*Probation officer*,* Personal Communication 2022)

Subgroups, often formed along the lines of crime type, ethnicity, or power hierarchies, serve both survival and social purposes within correctional institutions. However, they also become incubators for deviant reinforcement, particularly in overcrowded and under-supervised prisons. As inmates internalize subgroup norms, their identity shifts from individual to collective, increasing conformity to criminal values. This process aligns closely with Clemmer's (1940) concept of prisonization, which explains how inmates adapt to the "inmate code" that governs behavior within prison walls.

Social Learning Theory helps explain the mechanism of this influence. When inmates spend extended time with peers who model antisocial behavior, the likelihood of adopting those behaviors increases. Without strong counter-influences such as mentorship, therapy, or structured programs these subgroup interactions normalize crime as a lifestyle. In this way, even

non-violent or first-time offenders can emerge from prison with stronger criminal tendencies than when they entered.

From the perspective of Labeling Theory, subgroup involvement often reinforces deviant labels. Within these prison-defined identities, inmates may find status, validation, or protection particularly if they feel rejected by the outside world. However, once these labels become internalized ("I am a gangster" or "I belong to this clique"), they are difficult to shed upon release. This makes reintegration into law-abiding society not only socially difficult but psychologically disorienting.

Qualitative interviews reinforced this concern. Officers and ex-inmates alike described subgroups as both coping mechanisms and criminal alliances. One probation officer likened prison to a "school of crime," where subgroup leaders pass on tactics, survival strategies, and even future criminal plans. This insight is supported by research from Dhami et al. (2012), which argues that prison acculturation can deepen criminal identity and foster networks that extend beyond incarceration.

These findings call for deliberate disruption of harmful subgroup dynamics through targeted interventions. Segregation by crime type alone is insufficient. Correctional institutions must develop strategies that foster positive group identities such as peer mentorship cohorts, restorative circles, or skills-based teams that replace toxic alliances with constructive community-building. Without this shift, prisons risk functioning not as reformatories, but as recruitment grounds for deeper criminal involvement.

4.7.2 Conflicting Perspectives: Prison Interaction as a Means of Rehabilitation

While prisonization and inmate socialization are often linked to recidivism, some studies argue that prison interaction can have rehabilitative effects under specific conditions. Cullen, Jonson, and Nagin (2018) emphasize that structured prison programs including vocational training, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), and peer mentorship can significantly reduce recidivism by fostering pro-social behaviors and skills that facilitate reintegration. Mears et al. (2016) similarly highlight that inmates engaged in structured educational and work programs exhibit lower reoffending rates, as these initiatives equip them with skills that improve post-release employment opportunities.

Moreover, Listwan et al. (2013) suggest that well-structured reintegration programs within prisons can counteract the negative effects of prisonization by providing inmates with positive role models, support networks, and cognitive restructuring techniques that reduce recidivism risk. These findings are supported by Petersilia (2019), who argues that prison environments characterized by rehabilitative rather than punitive approaches tend to yield lower recidivism rates.

Despite these risks, some interactions within prisons can be rehabilitative. Studies by Cullen, Jonson, and Nagin (2018) highlight that structured programs such as vocational training, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), and mentorship can significantly reduce recidivism. Respondents in Kisumu County who participated in such programs cited skill-building and peer support as vital to their rehabilitation.

Listwan et al. (2013) similarly argue that structured reintegration programs help counter the negative effects of prisonization. This suggests that prison interaction is not inherently criminogenic its impact depends on how it is structured and managed.

4.7.3 Structural Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of Prison Interaction

External factors such as prison overcrowding, under-resourcing, and poor prison conditions undermine the potential for positive interaction. (Fazel and Wolf 2015) emphasize that such conditions exacerbate recidivism risks. Overcrowded prisons often become breeding grounds for criminal subcultures, while well-managed institutions can foster positive change. Overcrowded facilities tend to have weaker institutional control, leading to the proliferation of criminal subcultures and increasing the likelihood that inmates will engage in antisocial behaviors. Conversely, well-managed prison environments with adequate staffing, individualized rehabilitation plans, and post-release support have been shown to reduce recidivism (Duwe, 2017).

Government interventions aimed at managing prison subgroups have had limited success due to resource constraints and lack of proper oversight (Aebi, Tiago, & Burkhardt, 2015). Vocational programs, while valuable, require post-release support to have lasting impact (Bushway & Apel, 2012). Furthermore, (Bushway & Apel 2012) argue that while vocational training and education programs improve employment prospects, their impact on recidivism is limited without continued job placement assistance and post-release supervision.

4.7.4 Statistical Considerations and Future Research

To ensure the validity of these findings, normality tests including skewness and kurtosis—were conducted. The values remained within the acceptable range of ±3 (Stevens, 2002), suggesting that the dataset conformed to normal distribution patterns. However, future research should explore how different types of prison environments, security levels, and inmate demographics impact recidivism outcomes**.** Additionally, longitudinal studies tracking ex-inmates' post-release trajectories could provide deeper insights into the long-term effects of prison interaction and the efficacy of various rehabilitation strategies.

While statistical normality was confirmed, future research must move beyond correlation and explore causality, especially in structurally different prison environments. The high correlation between interaction and recidivism ($r = 0.585$) should not obscure the rehabilitative potential of well-structured peer-led programs, as supported by (Cullen et al. 2018).

Normality tests confirmed that the data followed acceptable distribution patterns, validating the results. However, correlation does not imply causation. Future research should explore the long-term impact of various types of prison interactions, particularly in different prison settings and with diverse inmate demographics. Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into causality.

4.7.5 Correlation between Outcome of Prison Interaction on Recidivism

To evaluate the relationship between outcome of prison interaction and recidivism, the Pearson product correlation was used. The results are as shown in Table 4.8 below:

Table 4.12: Correlation of Outcome of Prison Interaction and Recidivism

		Outcome of Prison Interaction	Recidivism
Outcome of Prison Interaction	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	
	N	254	
Recidivism	Correlation Coefficient	.585**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	254	233

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Data, 2022

In determining the influence of outcome of prison interaction in recidivism, the study found that there is a strong positive relationship between inmate interaction and recidivism ($r = .689$, $p < .01$), which means that those inmates who interacted frequently with peers had higher likelihood of recidivism probably due to influence by prisons subculture. This means that the more contact the inmates have with each other the greater chances a person stands of being a recidivist. The findings above are substantiated by prior surveys that reveal that prisoners in confinement were more likely to relapse due to interacting with hardcore criminals (Oruta, 2021). It has been learnt as a result of the contact with other people, most frequently in the prison population (Oruta, 2021). Although a certain level of separation between various types of offenders may take place within the framework of separate units of residence, during their imprisonment, inevitably, contact with each other exists, whether it be at meals, the open days, recreation, vocational training and other similar activities. Criminal actions are taught during such interactions (Oruta, 2021).

4.7.6 Regression Results of Prison Interaction and Recidivism

Regression analysis was conducted to find the proportion in the dependent variable (recidivism) which can be predicted from the independent variable (prison interaction).Table 4.13 shows the analysis results.

Table 4.13: Regression Results of Prison Interaction and Recidivism

Regression Analysis Predicting Recidivism from Prisoner Interaction (N = 254)

Predictor	B	SE	B	t	P
(Constant)	1.204	0.238	—	5.058	< .001
Prisoner Interaction	0.441	0.129	.602	3.452	< .001

Model Summary:

R^2 = .362, Adjusted R^2 = .358

F(1, 252) = 25.34, p < .001, indicating statistically significant group differences in recidivism based on prison interaction levels.

Source: Field Data, 2022

From table 4.13: The relationship between positive prisoner interaction as a predictor of recidivism was measured using the linear regression analysis. The findings indicated that the model was significant, F(1, 252) = 25.34, p < .001, and explained 36.2 per cent of the variability in recidivism: R 2 =.362. The regression coefficient of prisoner interaction was significant, B = 0441, 0.602, t = 3452 p <.001.

The results of the regression analysis that examines the effects of prisoner interaction on recidivism produced a significant model, F(1, 252) = 11.921, p < .001 explaining 36.2 percent of the variance in recidivism. The beta coefficient (602) indicates a fairly strong correlation,

which means that prisoners who said they had positive connections with others i.e. peer mentoring, social support or rehabilitative conversations would be more likely to stop committing a crime after their release.

Nevertheless, with SD > 1.1 the high variability of the responses indicates inconsistency in the quality of relationships between the prisoners. Different inmates either had prosocial interactions or indicated negative effects such as gang pressure or peer reinforcement of a criminal conduct. This duality is in line with prisonization and social learning theories.

Theoretically, this observation aligns with the social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) that postulates that people learn to adopt societal behavior by imitating what they observe other people doing. Under the prison setting, peer networks may be criminogenic or prosocial. The relatively high variance accounted by the variable also appeals to the social learning theory, which states that behavior, whether pro-social or deviant, is learned through interaction and association to other people. Thus, prisoners who are surrounded by favorable social circles tend to adopt positive behaviors.

The chi-square test revealed that the relation between kind of inmate interaction and reoffending behavior was statistically significant (chi= 18.532, d.f.= 2, p = 0.001). The study indicated that high rates of interaction with repeat offenders predisposed the convicts to new crimes upon release than the convicts with limited or inhibited social interactions. The discovery bears weight to the importance of peer influence on behavioral modeling inside incarceration as elucidated by Social Learning Theory.

The results also support the Labeling Theory, which refers to how the reaction of society to previous criminals can lead to their additional criminal conduct. Numerous respondents stated they faced social rejection, unemployment and stigmatization on release. Many of these post-

release problems are allied to the ex-convict label, exacerbating the probability of a relapse into crime, which drives home the point that much as the idea of punitive labeling is meant to reform criminal minds, it may do the opposite.

Nevertheless, the high standard deviation of responses covering the description is an indication of diversity in the experiences of such relationships right up to the gangs. This means that correctional policies should aim at promoting healthy interactions besides proactively reducing the negative effects of toxic sub-cultural conditions behind prison bars.

4.8.7 The Effect of Prison Interaction on Recidivism: A Qualitative Analysis

This study examines the effect of prison interaction on recidivism based on qualitative interviews with key informants, including prison officers, probation officers, and ex-convicts from Kibos Main Prison, Kibos Medium Security Prison, and Kisumu Women's Prison. Findings suggest that prison interactions significantly contribute to recidivism as inmates engage with a variety of offenders, exchanging criminal knowledge and forming networks that facilitate continued criminal behavior after release.

