

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK**

**FEMALE RECIDIVISM AND PRISON REHABILITATION: THE CASE OF  
LANG'ATA WOMEN MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON**

**BY**

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**DECLARATION**

I confirm that this research project is my original work and has not been submitted for examination in any other university for the award of a certificate or degree.

Sign..... Date.....

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**DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR**

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

Sign..... Date.....

**Dr Mike Chepkonga**

**Supervisor**

## **DEDICATION**

I thank the almighty God for without him, I could not have come this far. This Research project is dedicated to my wife Caroline, my daughter Faith and my son Griffins, in appreciation of their love, care and moral support during the time of this study.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS**

<b>GOK</b>	Government of Kenya
<b>TB</b>	Tuberculosis
<b>KPS</b>	Kenya Prisons Service
<b>NGOs</b>	Non Governmental Organizations
<b>SMEs</b>	Small and Micro Enterprises
<b>UDHR</b>	The Universal Declaration of Human Right
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime
<b>KNBS</b>	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
<b>NIJ</b>	National Institute of Justice

## ABSTRACT

In many developing societies, the rate of female recidivism is on the increase. Against this background this study sought to explore the relationship between female recidivism and prison rehabilitation within the context of Lang'ata Women Maximum Security Prison. The objectives of the study were; to identify socio-demographic characteristics of female recidivists, to document the perceptions of female recidivists on prison rehabilitation programs, to assess the effect of inmate education on recidivism, to ascertain the influence of vocational training on female recidivism and to assess the impact of life skills training on female recidivism. The study adopted a descriptive research design and targeted long term, medium term and short term female recidivists. Stratified random sampling was employed to sample 52 respondents out of a target population of 130 prisoners. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data while an interview guide was used to collect qualitative data from 15 key informants. The findings of the study showed that majority of the respondents committed petty offences such as hawking without license, prostitution, being in possession of drugs, child abandoning and had committed these crimes mostly in informal settlements due to poverty. That the rehabilitation programmes offered skills and knowledge to inmates for use after release from prison to avoid reoffending but inadequate resources affected these programmes negatively. That most of the prisoners were released from prison before completing their education programmes. It's therefore recommended that the Department of Probation and After care Services should be empowered to extend start-up funds and soft loans to female ex-convicts as an inducement to pursue legitimate modes of livelihoods and as a means of winning them from the pursuit of criminal enterprises. The Department of Correctional Services should be empowered through provision of adequate resources so as to be able to discharge its rehabilitation function completely and to reach out to ex-convicts and After Care Providers within the respective Communities. Penal institutions should enroll Prisoners into formal education programs at the start of their sentences, so as to be able to complete the education programs before completion of their sentences as this will earn them academic certificates, thus improving their sources of accessing gainful employments and/or other legitimate sources of livelihood. This study further recommends that a broader study involving more Penal Institutions and Recidivists be carried out in order to elicit more reliable and generalizable findings. Penologists should generate and disseminate Benchmarking and Case study results of reformed female ex-convicts, so as to motivate other Penal Institutions to borrow and implement their best practices.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Recidivism denotes relapse by an offender into criminal behavior especially after receiving sanctions, or while undergoing intervention for a previous crime (National Institute of Justice, NIJ, 2019). It is measured by criminal acts that lead to re-arrests, reconviction or return to prison with or without a new sentence, following the prisoner's release (NIJ, 2019). It also refers to a relapse into criminal behavior by an individual (Eaglin, 2017). Factors with statistically high correlations to recidivism include criminal companions, anti-social behavior, criminogenic needs, adult criminal history, race, family rearing practices, social achievement, current age, substance abuse, family structure, intellectual functioning, family criminality, gender and socio-economic status, among others (Eaglin, 2017). Recidivism is largely driven by the failure of former offenders to re-enter society successfully (Schnepel, 2016). Released offenders may face social, housing and financial challenges upon leaving prison. In fact, inability to obtain employment is one of the predisposing factors to recidivism (Schnepel, 2016).

Often times, limited labor market opportunities for ex-offenders have been linked to high recidivism rates (Schnepel, 2016). Past studies show that one year after release, about 70 percent of recidivists in the United States (US) were not employed in the legitimate labor market (Visher, Debus & Yahner, 2008). Recidivism is therefore abetted when prisoners are not rehabilitated but return to the same economic problems that led them to offend initially (Visher *et al*, 2008). Similarly, former prisoners may revenge for earlier unfair convictions, while association with hardened criminals socializes offenders to commit more serious crimes (Rutere, 2003). Stigmatization leading to unemployment, interaction with other criminals and rejection by relatives and friends, also contribute to recidivism (Rutere, 2003).

Female recidivism has been linked to drug use, family delinquency, severity of first offenses and age of first offending (Barrett, Ju and Katsiyannis, 2015). Lower educational

achievement has also been associated with the risk of female recidivism (Olson, Stalans and Escobar, 2015). However, the vast majority of ex-offenders both male and female, have low education, inadequate training, few skills, limited job experience and suffer from mental and substance abuse issues, potentially impeding their ability to obtain employment (Visher *et al*, 2008). Thus, individual characteristics such as ability or individual preferences for criminal behavior are the primary determinants of recidivism (Yang, 2016).