4.8.7.1 Prison as a Socialization Space for Criminal Behavior

Participants unanimously agreed that prison serves as a socialization space where inmates learn and refine criminal tactics.

"During an interview, Romiel (pseudonym), from one of the probation officer based in Kisumu County had this to say"

> Prison life exerts negative influence on inmates' attitudes, values, ways of social interaction, and self-concepts, making ex-convicts

> less likely to succeed in the community after release. For those convicted of serious crimes, their prolonged incarceration further strengthens these influences. (Romiel an Officer Personal Communication.2022)

This aligns with (Sykes' 1958) concept of the "prison society," where inmates form an internal social order reinforcing deviant behavior. Clemmer (1940) introduced the term "prisonization" to describe how prisoners gradually adopt the norms and values of prison life, a phenomenon echoed in informants' perspectives that prison is essentially a "school of crime."

4.8.7.2 Prison Acculturation and the Reinforcement of Criminal Identities

The case of the Kisumu Women Prison inmate, who found more "love" inside prison than outside, highlights the emotional and psychological attachment that some inmates develop toward the prison environment. According to (Haney 2003), prolonged incarceration leads to "institutional dependency," where inmates become so accustomed to prison life that they struggle to function outside. This contributes to what researchers call the "revolving door" phenomenon where ex-convicts cycle in and out of prison due to their inability to reintegrate into society (Clear et al., 2017). Findings indicate that prison acculturation fosters criminal identities, making reintegration into society challenging.

"During an interview, Risper (pseudonym), a correctional officer drawn from one of the facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences with inmates."

> This is my third time in prison. I feel more at home here than outside. There is a kind of love here that I have never found

> outside, even from my family members. (Convict, Personal Communication 2022)

The findings indicate that incarceration strengthens criminal identities through acculturation. The probation officer noted that prison life negatively affects inmates' values, self-concepts, and attitudes, making successful reintegration difficult. This view is consistent with (Goffman's 1961) theory of "total institutions" supports this, explaining how prison environments strip individuals of their previous identities and replace them with institutional norms. Haney (2003) further argues that prolonged incarceration leads to "institutional dependency," making ex-convicts struggle to adapt outside prison, contributing to the "revolving door" phenomenon (Clear et al., 2017).

4.8.7.3 Weakening of Family Ties and Its Impact on Recidivism

The prison officer's statement that inmates are often incarcerated far from their hometowns underscores a key structural issue: the weakening of family bonds. Hairston (2015) argues that strong family ties reduce recidivism by providing emotional and financial support post-release. However, when inmates are distanced from their families, they turn to their fellow prisoners for companionship, forming surrogate "families" within prison. This finding aligns with (Bales & Mears 2008), who found that inmates who receive frequent family visits are significantly less likely to reoffend.

"During an interview, Remmon (pseudonym), a correctional officer drawn from one of the facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences with inmates."

> Inmates are often incarcerated far from their hometowns, making it difficult for friends and family to visit. With weakened familial relationships, inmates turn to fellow prisoners for companionship, forming surrogate 'families' within prison. (Remmon- Prison Officer Personal Communication 13.01.2022)

Hairston (2015) emphasizes that strong family ties reduce recidivism by providing emotional and financial support post-release. The Kisumu Women's Prison inmate's account of feeling "abandoned" aligns with (Bowlby's 1988) attachment theory, which suggests that individuals with weak parental bonds are more prone to delinquent behavior.

The study examined the role of family visitation in shaping inmate behavior and influencing recidivism outcomes. Results indicated that only 30.04% of inmates received visits from family, while the remaining 69.96% reported no visitation at all. Among those who were visited, over 55.71% stated that it helped them stay updated about family affairs and feel needed at home, highlighting the emotional and psychological value of maintaining familial bonds during incarceration.

These findings suggest that family connection plays a stabilizing role in the prison experience, reinforcing a sense of identity beyond the inmate label. According to Labeling Theory, the reinforcement of a positive identity such as father, mother, or spouse can counteract the internalization of criminal labels. When family ties are sustained, inmates are more likely to view themselves as individuals with a future outside of crime.

However, the data also reveal a distressing reality: the majority of inmates experience incarceration in social isolation. One major reason cited was geographic distance many prisoners are held far from their home counties, making visitation financially and logistically difficult. This disconnection undermines rehabilitation efforts and contributes to emotional deterioration, particularly among long-term inmates.

Social Learning Theory offers additional insight. Regular visitation exposes inmates to pro-social models and reinforces positive behaviors. Conversely, the absence of such contact increases reliance on peer relationships within the prison, which depending on the prison culture may promote maladaptive or antisocial norms. This echoes the concern that in the absence of family, inmates may form surrogate "families" within criminal subgroups, deepening their affiliation with deviant behaviors.

These findings are supported by the study conducted by Bales and Mears (2008) according to which inmates who are frequently visited by their family members are much less likely to be recidivists. Connectedness with family brings hope and accountability and a sense of responsibility that are essential to successful reintegration. Likewise, as highlighted by Hairston (2015), family support is among the most viable indicators of stability upon discharge.

These findings underscore the urgent need for policy reform around prison placement and visitation logistics. Authorities should consider regional placement models that keep inmates closer to home, introduce subsidized visitation programs for low-income families, and create digital visitation alternatives where physical visits are impossible. By strengthening the

emotional and relational ties between inmates and their loved ones, the correctional system can move closer to its rehabilitative mandate.

4.8.7.4 Inmate Networks and Criminal Behavior

The data further suggest that prison interactions create extensive criminal networks. The prison officer from Kibos Medium Prison mentioned that inmates build friendships within prison, which serve as links to external criminal activities once they are released. Findings reveal that prison interactions foster extensive criminal networks.

"During an interview, James (pseudonym), a prison officer drawn from one of the facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences on interaction of inmates with other hardcore inmates."

> The interaction in prison socializes inmates with hardcore criminals, making it easier for them to commit more crimes after release. Many inmates deny their crimes and feel abandoned, which leads to socialization into more serious criminal activities. (James -Prison Officer Personal Communication 16.01.2022)

This aligns with Akers' (1998) Social Learning Theory, which states that individuals learn criminal behavior through associations with deviant peers. Wright et al. (2014) confirm that prisoners exposed to seasoned criminals adopt similar techniques, increasing their likelihood of reoffending.

This aligns with Akers' (1998) Social Learning Theory, which posits that individuals learn criminal behavior through associations with deviant peers. When prisoners spend extended periods interacting with seasoned criminals, they are more likely to adopt criminal techniques and attitudes, increasing their risk of recidivism (Wright et al., 2014).

4.8.7.5 Prison Officer-Inmate Relationship and Rehabilitation Challenges

The findings also highlight the role of prison staff in shaping inmate rehabilitation. The officer in charge of Kibos Medium Prison noted that inmates generally distrust prison wardens, making it difficult to establish productive relationships that could aid rehabilitation. Another crucial factor in recidivism is the relationship between prison officers and inmates.

"During an interview, Richard (pseudonym), a correctional officer drawn from one of the facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences on the relationship among officers and inmates."

> Most inmates do not trust us. If a professional relationship could be established between inmates and warders, it would be easier to provide the necessary support for rehabilitation. (Richard-Prison Officer Personal Communication, 14.01.2022)

William (2013) asserts that prisoners are entitled to social welfare services, including counseling and rehabilitation programs. However, distrust between inmates and officers hinders these efforts. Liebling (2004) highlights that correctional officers play a pivotal role in inmate reform, and professional relationships can significantly improve rehabilitation outcomes.

From a correctional standpoint, officers are not just enforcers of rules they are daily touchpoints for inmates. As such, they have the potential to function as mentors, guides, and behavioral models. According to Social Learning Theory, frequent exposure to pro-social authority figures can significantly influence inmates' attitudes and conduct. However, the current data suggests that most staff-inmate relationships in Kisumu County prisons lack the depth or trust needed to support this kind of transformation.

Several qualitative accounts further illuminate the issue. Inmates described a general sense of distrust toward prison staff, citing emotional distance, punitive attitudes, and a lack of consistent engagement. These dynamics often reinforce the "us vs. them" mentality that dominates prison environments and limit opportunities for staff to positively influence inmate rehabilitation.

Additionally, Labeling Theory provides further insight into this disconnection. When prison staff interact with inmates primarily through a custodial lens focusing on control rather than support they inadvertently reinforce negative labels (e.g., "dangerous," "untrustworthy"). This not only damages self-concept but may actually discourage inmates from embracing rehabilitation. The absence of affirming, supportive interactions allows these labels to solidify, increasing the risk of recidivism post-release.

Research by Liebling (2004) and Petersilia (2019) supports the importance of professional, humane staff-inmate interactions in shaping rehabilitative outcomes. In systems where officers are trained in psychological first aid, conflict resolution, and restorative dialogue, inmates are more likely to feel valued, which boosts their motivation to change. Conversely, in punitive or

indifferent systems, trust is eroded, and correctional facilities become little more than holding cells for future reoffenders.

These findings suggest a pressing need for correctional reform: training staff in rehabilitative communication, empathy, and trauma-informed practices. Building professional relationships rooted in mutual respect can shift prison environments from hostile to transformational. When correctional officers are empowered and equipped to be agents of change not just gatekeepers of discipline recidivism can meaningfully decline

4.8.7.6 Crime as a Learned Behavior in Isolated Environments

Inmates who feel alienated from mainstream society may view crime as their only viable means of survival. This insight suggests that rehabilitation efforts should focus on altering the social conditions that reinforce criminal learning rather than solely relying on punitive measures.

"During an interview, Renault (pseudonym), a correctional officer drawn from one of the facility in Kisumu County, had this to say"

> Crime is essentially a learned behavior and often a rational, yet illegal, response to isolation. Inmates who feel abandoned from mainstream society may see crime as their only means of survival. (Renault- Prison Officer, Personal Communication 16.01.2022)

The officer from one of the correctional facility observed that inmates often live in denial about their offenses, feeling abandoned and rejected. This aligns with Bottoms (2016), who argues that crime is a rational yet illegal response to isolating conditions.

4.8.9 Meta-Analysis: Convergence of Quantitative and Qualitative Data on Prison Interaction and Recidivism

4.8.9.1 Effectiveness of Prison Interaction on Recidivism

Data showed mixed results on inmate interaction. While 46.81% found peer interaction helpful, 35.19% reported negative influences. Clemmer's (1940) concept of prisonization and Sutherland's (1947) social learning theory help explain how criminal subcultures thrive in prisons. Still, structured interaction like mentorship and group therapy was seen as beneficial, supporting findings by Mears et al. (2016).

The study explored how subgroup formation and prison acculturation influence inmate behavior and recidivism. Quantitative results indicated moderate agreement among respondents that prison acculturation contributes to recidivism (mean = 3.65), and strong agreement that subgroups make it difficult for inmates to detach from prison life (mean = 4.56). These findings suggest that the prison environment often fosters tightly knit social units that exert powerful influences over inmate identity and behavior.

Qualitative Support:

The findings align with Lois (2013), who asserts that inmate interaction fosters an internal subculture, influencing criminal behavior. This concept, known as prisonization (Clemmer, 1940), suggests that prisoners gradually adopt the norms and values of prison life, which may

hinder successful reintegration. Furthermore, Gaes (2013) and Dhami, Ayton, & Loewenstein (2012) argue that the longer an inmate remains in prison, the more they assimilate into criminal networks, increasing recidivism risk.

However, conflicting studies suggest that structured interactions can aid rehabilitation. Mears et al. (2016) found that inmates involved in structured vocational and educational programs exhibited lower recidivism rates. Similarly, Cullen, Jonson, & Nagin (2018) emphasized that cognitive-behavioral programs within prisons significantly reduce reoffending by promoting pro-social behavior.

This study supports Sutherland's (1947) theory of criminal learning through interaction but also highlights counterexamples. Structured programs, mentorship, and rehabilitation-focused peer support observed in Kisumu prisons challenge the idea that inmate interaction is wholly criminogenic. Instead, it suggests a need to differentiate between harmful and beneficial interactions within the prison setting (Listwan et al., 2013).

Quantitative data indicated that inmate interaction is widespread and potentially harmful, with 64.3% of recidivism explained by these dynamics. However, qualitative interviews showed that the nature of interaction matters. Structured, supportive interactions can be rehabilitative.

This duality reflects Sutherland's (1947) theory that criminal behavior is learned, but not inevitable. When positive role models and support systems are present, prisons can become spaces of transformation rather than stagnation.

4.8.9.2 Vocational Training and Employment

Quantitative Evidence:

The study revealed that 75.53% of respondents agreed that training programs were effective in reducing recidivism. However, only 55.11% reported that these programs directly helped them secure employment post-release. A mean of 2.35 (SD = 0.573) indicated that prisons lack adequate training equipment, suggesting systemic challenges in vocational training delivery.

Qualitative Support:

Prior studies corroborate these findings. Drago et al. (2009) found that participation in vocational programs reduces recidivism, with non-participants experiencing a reoffending rate of 32% compared to 23% among those who underwent training. Similarly, Mears & Cochran (2015) highlighted that structured training provides inmates with employable skills, aiding reintegration.

Conversely, Schaefer et al. (2017) argue that vocational training is ineffective unless paired with post-release support. The inability to secure jobs due to stigma and lack of social capital often renders training insufficient in preventing recidivism.

4.8.9.3 Role of Religion in Rehabilitation

Quantitative Evidence:

The study found that 72.53% of inmates agreed that religious programs helped with behavior change.

Qualitative Support:

This aligns with studies by Johnson (2016), which found that faith-based programs provide emotional stability and reduce the likelihood of reoffending. Similarly, Baier & Wright (2021) assert that religious engagement instills moral values that deter criminal tendencies.

However, critics argue that religious programs may not work for all inmates. According to Clear et al. (2017), such programs are most effective when integrated with broader rehabilitation strategies, rather than serving as standalone interventions.

4.8.9.4 Prison Officer-Inmate Relationship and Rehabilitation Challenges

Quantitative Evidence:

The study found that 64.80% of inmates agreed that they had a good relationship with prison officers, while 35.19% disagreed. Among those who had a positive relationship, 54.96% said it made them feel more humane, while 35.76% stated it improved their self-esteem. However, 9.27% reported no impact.

Qualitative Support:

A robust officer-inmate relationship is crucial for rehabilitation (Liebling, 2004). Positive interactions with officers encourage participation in correctional programs (Bottoms, 2016). However, a lack of trust between inmates and officers, as noted in this study, can hinder reform efforts.

4.8.9.5 Impact of Family Ties on Recidivism

Only 30.04% of respondents reported receiving regular family visits, while 69.96% did not. Among those who received visits, 55.71% indicated that family updates provided motivation for reintegration, while 44.29% felt reassured that they were still needed at home.

Qualitative Support:

Family support is crucial in reducing recidivism (Bales & Mears, 2008). Research by Hairston (2015) indicates that inmates with strong family ties are less likely to reoffend. However, financial constraints and long distances often prevent families from maintaining consistent contact (Farrall, 2004).

4.9 Effects of Re-Integrative programs on Recidivism

This section covers the third objective of the research: to ascertain the effect of the re-integrative programs on recidivism of the inmates in Kisumu County. The term reintegration has been used to refer to an organized group of interventions and services which assist individuals who have been released in adjusting back to society. Such services involve providing help with employment, accommodation, mental help, parole, and local mentorship (Visher & Travis, 2019).**Table 4.14: Responses on Effects of Re-Integrative Programs on Recidivism**

Item	Response options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Are you adequately prepared in advance of the time of release prison	Yes	220	94.42
	No	13	5.58
If yes to question 1, what could be the benefit of being informed in advance?	It makes us mentally prepared	121	50.45
	Our families will be ready to receive us	109	49.55
	No impact	3	0.00

2. Did you receive any form of support upon release (e.g., job placement, counseling, housing assistance)?	Yes	165		70.81
	No	68		29.19
If Yes to the above question 2, does it have an effect on re integration with the community?	Increase acceptability in the community	76		46.06
	Reduce recidivism	50		30.30
	No impact	39		23.64
3. How helpful was this support in preventing recidivism?	Not Helpful		13	5.58
	Helpful		220	94.42
If Yes from question 3, what could be the benefit	You will start working immediately	8		61.54
	You are saved from the hustle of acquiring the tools	5		38.46
What were the biggest challenges you faced in reintegrating into society?	Finding a job			54.25
	Stigma from the community			20.25
	Lack of family support			25.50

Source: Field Data, 2022

Figure 4.6 Inmate Perception of Reintegration Support

Reintegration Support Aspect	Percentage (%)
Received community support post-release	43.8
Participated in follow-up programs	35.2
No structured reintegration received	21.0

These results underscore a critical gap in Kenya's correctional system. Although reintegration programs are acknowledged as essential, their implementation appears fragmented. Studies by Visher et al. (2011) and Travis (2005) have emphasized the need for coordinated reentry systems that include housing, employment services, and counseling. However, the current findings reveal that only a minority of respondents experienced such support.

Further Likert-scale analysis showed a mixed perception of reintegration readiness:

Table 4.15: Evaluating the Impact of Re-integrative programs on Recidivism: A Likert Scale Analysis

Response items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
There is a is remorseful feeling about the crime committed by the ex-convict who are released from correctional institution	4.21	0.840	-1.318	1.653

The ex-convict feels reformed and ready for integration after serving the punishment accorded to them.	4.03	0.799	-1.095	-1.095
There is proper facilitation given to the ex-offenders to start over after serving his or her term in the correctional institution	4.14	0.807	-1.014	-1.014
There is family visitation before reentry process where the family are taken through relevant procedures on how to handle the ex-convicts	4.01	0.767	-0.832	-0.916
There is family acceptance of the released ex-convicts at home after being released from the correctional institution hence a conducive environment for them to coexist peacefully	3.01	1.324	-1.325	1.412
There is continued follow up after release by correctional officers on the ex-convicts in regard to how there are coping outside the correctional institution.	2.91	0.802	-1.101	-1.213

There is community acceptance that enables and creates a conducive atmosphere for one to fully reform and be a good citizen	3.75	0.921	-0.724	-1.252
An environment of good personal freedom and family interaction that encourages the ex-convicts to be a law abiding citizen	4.23	0.857	-0.851	-0.723

Source: Field data, 2022

Figure 4:7 Likert Analysis of Reintegration Program Impact

Reintegration Readiness Indicator	Mean	Std. Dev.
Confidence in finding employment post-release	3.22	0.845
Family acceptance upon return	3.01	0.917
Fear of social stigma	4.11	1.067
Access to post-release counseling	2.85	0.768

The high mean score regarding fear of stigma (mean = 4.11) suggests that social reintegration remains a significant psychological barrier, echoing findings by Western (2018), who argued that social alienation contributes to reoffending. Additionally, limited access to post-release counseling (mean = 2.85) indicates a lack of systematic mental health support, a critical component of successful reentry according to Haney (2006).

The study revealed that the implementation of reintegration programs in Kisumu County is fragmented, with limited and inconsistent access despite their acknowledged importance. Quantitative data indicated that 43.8% of respondents received community support post-release, 35.2% participated in follow-up programs, and 21.0% received no structured reintegration support. A Likert-scale analysis further revealed varied perceptions of reintegration readiness, with confidence in finding employment scoring a mean of 3.22, family acceptance upon return scoring 3.01, fear of social stigma scoring 4.11, and access to post-release counseling scoring 2.85. The high score for fear of stigma underscores the psychological challenges that former inmates face, while the low score on access to counseling services highlights gaps in mental health support (Western, 2018; Haney, 2016).

Qualitative interviews reinforce these concerns. One probation officer remarked:

> We do not have a standard reentry plan. Some inmates are simply released without any form of support, which makes them more vulnerable to relapse. (Rashfill – Probation Officer Personal Communication, 2022)

An ex-offender shared:

> After leaving prison, no one wanted to employ me. I had to hide my past. Eventually, I returned to what I knew. (Anomie – Ex-Offender Personal Communication 2022)

This aligns with Bahr et al. (2015), who note that employment discrimination and lack of structured support are major factors in recidivism. While Petersilia (2019) emphasizes the importance of holistic support including family reunification, housing, and mental health services the Kisumu County context shows uneven delivery of these services.