Globally, women have lower rates of recidivism than men; however, the rate of female recidivism has been growing lately (Olson *et al*, 2015). In the US, over 650,000 offenders are released from federal and state prisons each year with 10% being female. But within three years of release, over two-thirds of the total numbers of released offenders, women included, are rearrested (Durose *et al*. 2014). In the first year after release, 45% of the male prisoners were arrested, compared to 35% of female prisoners (Alper, Durose and Markman, 2018). As a result, recidivists contribute to a growing share of overall crime rates (Piquero, Jennings & Barnes, 2012). In the United Kingdom (UK), the total number of offenders in the fourth quarter of 2016 was 114, 000, of which 17 % (19,400) were female. The reoffending rate for female offenders was 23.4% while that of males was 30.7% (UK Ministry of Justice, 2018).

In South Africa, the total prison population was 159,241 of which 2.6% or 6,125 were female and 97.4% male (Hopkins, 2018). Curiously, the country has a recidivism rate of between 60% and 70%, which is extremely high. The recidivism rate for female offenders was 40.3% while that of male offenders' was 73.5% (Hopkins, 2018). In Kenya, the number of recidivists increased by 76.9% from 12,949 in the year 2012 to 22,910 in 2013 (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, KNBS, 2014). The implication is that 60-80% of all inmates in the country will re-offend and land back in jail within a year (Omboto, 2014). Out of 88,531 convicted prisoner admissions in Kenya, 29,652 (33.5%) were repeat offenders (Kenya Prisons Service, KPS, 2015). Overall, the recidivism rate in Kenya was 47% while that of female offenders was 40.3% (Anyango, 2017). Implying that population of female re-offenders in Kenya is almost as high as that of the male re-offenders.

Throughout the world, there are efforts to address women involvement in crime, especially recidivism within correctional institutions and in the community (Obi *et al.*, 2014). As such, prison institutions have widely adopted more or less similar rehabilitation measures in order to correct inmates and prepare them for a life back in the society. Similarly, communities, governments and other stakeholders have devised various measures aimed at crime prevention among men and women (Obi *et al.*, 2014). For example, education is touted to reduce recidivism and increase employability of ex-convicts (Ellison, Szifris, Horan and Fox, 2016). The same applies to participation in mental health treatment (Olson, 2015) and employment of ex-offenders (Yang, 2016). Here in Kenya, mainstream rehabilitation programmes include formal education, vocational training and life skills training, all of which are aimed at reintegrating the offender into the society.

It is however, popularly assumed that the rate of female involvement in crime is on the rise, as an increasing number of women are incarcerated (Obi *et al.*, 2014). Unfortunately, the vice is costly and impacts on public safety, increased security budget, prosecution and reincarceration expenses (McKean, 2004). Re-offending also exacerbates the problem of overcrowding in prison and correctional spending (Clear, 2010). Besides, other collateral and social costs of imprisonment like healthcare, unemployment, welfare supports and social isolation (Anyango, 2017). This study therefore aims at exploring the relationship between female recidivism and prison rehabilitation following increased cases of female recidivism. The factors to be investigated are: in-mate socio-demographic characteristics, their perceptions of rehabilitation programs, as well as, the influence of formal education, vocational and life skills training on female recidivism.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Aronson (2010) observed that one of the greatest threats to national cohesion and socio-economic development is increasing crime and recidivism rates. These twin problems have contributed to the problem of congestion in the 108 Kenyan prisons. In fact, Kenyan prisons currently hold triple the capacity of inmates (KPS, 2015). For instant a total of 88,531 convicted and 165,739 non-convicted prisoners were admitted to various prisons in the country in the year 2010. Of the convicted inmates, 29,652 (33%) were repeat

offenders (KPS, 2015). The Kenyan prison population therefore is in excess of its ideal capacity by 56%, thus resulting in overcrowding and massive imprisonment costs by the state (KPS, 2015).

Upon release, female recidivists' offenders are invariably faced with social, housing and financial challenges, thus limiting their chances of re-entering the society successfully (Visher *et al*, 2008). Whenever Prisoners are unable to secure employment, abuse drugs, are stigmatized and rejected by relatives and friends upon release from prison, they end up re-offending (Yang, 2016). Unfortunately, female recidivists are part and parcel of the growing crime rates, thus resulting in high security, prosecution and re-incarceration costs. Furthermore, female recidivism impacts negatively on family institution through broken families, poor socialization and lost productivity (Anyango, 2017).