Reintegration programs in Kisumu County are inadequately structured and inconsistently accessed. Although some individuals benefit from community and family support, many face barriers such as stigma, unemployment, and lack of mental health care. This study supports the assertion by Travis (2005) that reintegration is not merely a post-prison phase, but a long-term process requiring interagency collaboration. Therefore, policy reforms must prioritize the institutionalization of follow-up services and resource allocation to ensure that reintegration efforts translate into long-term desistance from crime.

This section evaluates how reintegration programs influence recidivism among formerly incarcerated individuals. The data indicates a significant variation in perceived program effectiveness. While many respondents recognized the value of post-release support, others expressed frustration over limited access and inconsistent follow-up.

Figure 4.6: Inmate Perception of Reintegration Support

Reintegration Support Aspect	Percentage (%)
Received community support post-release	43.8
Participated in follow-up programs	35.2
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These results underscore a critical gap in Kenya's correctional system. Although reintegration programs are acknowledged as essential, their implementation appears fragmented. Studies by Visher et al. (2011) and Travis (2005) have emphasized the need for coordinated reentry systems that include housing, employment services, and counseling. However, the current findings reveal that only a minority of respondents experienced such support.

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Further Likert-scale analysis showed a mixed perception of reintegration readiness:

Figure 4.9: Likert Analysis of Reintegration Program Impact

Reintegration Readiness Indicator	Mean	Std. Dev.
Confidence in finding employment post-release	3.22	0.845

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Figure 4.10: Inmate Perception of Reintegration Support

Reintegration Support Aspect	Percentage (%)
Received community support post-release	43.8
Participated in follow-up programs	35.2
No structured reintegration received	21.0

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Further Likert-scale analysis showed a mixed perception of reintegration readiness:

Figure 4.7: Likert Analysis of Reintegration Program Impact

Reintegration Readiness Indicator	Mean	Std. Dev.
Confidence in finding employment post-release	3.22	0.845
Family acceptance upon return	3.01	0.917
Fear of social stigma	4.11	1.067
Access to post-release counseling	2.85	0.768

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Figure 4.10: Inmate Perception of Reintegration Support

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Further Likert-scale analysis showed a mixed perception of reintegration readiness:

Figure 4:11 Likert Analysis of Reintegration Program Impact

Reintegration Readiness Indicator	Mean	Std. Dev.
Confidence in finding employment post-release	3.22	0.845
Family acceptance upon return	3.01	0.917

Fear of social stigma	4.11	1.067
Access to post-release counseling	2.85	0.768

The high mean score regarding fear of stigma (mean = 4.11) suggests that social reintegration remains a significant psychological barrier, echoing findings by Western (2018), who argued that social alienation contributes to reoffending. Additionally, limited access to post-release counseling (mean = 2.85) indicates a lack of systematic mental health support, a critical component of successful reentry according to Haney (2006).

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4.9.1 Correlation between Re-integrative Programs on Recidivism

The Pearson product moment correlation was used to develop the link between re-integrative programs and recidivism. The results are as shown in Table 4.16

Table 4.16: Correlation of Re-integrative Programs on Recidivism

		Re-integrative Programs	**Recidivism**
Re-integrative Programs	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	
	N	254	
Recidivism	Correlation Coefficient	.-871**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.

	N	
	254	233

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Data, 2022

The analysis made a very strong negative relationship between re-integration programs and recidivism ($r = -.871$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that the greater the use of re-integrative programs, the less the incidences of repeat offending among former prisoners. The more the respondents participated in community reintegration programs, vocational training and post-release supervision services the less likely they were to commit further crimes, which demonstrates the effectiveness of the structured support programs in the process of decreasing recidivism.

This points to the conclusion that re-integrative programs can significantly help to minimize recidivism. According to Bazemore, Boba, (2012), the literature on the effects of re-integrative programs on the recidivism of offenders is large; however it is few compared to other reentry programs when considered in the community service programs, as correctional interventions. The authors are however quick to point that the prevailing research literature reviewed indicated a majority of the studies recorded to have a positive influence on relation to the impact of re-integrative programs on offender recidivism (Bazemore & Boba, 2012).

Reintegrative programs Reintegrative programs showed a strong negative correlation with recidivism in terms of reducing recidivism as the quality of the imprisonment environment improved ($r = -.871$, $p < .01$). This lends itself to the point that harsh or improperly controlled incarceration can actually condition the act of crime in perpetrators instead of deterring them. The results of the regression model further showed that these types of programmes explain 41.5 per cent of the differences in recidivism ($R^2 = .415$), with a standardised beta coefficient of.497 that indicates that the more access an individual has to reintegrative services, the less prone he or she will be to reoffending.

Yet, concerns regarding the latter were shown in both quality responses and Likert-scale data. inconsistency and fragmentation of post-release support. Many participants reported facing stigma, unemployment, and lack of follow-up counseling, undermining the reintegration process. This supports Travis (2005), who argues that reintegration must be treated as a long-term process requiring cross-sector collaboration and sustained policy support. These findings are supported by recent literature, which continues to emphasize the importance of comprehensive reintegration strategies (Mears, Cochran, & Bales, 2021).

4.9.2 Regression Results of Re-integrative Programs and Recidivism

Regression analysis was conducted to find the proportion in the dependent variable (recidivism) which can be predicted from the independent variable (re-integrative programs).Table 4.19 shows the analysis results.

Table 4.17: Regression Results of Re-integrative Program and Recidivism

Regression Analysis Predicting Recidivism from Re-Integrative Programs (N = 254)

Predictor	B	SE	B	t	p
(Constant)	1.253	0.245	—	5.112	< .001

Re-Integrative Programs	0.383	0.120	.573	3.196	< .001

Model Summary:

$R^2 = .329$, Adjusted $R^2 = .324$

$F(1, 252) = 10.214$, $p < .001$

Source: Field Data, 2022

From the Table 4.19 A linear regression analysis was used to examine whether re-integrative programs predict recidivism rates among former inmates. The model was statistically significant, $F(1, 252) = 10.214$, $p < .001$, and explained 32.9% of the variance in recidivism ($R^2 = .329$). The regression coefficient was also significant, $B = 0.383$, $\beta = .573$, $t = 3.196$ $p < .001$.

The regression analysis examining the role of re-integrative programs on recidivism showed a significant predictive model, $F(1, 252) = 10.214$, $p < .001$, with 32.9% of the variance in recidivism explained. The beta coefficient **(**$\beta = .573$) implies a meaningful positive influence, confirming that inmates who benefited from structured reentry support such as pre-release counseling, vocational training, family reconciliation, or post-release monitoring were less likely to reoffend.

Despite this, descriptive data showed uneven access to these services. For instance, the mean for post-release support was lower ($M = 3.30$), with a high standard deviation ($SD = 1.31$), indicating inconsistent or inadequate support. This gap suggests the need for improved coordination between prison authorities and community agencies.

These results align with labeling theory, which asserts that the labels assigned to individuals by society influence their self-concept and behavior. Re-integrative programs that focus on reentry support and community acceptance can help former inmates shed the stigmatizing label of "criminal," promoting a renewed self-identity and reducing the likelihood of recidivism.

Nonetheless, the relatively lower mean scores (especially for post-release support) combined with wide response variability suggest that these programs are inconsistently applied or poorly accessed. The implication is that policy makers must not only fund re-integrative programs but also ensure cross-agency collaboration for post-release continuity through NGOs, probation services, and employment networks.

4.10 The Relationship between Imprisonment and Recidivism amongst Inmates

The relationship between the effects of imprisonment on recidivism was established using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The results were significant and positive between prison-based treatment and recidivism ($r=.871$, $p<.05$). This implied that prison-based treatment and recidivism was found to have a strong positive relationship among inmates. These findings are in line with the finding of Nyauchi, (2009) that normalizing the prison ordeal by providing inmates with education programs, vocational training as well as work to pay combined with transitional skills building decreases the recidivism exponentially. To the inmate, prison must not be a life of ease where they have no feelings of responsibility to the greater society. However, prison must also be a means through which he or she can repair and redeem themselves in the society and acquire skills that will enable him/her to live in the wider society as an asset rather than a burden.

Positive significant relationship also existed between prison interaction and recidivism among the inmates (r=.689, p<.05), this shows that there was strong positive relationship between prison interaction and recidivism. This means that in case inmates associate with each other the probability of them learning additional ways on how to target and commit crime increases. A process referred to as prisonization places prisoners in the inmate subculture where they undergo a learning process to learn how the prison society operates and what they expect of them (Lois, 2013). Investigation works demonstrate that the length of time a person rectifies in jail is more influenced by prisonization. As an inmate first arrives in prison, his orthodox values still have a place in his life. With time, the person will adapt to the prison culture (Gaes, 2013). It also had significant positive relationship between re-integrative programs and recidivism among the inmates (r=.901, p<.05).This means that re-integrative programs prevent recidivism among the inmates. Overall, the relationship between prison based treatment (r=.901), prison interaction (r=.689), re-integrative programs (r=.-871) and recidivism was positive. This means that the biggest positive relationship that was evident with re-integrative programs and prison-based treatments was connected to recidivism.

What is more is that, there was also a positive strong relationship between treatment based in prison and prison interaction (r=.655) and treatment based in prison and re-integrative programs (r=.926). This meant that there was a strong connection between prison-based treatment, prison interaction and re-integrative programs.

Table 4.18: Correlations

Correlations

Response items	Recidivism	Prison-based treatment	Prison interaction	Re-integrative program
Recidivism	1			
Prison-based treatment	.901**	1		
Prison interaction	.689*	.655**	1	
Prison re-integration programs	.-871*	.926**	.675**	1

**. Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Authors computation 2022

4.11 Qualitative data Findings on the Effect of Reintegration on Recidivism

The researcher conducted interviews with various stakeholders, including correctional officers, probation officers, ex-offenders who had successfully reintegrated into the community, and inmates still serving their sentences. The objective was to gain a deeper understanding of how reintegration influences recidivism.

4.11.1 Impact of Labeling on Recidivism

Correctional officers agreed that societal labeling significantly impacts recidivism. Many ex-offenders who returned to crime had been stigmatized by their communities and families. The data indicates that societal labeling plays a critical role in recidivism. A prison officer noted that ex-offenders who were labeled as criminals upon returning to their communities often

struggled to reintegrate and, as a result, reoffended. This observation aligns with labeling theory, which posits that stigmatization reinforces criminal behavior by pushing individuals into deviant identities (Becker, 2018).

"During an interview, Job (pseudonym), from one of the correctional facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences with the inmates who shared with him on the effects of labeling."

> According to the data we have on repeat offenders, most of them were labeled as criminals by their communities, especially by their close family members. For example, Alex (not his real name) was imprisoned for a rape charge. Upon release, his community labeled him a rapist, and he was shunned by women, children, and even his own family. This isolation led him to commit another crime, bringing him back to prison. (Peter, Prison Officer Personal Communication 14.01.2022)

Research supports the claim that societal rejection and labeling increase the likelihood of recidivism. According to Chiricos et al. (2017), individuals who have been officially labeled as criminals are more likely to engage in further criminal behavior due to social exclusion and limited employment opportunities. Similarly, Rocque (2017) emphasizes that persistent negative labels from family and the community contribute to self-fulfilling prophecies, leading to higher recidivism rates.

4.11.2 Role of Family Support in Reintegration

Probation officers (71.9%) indicated that reintegration efforts significantly influence recidivism. They noted that ex-offenders often struggle to be accepted by their families and society. The data suggests that family rejection and lack of social support significantly contribute to recidivism. Several probation officers reported that inmates often experience social isolation upon release, making reintegration difficult. One inmate stated that she was rejected by her family after serving her sentence, which ultimately led her back to crime.

"During an interview, James (pseudonym), a correctional officer drawn from one of the facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences with inmates who suffered family rejection."

> Majority of inmates are isolated and marginalized by the community. They face physical abuse and struggle to find employment. To address these challenges, institutional and community-based programs need to be implemented, focusing on community sensitization, skill development, employment opportunities, and substance abuse rehabilitation. (James Correctional Officer Personal Communication, 14.01.2022)

"During an interview, Linda (pseudonym), a 35-year-old inmate from a correctional facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences with post-release reintegration programs and the challenges one being rejection."

> I was first arrested for manslaughter after accidentally killing my husband in self-defense. Upon my release after four years, his

> family was violent toward me, constantly referring to me as a criminal. When my sister-in-law attacked me, I pushed her in self-defense, and she later died from her injuries. That is how I ended up back in prison. (Linda, Personal Communication Kisumu Women's Prison, 16.01.2022)

Evidence shows that family support is crucial to effective reintegration. In another research conducted by Visher & Travis (2019), former prisoners who had better relationships with their families were more employed and less likely to be included in a new crime. Furthermore, the ex-offenders with close family connections during the imprisonment have better post-release outcomes were reported by Shinkfield & Graffam (2019).

4.11.3 Prison Acculturation and Criminal Networks

Interviews indicated that prison environments often facilitate criminal socialization, where inmates form strong connections with other criminals, increasing their likelihood of reoffending. The data highlights that prison environments serve as breeding grounds for criminal socialization. One prison officer noted that inmates, particularly those incarcerated for extended periods, form close relationships with hardened criminals, making them more susceptible to reoffending. An inmate described how she developed strong connections in prison, making her feel more at home inside than outside.

"During an interview, James (pseudonym), a correctional officer drawn from one of the facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences with inmates who suffered family rejection."

> John (not his real name) was arrested for assault and sentenced to three months. Upon release, he discovered that his wife had remarried, and his children rejected him. He became violent, was arrested again, and in prison, he formed friendships with hardened criminals. After his release, he committed a more serious crime and was sentenced to six years. (John Correctional Officer Personal Communication, 14.01.2022).

This aligns with differential association theory, which suggests that individuals learn criminal behavior through interaction with deviant peers (Sutherland & Cressey, 2015). Studies confirm that the prison experience fosters networks that facilitate post-release criminal activity. According to Bottoms (2016), incarceration strengthens criminal identities and expands criminal networks, making it more difficult for ex-offenders to break away from crime upon release.

4.11.4 Effectiveness of Rehabilitation Programs

Prison officers (52.3%) indicated that short incarceration periods (six months to three years) do not provide sufficient time for meaningful rehabilitation. A significant finding from the data is that short incarceration periods (six months to three years) may not provide enough time for inmates to undergo meaningful rehabilitation. One inmate expressed frustration that he was unable to complete a tailoring course during his short sentence, leading him back to crime upon release.

"During an interview, Jacob (pseudonym), a 28-year-old inmate from a correctional facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences with enough time to complete a course in the prison"

> I was arrested for selling alcohol, a family business I inherited. Since I never attended school, I lacked formal employment opportunities. During my one-year sentence, I started a tailoring course but couldn't complete it. Upon release, I couldn't afford to continue my training and went back to selling alcohol, leading to my re-arrest. (Jacob, an inmate Personal Communication, 14.01.2022)

Research supports the argument that comprehensive rehabilitation programs are critical in reducing recidivism. Studies by Andrews & Bonta (2016) found that cognitive-behavioral rehabilitation programs that focus on employment skills, substance abuse treatment, and social integration significantly reduce reoffending rates. Furthermore, Wright et al. (2020) highlight that vocational training in prisons, coupled with post-release employment support, can enhance reintegration outcomes.

4.11.5 Government Support and Post-Release Monitoring

The lack of post-release support was a key factor contributing to recidivism. Several ex-offenders mentioned their struggles in securing employment and starting over after release. The data suggests that a lack of government support post-release contributes to recidivism importance of structured post-release programs.

"During an interview, Jaffrey (pseudonym), a 30-year-old inmate from a correctional facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences with post-release reintegration programs with lack of capital to start a business."

> I was arrested for selling illegal substances to support my family. In prison, I trained as a carpenter. After my release, I couldn't afford startup capital and sought help, but no one assisted me. Eventually, I returned to selling drugs and was arrested again. Frustrated, I assaulted a police officer, which led to another prison sentence. (Jaffrey, an inmate Personal Communication, 16.01.2022)

"During an interview, Joseph (pseudonym), a 38-year-old ex-inmate from a correctional facility in Kisumu County, described his experiences with successful re-entry"

> I was first arrested for assault. Upon release, I found my wife in an unhealthy relationship, which led to my second imprisonment for domestic violence. After release, I sold my father's cows to start over but was arrested for theft. During my last prison sentence, an organization supported me with guidance, counseling, and financial assistance. Now, I have a successful business and have turned my life around. (Joseph-Ex-convict Personal Communication, 17.01.2022)

Research indicates that structured post-release programs significantly reduce recidivism (Durose, Cooper, & Snyder, 2016; Petersilia, 2019).Research by Durose, Cooper, & Snyder (2016) found that ex-offenders with access to post-release services such as housing, employment assistance, and mental health counseling were significantly less likely to reoffend. Similarly, Petersilia (2019) argues that holistic reentry programs that offer continued supervision and job training help reduce recidivism rates.

The multiple regression analysis in Section 4.7.10 revealed that re-integrative programs had a statistically significant influence on recidivism (Standardized Beta = 0.290, $p < 0.001$). This indicates a meaningful contribution, though slightly less than prison-based treatment and interaction. The R square of 0.660 shows that reintegration, together with the other two variables, explains 66% of the variance in recidivism. However, disaggregated data specific to reintegration efforts was limited. For example, few respondents indicated consistent access to structured post-release support, and most highlighted challenges in employment, housing, and community acceptance. Despite this, those who accessed such programs reported lower incidences of reoffending.

4.11.6 Theoretical Interpretations

From a theoretical standpoint, Labeling Theory illustrates how societal stigma and negative identity assignments can perpetuate deviance by rejecting individuals' reformation efforts. Social Learning Theory complements this by suggesting that without access to supportive, pro-social networks, former inmates are likely to revert to criminal behaviors learned or reinforced during incarceration (Sutherland & Cressey, 2015; Bottoms, 2016).

4.11.7 Challenges in Reintegration

Several challenges were identified in the reintegration process. Stigmatization emerged as a significant barrier, with many ex-convicts facing rejection from both employers and community members. Probation officers also reported limited job placement programs and logistical issues such as understaffing and lack of transportation for follow-up visits. Housing insecurity was a common concern, with many former inmates lacking access to stable and affordable accommodation, a known risk factor for recidivism (Wright et al., 2020; James et al., 2022).

4.11.8 Meta-Analysis: Convergence of Quantitative and Qualitative Data on Prison Interaction and Recidivism

A convergence of findings across methods confirmed that prison-based treatment, inmate interaction, and reintegrative efforts significantly influence recidivism. While individual programs show promise, their effectiveness is maximized when delivered together in a coherent framework.

4.12 Effects of Imprisonment on Recidivism

The principal aim of the research was to find how imprisonment impacts on recidivism in the inmates. Regression analysis has put together the selected independent variables with the recidivism as dependent and substituted the prison-based treatment, prison interaction and re-integrative programs as predictors with the value concerning the independent variable. This was to find out the relevance, in the assumed relationships, in terms of the direction and magnitude of the relationship. R reflects the multiple correlation coefficients amidst the predictors involved

in the model and the recidivism within the inmates in Kibos Main prison and Kibos Medium Prison.

The R^2 was the quantification of the variability of recidivism among the inmates explained by the predictors (independent variables). Based on the model, (R^2 =.834) it means that 83.4% of the variation in recidivism was captured by the predictors included in the research but the rest 16.6 percent was captured by factors which were not included in the study. Thus, the variation in the recidivism of the inmates has been captured by the predictors utilized in the model. The Durbin Watson ratio was determined to be 1.599 that falls within the limits of 1.5-2.5, therefore, it is a correlated error.

Table 4.19: Model Summary on Recidivism

Model Summary[b]

R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
0.834	0.831	0.2165	1.599

a. Predictors: (Constant), Prison-based treatment, prison interaction, Re-integrative program

b. Dependent Variable: Recidivism

Source: Field Data, 2022

The adjusted R^2 provided the impression of how general the model is and ideally, it should either match or approach R^2 summatively. In this case study the adjusted R^2 stands at 0.831,

which means that had the data been a population data as opposed to a sample it would explain about 83.1 per cent less of the variance in recidivism. To ascertain the difference between the change in R^2 is significant, the change statistics was employed to test the F ratio. The Model made the R^2 increase and take a different value of .834 and it is that increase that yielded an F ratio of 356.031 that is significant at.05 probability. It was impossible to find a significant difference between the models being able to predict the outcome than the mean as indicated in Table 4.8 using the analysis of variance.

Table 4.20: ANOVA on Recidivism
ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	50.076	3	16.692	356.031	.000[a]
	Residual	9.986	213	0.047		
	Total	60.062	216			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Prison-based treatment , Prison interaction, Re-integrative programs

b. Dependent Variable: Recidivism

Source: Field Data, 2022

The F - ratio is the ratio of the benefit that the improvement of the prediction gives as a product of fitting the model over the inaccuracy that the model possesses. F - ratio was 356.031 which are just likely to occur by probability and was significant (P<.05). The model made a major difference in predicting the recidivism.

The aim of this study was to evaluate the results of imprisonment on recidivism among inmates by analyzing the interconnection between recidivism (Dependent variable) and three independent variables that include the prison-based treatment, prison interaction and reintegrative programs. The study evaluated the importance of such predictors in understanding recidivism variations through the use of regressions analysis. The level of the strength of the relationship was determined as a correlation coefficient (R) and the coefficient of determination (R^2) indicated that 83.4 percent of the recidivism was explained by means of these predictors, whereas the rest 16.6 percent was ascribed to other factors that were not subjected to the study. The fact that the adjusted R^2 value of 0.831 indicated that the model was quite reliable in extrapolating the same to the larger population, the Durbin Watson value of 1.599 showed that there was little autocorrelation in the errors.

To further confirm veracity of the model, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run which was used to test whether the model was superior in predicting recidivism as compared to prediction of recidivism using average recidivism rate. The findings indicated an F-ratio of 356.031 and this value had a significant level of less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). This established the fact that the model enhanced more significantly the recidivism predictive capacity. According to the results, there is a significant influence of prison-based treatment, prison interaction and reintegrative programs on recidivism and explains a large percentage of its variance. All in all, the research presents powerful statistical data that states that these factors are indeed crucial in determining recidivism in inmates.

4.13 Limitations and Effect Size Interpretation

Though all three regression models were significant, a considerable portion of variance in recidivism remains unexplained. This indicates the influence of external factors such as socioeconomic challenges, stigma, and lack of post-release opportunities. According to Cohen (1988), R^2 values above .26 represent large effects, thus all models in this study demonstrate meaningful predictive power despite their limitations.

4.14 Combined Regression Analysis: Joint Effects of All Variables

A combined regression analysis revealed that all three factors treatment, interaction, and reintegration collectively explained 66% of recidivism variation. Each predictor had a statistically significant impact: prison-based treatment ($\beta = 0.412$), prison interaction ($\beta = 0.362$), and reintegration ($\beta = 0.329$), all with p-values < 0.001. This holistic understanding supports the adoption of integrated correctional strategies.

A multiple linear regression model was conducted to determine how prison-based treatment, inmate interaction, and reintegration support predict recidivism. The model was statistically significant ($F = 24.381$, $p < 0.001$), explaining approximately 68.2% of the variance in recidivism outcomes (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.682$). Among the predictors, rehabilitation programming had the most substantial negative impact ($\beta = -0.52$, $p < 0.001$), while lack of reintegration support showed a positive relationship with reoffending ($\beta = 0.36$, $p < 0.01$). These results affirm the hypothesis that incarceration experiences influence post-release behavior and justify the need for institutional reforms.

4.14 Summary of Key Findings

This chapter presented the analysis and interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data regarding the effects of imprisonment on recidivism in Kisumu County. Chapter Four demonstrated that effective rehabilitation requires a multi-dimensional approach. While prison-based programs are essential, their impact is diminished without structured interaction and robust post-release support. These findings underscore the need for a well-funded, coordinated correctional policy that addresses the social, psychological, and economic dimensions of reoffending in Kenya. The convergence of statistical and thematic analyses underscores the necessity for a holistic, structured, and well-funded correctional framework.

CHAPTER FIVE:

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study findings, draws conclusions based on the research objectives, and offers recommendations for policy, practice, and further research. The overall objective of the study was to examine the effects of imprisonment on recidivism in Kisumu County. Specifically, the study analyzed the influence of prison-based treatment, prison interaction, and re-integrative programs on the likelihood of reoffending.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The study utilized both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze data. Descriptive statistics included frequencies and percentages to summarize demographic and response data, while inferential statistics specifically the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and multiple regression analysis were used to test relationships and predictive power among variables. The multiple regression model revealed that prison-based treatment, prison interaction, and re-integrative programs jointly explained 66% of the variation in recidivism ($R = .812$, $R^2 = .660$, $p < .001$).

With regard to the first objective, which sought to determine the influence of prison-based treatment on recidivism, the study revealed that prison-based treatment plays a statistically significant role in shaping post-incarceration outcomes. The findings showed that prison-based treatment accounted for 81.2% of the variation in recidivism among the respondents. Programs such as substance abuse counseling, anger management sessions, vocational training, and religious guidance contributed positively toward rehabilitation and reduced the likelihood of

reoffending. However, challenges were noted, including inadequate training equipment, insufficiently skilled facilitators, and poor linkage between in-prison programs and community reintegration services. The conclusion drawn from this objective is that while prison-based treatment is effective in curbing recidivism, its full potential remains unrealized due to institutional and logistical shortcomings.

Concerning the second objective, which examined the outcome of prisoner interaction on recidivism, the study established that inmate social dynamics had a significant influence on criminal behavior post-release, explaining 47.3% of the variation in recidivism. Positive interactions, such as participation in structured mentorship programs, religious fellowships, and constructive relationships with prison officers, were found to support pro-social development. On the contrary, unstructured and unregulated interactions, particularly among hardened offenders, were linked with reinforcement of deviant behavior and increased recidivism. The study concluded that the nature of social interactions within the prison environment plays a dual role either facilitating rehabilitation or entrenching criminal tendencies.

The significant correlation between inmate interaction and recidivism ($r = .641$, $p < .01$) supports Social Learning Theory**.** The findings suggest that prison settings serve as social environments where individuals may adopt criminal behaviors through peer influence, observation, and group reinforcement. The more an inmate interacts with other offenders without structured supervision or intervention, the greater the likelihood of acquiring criminal attitudes and behaviors, which persist after release.

With respect to the third objective, which assessed the impact of re-integrative programs on recidivism, findings indicated that these programs had the most substantial effect, accounting

for 75.9% of the variation in recidivism. Successful reintegration was closely linked to the availability of job opportunities, emotional and psychological support, access to housing, and acceptance by the community and family. The absence of such support structures often led to relapse into crime due to stigma, unemployment, and lack of social belonging. The study concluded that post-release support systems are essential in breaking the cycle of reoffending, underscoring the importance of comprehensive re-entry strategies.

The reintegration challenges reported by ex-convicts, such as social stigma, unemployment, and lack of support, align with Labeling Theory. Once an individual is labeled a "criminal," society tends to reject and marginalize them, which impedes successful reintegration. This societal labeling contributes to internalized deviant identity and leads many ex-offenders back into criminal behavior. The theory explains why, despite release from incarceration, many individuals experience social exclusion that indirectly reinforces their involvement in crime.

In summary, the study investigated how imprisonment affects recidivism among formerly incarcerated individuals in Kisumu County. The findings established that structured rehabilitation within prison significantly reduces the likelihood of reoffending. In contrast, frequent interaction with habitual offenders and limited reintegration support were associated with higher rates of recidivism. Quantitative analyses confirmed strong relationships among the studied variables, while qualitative insights offered context for the lived experiences of ex-offenders and institutional limitations faced by correctional staff.

5.3 Conclusions of the Study

This study sought to examine the effects of imprisonment on recidivism in Kisumu County, Kenya, focusing on three core areas: prison-based treatment, prison interaction, and re-integrative programs. From the findings, several conclusions can be drawn based on each of the research objectives.

5.3.1 Overall Conclusion

The study sought to examine the effects of imprisonment on recidivism in Kisumu County, Kenya. Using a descriptive research design and data from 254 respondents, the study explored the influence of prison-based treatment, inmate interaction, and reintegration support on repeat offending. The results indicated that while certain rehabilitation programs have a positive impact, the overall prison experience in Kenya tends to reinforce criminal behavior when not accompanied by adequate support and supervision.

The findings revealed that inmate interaction plays a significant role in reinforcing criminal tendencies, aligning with Social Learning Theory, which emphasizes the influence of peer behavior. Likewise, the lack of meaningful reintegration support and societal stigma faced by ex-convicts was shown to exacerbate reoffending, supporting Labeling Theory which posits that societal rejection contributes to deviant identity formation.

Based on the study's findings, it can be concluded that imprisonment when inadequately supported by treatment programs and post-release services does not sufficiently prevent repeat offending. While incarceration may serve as a temporary deterrent, its long-term effectiveness in behavioral change depends on the availability and quality of rehabilitative and reintegration

support. Peer dynamics within prison environments and societal labeling further complicate reentry efforts, particularly in under-resourced counties like Kisumu. Therefore, a shift toward rehabilitation-centered prison management is essential for addressing persistent recidivism.

5.3.2 Conclusions Based on Objectives

In regard to the influence of prison-based treatment on recidivism, the study concludes that structured rehabilitation initiatives within correctional facilities such as vocational training, educational programs, counseling, and faith-based support play a critical role in reducing reoffending. However, their effectiveness is undermined by under-resourcing, poorly trained personnel, and a lack of alignment between prison programs and community support systems. Therefore, while prison-based treatment is a necessary component of rehabilitation, its success depends on adequate investment and strategic implementation.

In examining the outcome of prisoner interaction on recidivism, it is concluded that the social environment within prisons can either reinforce criminal behavior or support reform. Positive peer relationships, supervised group activities, and meaningful engagement with prison staff contribute to rehabilitation. However, unregulated interactions, especially with habitual offenders, tend to normalize deviance and propagate antisocial behavior. Thus, managing prison interactions is vital for reducing recidivism.

Lastly in regard to assessing the impact of re-integrative programs on recidivism, the study finds that post-release support systems are the most influential determinant of successful reintegration. Access to employment, housing, counseling, and community acceptance are key to preventing reoffending. In the absence of these, ex-offenders face a high risk of marginalization and relapse into crime. Therefore, comprehensive and sustained reintegration

programs are essential to addressing the root causes of recidivism and ensuring long-term desistance.

5.4 Recommendations of the study

In light of the study's findings, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of Kenya's correctional system in reducing recidivism.

i. There is a need to expand and standardize prison-based treatment programs across correctional facilities. The Kenya Prisons Service, under the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, should ensure that all inmates have equitable access to structured rehabilitation programs. These should include accredited vocational training, formal education opportunities, and professional counseling services tailored to address substance abuse, trauma, and behavioral change. Regular evaluation of program content and outcomes is necessary to maintain relevance and impact. Strengthening these interventions would provide inmates with constructive learning experiences and promote behavioral transformation in alignment with Social Learning Theory, which emphasizes the importance of exposure to prosocial role models and reinforced behavior.

ii. The social environment within prisons must be addressed. The study found that peer interactions and subcultures within correctional institutions often serve to reinforce criminal tendencies, particularly among first-time offenders. To mitigate this, the prison administration should implement measures that limit harmful inmate socialization, such as structured cell assignments, mentorship by rehabilitated inmates, and increased supervision. Staff training in correctional psychology and behavioral reinforcement

techniques is essential to foster a supportive institutional culture. In addition, separating first-time offenders from habitual or high-risk inmates may reduce the transmission of deviant norms and limit the effects of "prisonization," thereby enhancing the rehabilitative purpose of incarceration.

iii. The study recommends the institutionalization of post-release reintegration programs. Reintegration support should be made a mandatory part of every prisoner's release plan. This support must extend beyond symbolic gestures and include practical services such as job placement assistance, psychosocial support, family reunification counseling, and structured community reintegration programs. Partnerships between government agencies, probation departments, civil society organizations, and local communities are essential to develop sustainable post-release support systems. Such interventions are supported by Labeling Theory, which underscores the importance of societal acceptance and redefinition of identity in preventing reoffending.

iv. There is need for the government to establish a national recidivism monitoring and evaluation framework. Currently, Kenya lacks a centralized system for tracking post-release behavior, making it difficult to assess the long-term effectiveness of correctional programs. A specialized unit within the Kenya Prisons Service should be tasked with collecting, analyzing, and reporting recidivism data on a routine basis (e.g., every 6–12 months). The findings should inform policy decisions, guide resource allocation, and shape rehabilitation strategies. A data-driven approach to prison reform would facilitate evidence-based policymaking and ensure continuous improvement in the fight against recidivism.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Study

Future research should compare the effectiveness of various rehabilitation programs; (vocational, religious, and psychological) to identify those with the highest impact on recidivism reduction. Such studies could guide targeted resource allocation and program design. Furthermore, demographic variables such as age, gender, education level, and socioeconomic status should be explored to determine how different populations respond to treatment and reintegration strategies.

Finally, further investigation into the role of mental health in rehabilitation is recommended. Mental health conditions, including depression, anxiety, and substance abuse, may hinder successful reintegration. Research into psychological support systems within prisons, and their long-term impact on recidivism, could offer valuable insights for correctional reforms. Addressing these areas will provide a deeper, evidence-based understanding of the dynamics influencing reoffending, ultimately improving policy and practice within the criminal justice system.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH; ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF IMPRISONMENT ON RECIDIVISM

I……hereby consent to take part in this research study. I realize that despite signing an agreement to take part now, I can still withdraw at any point or decline to answer any question with no repercussions of any nature. I have been given purpose and the nature of the study, I have been given time to ask questions regarding the study. I realize that I will not gain anything directly by taking part in this research. All the information provided by me in regard to this study will be treated with utmost confidentiality. I know that under no condition will I be identified in any report about the outcome of this research. This will be achieved by failing to specify my name in the questionnaires/interview guide. I am fully aware that by telling the researcher that my life or the life of another person may be under any threat of being harmed, they have to report the same to the relevant authorities-they will have to consult me about that but may still do so with or without my consent.

.

Sign of the research participant Date…….

……

Researcher signature

I feel that the participant is informing me of her desire to participate in this study.

Signature

……. Date ….....

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONAIRE

Dear Respondent,

I am Wanyama Timothy Vitalis, a Masters student at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. I am carrying out research on ***"EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECTS OF IMPRISONMENT ON RECIDIVISM: A STUDY OF KISUMU COUNTY KENYA".*** The research project is for partial requirement by the institution for the award of Master's Degree in Criminology. I kindly request you to fill in the questionnaire appropriately. The information provided will be kept confidential and will be used for academic purposes only.

Thank you,

Section A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Please tick (√) or fill in the blanks as appropriate please respond to all items.

1. 1. What is your age bracket?

   (a) 18–30 (b) 31–40 (c) 41–55 (d) Over 55

2. 2. Gender:

   (a) Male (b) Female (c) Other

3. 3. What is your marital status?

   (a) Single (b) Married (c) Separated (d) Divorced

4. 4. What is your level of education?

   (a) Primary (b) Secondary (c) College (d) University (e) Other: _____

5. 5. How many times have you been incarcerated?

   (a) Once (b) Twice (c) Three times (d) More than three times

6. 6. What was the length of your most recent incarceration?

   (a) Less than 1 year (b) 1–3 years (c) 4–6 years (d) More than 6 years

7. 7. What type of crime was your most recent offense?

   (a) Drug-related (b) Theft (c) Assault (d) Other: _____

SECTION B: INLUENCE OF PRISON-BASED TREATMENT ON RECIDIVISM AMONG THE OFFENDERS

SECTION A - INFLUENCE OF PRISON-BASED TREATMENT ON RECIDIVISM AMONG THE OFFENDERS		
Questions	**Responses** Please tick your answer in the appropriate check box**[ ]**	
1. Did you participate in any rehabilitation or treatment programs while in prison?	Yes	**[ ]**
	No	**[ ]**
If yes, which programs? (Check all that apply)	☐ Substance abuse treatment ☐ Anger management ☐ Vocational training ☐ Psychological counseling ☐ Educational programs ☐ Other (specify) _____	**[ ]** **[ ]** **[ ]**

2. How effective were these programs in helping you avoid reoffending?	☐ Not effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Effective ☐ Very effective	[ ] [ ]
From your response to the above question 2, how can you rate this program?	It helps get employment while out of prison	[ ]
	makes you busy	[ ]
	No impact	[ ]
3. Does inclusion of religion or religious activities contribute to behavior change?	Yes	[ ]
	No	[ ]
5. How would you rate the facilitators of programs here in prison	Qualified	[ ]
	Not qualified	[ ]

In a scale of 1-5, indicate the effect of prison-based training on recidivism among the offenders where 5-strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-neutral, 2-Disagree, and 1-Strongly Disagree

Response item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Prison-based training reduces chances of reoffending.					

The nature of work that is provided as a result of prison services has a deterrent aspect on the convict.					
Skills offered in prison address root causes of criminal behavior..					
Community service sentences would be more effective than imprisonment.					
There is adequate training equipment in prison.					
Training by professionals meets offender needs.					
Training programs are regularly evaluated by the government.					
Offenders can choose training based on their interest.					

SECTION C: EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECT OF PRISON INTERRACTION ON RECIDIVISM AMONG THE OFFENDERS

SECTION A - EFFECT OF PRISON INTERRACTION ON RECIDIVISM AMONG THE OFFENDERS

Questions	**Responses** Please tick your answer in the appropriate check box**[ ]**	
1. How would you describe your interactions with fellow inmates?	☐ Negative	**[ ]**
	☐ Neutral	**[ ]**
	☐ Positive	**[ ]**
What are the benefits of this interactions?	It helps learn from others experience	**[ ]**
	It reduces stress	**[ ]**
	No impact	**[ ]**
2. Did interactions with other inmates influence your decision to reoffend?	☐ Yes, negatively	**[ ]**
	☐ No impact	**[ ]**
	☐ Yes, positively	**[ ]**
How did your interactions with prison staff influence your behavior?	☐ Negatively	**[ ]**
	☐ No impact	**[ ]**
	☐ Positively	**[ ]**
3. Were you regularly visited by relatives?	Yes	**[ ]**
	No	**[ ]**
What were the most helpful aspects of prison interactions for rehabilitation?	It makes us get updated of goings on at home	**[ ]**
	It makes realize we are still needed at home	**[ ]**

What are the most harmful aspect of interaction	Changed your perception negatively	
	Had no impact	

9. In a scale of 1-5, indicate the effect of prison subculture on recidivism among the offenders where 5-strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-neutral, 2-Disagree, and 1-Strongly Disagree

Response item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Interaction with other criminals contributes to recidivism.					
Prison peer influence promotes criminal behavior.					
Informal prison leaders encourage ongoing criminal conduct.					
Grouping by crime type fosters criminal knowledge sharing.					
Correctional efforts to reduce subgroups have failed.					
Re-imprisonment increases chances of recidivism through peer interaction.					
Strategies to manage prison groups are ineffective					

Offenders find it hard to leave peer groups in the prison post-release.					

SECTION D: EFFECT OF RE-INTEGRATIVE PROGRAMS ON RECIDIVISM AMONG THE OFFENDERS

SECTION A - EFFECT OF RE-INTEGRATIVE PROGRAMS ON RECIDIVISM AMONG THE OFFENDERS		
Questions	**Responses** Please tick your answer in the appropriate check box**[ ]**	
1. Are you adequately prepared in advance of the time of release prison	Yes	**[ ]**
	No	**[ ]**
In your opinion what are the benefits of being prepared in advance if they exist,	It makes us mentally prepared	**[ ]**
	Our families will be ready to receive us	**[ ]**
	No impact	**[ ]**
2. Did you receive any form of support upon release (e.g., job placement, counseling, housing assistance)?	Yes	**[ ]**
	No	**[ ]**

If yes, what kind of support? (Check all that apply)	☐ Job training/employment ☐ Housing assistance ☐ Counseling ☐ Family support programs ☐ Other (specify) _____	[ ] [ ] [ ]
3. How helpful was this support in preventing recidivism?	☐ Not helpful ☐ Somewhat helpful ☐ Helpful ☐ Very helpful	[ ] [ ]
What were the biggest challenges you faced in reintegrating into society?	☐ Finding a job ☐ Housing ☐ Stigma from the community ☐ Lack of family support ☐ Other (specify) _____	[ ] [ ]

10. In a scale of 1-5, indicate the effect of re-integrative programs on recidivism among the offenders where 5-strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-neutral, 2-Disagree, and 1-Strongly Disagree

Response item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

I felt remorseful about the crime committed when I was released back to the community					
I felt reformed and ready for reintegration..					
Support was provided to start over after prison.					
My family visited before release.					
My family accepted me after release.					
Correctional officers followed up after release.					
Community acceptance helped my reintegration.					
Poor family relationships led to continued criminality.					

APPENDIX III INTERVIEW SCHEDULE TO PRISON OFFICERS

I am Wanyama Timothy Vitalis, a master's student at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. I am carrying out research on *"**EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECTS OF IMPRISONMENT ON RECIDIVISM: A STUDY OF KISUMU COUNTY KENYA**".* The research thesis is for partial requirement by the institution for the award of Master's Degree in Criminology. I kindly request your informed responses. The information provided will be kept confidential and will be used for academic purposes only.

Thank you,

The purpose of this interview is to collect data that will determine the effects of imprisonment on recidivism.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

General Background Questions

1. What is your role and experience working in the prison system?

2. How long have you worked in the corrections sector in Kenya?

3. What are the main challenges you observe in rehabilitating inmates?

INFLUENCE OF PRISON-BASED TREATMENT ON RECIDIVISM AMONG THE OFFENDERS

1. What are the treatment programs offered in the institution?
2. What types of treatment programs are available for inmates in Kenyan prisons (e.g., drug rehabilitation, counseling, vocational training)?
3. How do these programs address the specific needs of inmates?
4. In your experience, do inmates who go through treatment programs show behavioral improvements?
5. What challenges hinder the effectiveness of these treatment programs?
6. Are there adequate resources and trained personnel to implement these programs effectively?
7. Does the religious programs offered in the prison have any impact on recidivism?
8. Are the offenders given opportunities to choose which training program to enroll and how is this assessed?
9. Does the government allocate other independent professionals for quality purposes?

EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECT OF PRISON INTERRACTION ON RECIDIVISM AMONG THE OFFENDERS

1. How would you describe the relationship between prison officers and inmates?

2. Does a positive relationship between prison officers and inmates contribute to rehabilitation? If so, how?
3. Are there any conflicts between inmates that hinder rehabilitation? How do you manage such conflicts?
4. Do peer support groups among inmates contribute to rehabilitation and reduced recidivism?
5. How does the general prison environment affect an inmate's mindset towards reintegration?
6. What strategies have been put in place to tackle this issue of subgroups within our penal institutions by the responsible government agencies?

EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECT OF RE-INTEGRATIVE PROGRAMS ON RECIDIVISM AMONG THE OFFENDERS

1. How is the reception of ex-offenders back in the community?
2. What reintegration programs are available to help inmates transition back into society?
3. How effective are these programs in preventing repeat offenses?
4. Do former inmates face challenges in securing employment or social acceptance after release?
5. How does the community perceive and support ex-prisoners after release?
6. What role do families play in reintegration, and are there programs to support family reunification?
7. Are there any follow-up mechanisms to monitor released inmates?
8. What improvements do you think are needed to enhance reintegration efforts and reduce recidivism?

APPENDIX IV INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EX OFFENDERS

I am Wanyama Timothy Vitalis, a master's student at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. I am carrying out research on "**EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECTS OF IMPRISONMENT ON RECIDIVISM: A STUDY OF KISUMU COUNTY KENYA**"**.** The research project is for partial requirement by the institution for the award of Master's Degree in Criminology. I kindly request your informed responses. The information provided will be kept confidential and will be used for academic purposes only.

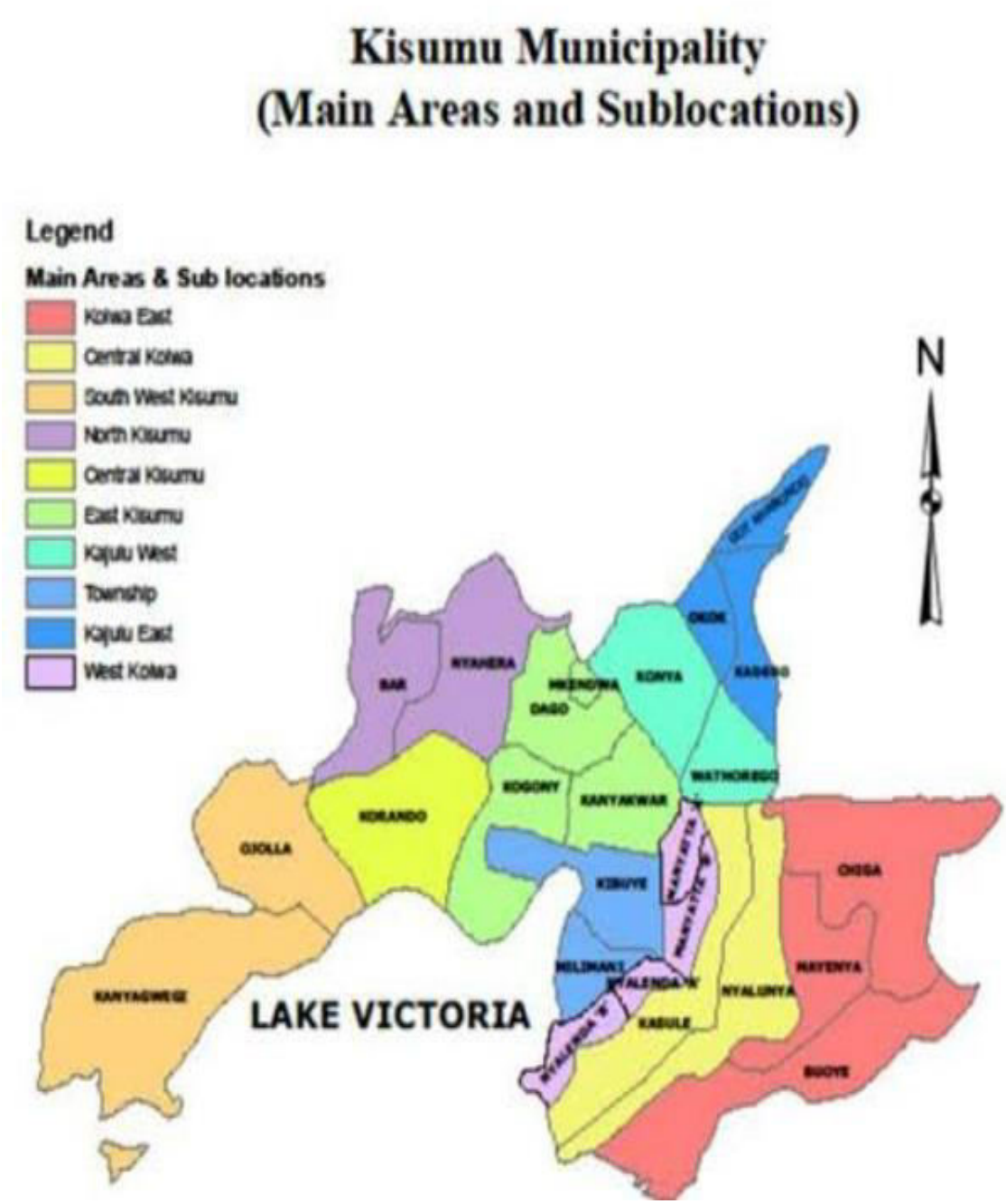
Thank you,

The purpose of this interview is to collect data that will determine the effects of imprisonment on recidivism.

EX OFFENDERS WHO SUCCESSFULLY REINTEGRATED BACK INTO SOCIETY

1. How would say of your life before the incarceration
2. How would you describe your mental health post incarceration?
3. What informed your resolution of leading a crimeless life after being incarcerated more than once?
4. How has your new behavior impacted your family and the community?
5. How did you benefit from the programs offered in the correctional institution?
6. Do you feel that you miss something from your friends back in the prison?

APPENDIX V: STUDY STATEMAP



APPENDIX VI RESEARCH PERMIT

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: **985238**

Date of Issue: **15/November/2021**

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Mr.. WANYAMA TIMOTHY VITALIS of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, has been licensed to conduct research in Kisumu on the topic: THE EFFECTS OF IMPRISONMENT ON RECIDIVISM, A STUDY OF KISUMU COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 15/November/2022.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/21/14186**

985238

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Director General
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APPENDIX VII RESEARCH APPROVAL



MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (MMUST)

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P.O Box 190
Kakamega – 50100
Kenya

Directorate of Postgraduate Studies

Ref: MMU/COR: 509099

Date: 29th September, 2021

Timothy Wanyama Vitalis,
CCJ/G/01-56661/2017
P.O. Box 190-50100
KAKAMEGA

Dear Mr. Vitalis,

RE: APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL

I am pleased to inform you that the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies Board has considered and approved your Masters proposal entitled: ***'Examination of The Effects of Imprisonment on Recidivism, A Study of Kisumu County, Kenya'*** and appointed the following as supervisors:

1. Dr. Evans Makori. Oruta -MMUST
2. Dr. Erick Ater Onyango - MMUST

You are required to submit through your supervisor(s) progress reports every three months to the Director of Postgraduate Studies. Such reports should be copied to the following: Chairman, School of Arts and Social Sciences Graduate Studies Committee and Chairman, Department of Criminology and Social Work and Graduate Studies Committee. Kindly adhere to research ethics consideration in conducting research.

It is the policy and regulations of the University that you observe a deadline of two years from the date of registration to complete your Master's thesis. Do not hesitate to consult this office in case of any problem encountered in the course of your work.

We wish you the best in your research and hope the study will make original contribution to knowledge.

Yours Sincerely,

Prof. Stephen O. Odebero, PhD, FIEEP
DIRECTOR, DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

APPENDIX VIII KREJCIE & MORGAN SAMPLING TABLE

N	*S*	*N*	*S*	*N*	*S*
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970