The Kenyan Prisons have adopted rehabilitation programmes in order to deal with the problem of female recidivism in the Country. The programmes include; Formal Education, Vocational training and Life skills training. Ideally, education programs are perceived to be reformatory given their capacity to impart discipline, knowledge, skills, and confidence and prepare inmates for employment (Mohammed & Mohamed, 2014). However, if education programs are inadequately funded, and not started early enough, they may not meet their rehabilitative objective hence released offenders are likely to re-offend (Qhogwana, 2017). Accordingly, Vocational and life skills training are all aimed at equipping female recidivists with skills for use upon release from prison. However, if the programs are not problem centered but content oriented, forced on female recidivists prisoners without involving them in choosing the programs they are interested in, then, they are likely to be of little vocational and educational value to them, thus limiting their ability to re-enter the society successfully.

Female recidivism is on the rise in Kenya, and it has negative financial, social and political effects on the Country. The financial effect of female recidivism includes both local and foreign investment loses. Besides, the government uses a lot of taxpayer's money on national security and to cater for the re-incarceration of female recidivists' health care, correctional and welfare support activities, among other costs (Hyatt and



Barnes, 2017). While investors suffer direct monetary loss through theft by female recidivists. The negative social effects of female recidivism are insecurity due to increase in crime rates and loss of jobs whenever businesses are closed due to insecurity (Erickson, 2017). The political effects of female recidivism include tainted international relations with other countries (Erickson, 2017). There is need therefore to study the relationship between female recidivism and prison rehabilitation at Lang'ata Women Maximum Security prison, with a view to establish the impact of prison programs on rehabilitation of female offenders and for purposes of eliciting information on how to improve the rehabilitation objective of the Kenyan penal system.

### **1.3 Key Research Questions**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. What are the socio-demographic characteristics of female recidivists?
- ii. What are the perceptions of female recidivists on prison rehabilitation programs?
- iii. Does education offered in prison influence recidivism by female offenders?
- iv. Does vocational training influence recidivism by the inmates?
- v. Is there a relationship between life skills training and recidivism at Lang'ata Women Maximum Security Prison?

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The study adopted the following objectives:

#### **1.4.1 General Objective**

The general objective of this study was to explore the relationship between female recidivism and prison rehabilitation at Lang'ata Women Maximum Security Prison.

#### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives**

- i. To identify the socio-demographic characteristics of female recidivists.
- ii. To document the perceptions of female recidivists on prison rehabilitation programs.
- iii. To assess the effect of inmate education on recidivism.

- iv. To ascertain the influence of vocational training on female recidivism at Lang'ata Women Maximum Security Prison.
- v. To assess the impact of life skills training on female recidivism.

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

Penal institutions and by extension the Kenyan criminal justice system, are faced with various drawbacks including high rates of recidivism which poses a challenge to the Police, Judiciary and Prisons (Wambugu, 2014; Otiato, 2014). This impact negatively on public safety, as crimes and fear of crime increases. Recidivism has also led to congestion in Kenyan prisons, increased costs for re-arrests, prosecution, incarceration and rehabilitation. However, the problem can be partly addressed if female recidivism and rehabilitation programs are better understood and managed by the relevant agencies. The findings from this study may therefore, hopefully, inform the criminal justice institutions namely the Police, Judicial and Correctional agencies, on the potential impact of prison programs on the rehabilitation of female offenders and more pertinently, generate policy inputs on how to improve on the rehabilitative objective of the penal system.

Additionally, the results of this study may hopefully, help penal institutions and other criminal justice agencies, to gain insights into causes of recidivism and thus, formulate strategies to combat the challenge. It may also inform the Prisons Department on how to improve rehabilitation programmes that target recidivists. It may also help to sensitize respondents on the need to turn their lives around for their own good, that of their families and society at large. The improved rehabilitation programs may also help inmates to restructure their lives once out of prison. By so doing the programs may add value into their lives and help them to compensate for lost time in prison. Over and above all, the study sought to contribute to the body of knowledge on female recidivism and prison rehabilitation measures, in addition to catalyzing an appetite for further research on female recidivism and prison rehabilitation in general.

## **1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The study was conducted at Lang'ata Women Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County. It sought to explore the relationship between female recidivism and prison rehabilitation. The specific study factors are socio-demographic characteristics, offender perceptions on the rehabilitation programs as well as the influence of education, vocational and life skills training programs on recidivism. The study utilized descriptive research design on account of its ability to allow for the collection, summarizing, interpretation and presentation of empirical data. A semi structured questionnaire was utilized to obtain information from 52 female recidivist convicts. Issues of confidentiality arose but these limitations were addressed by obtaining appropriate permissions and assuring respondents that any information obtained would be treated with confidentiality. The study findings may be generalized to other Kenyan prisons since they face similar challenges of recidivism and rehabilitation, besides having the same cosmopolitan prison population.

## **1.7 Definition of Key Terms and Concepts**

**Recidivism:** Refers to habitual offending or percentage of prisoners who are re-arrested for a similar offence.

**Rehabilitation programs/measures:** Refers to training and counseling aimed at reforming prisoners to assist them with skills to reintegrate into society.

**Socio-demographic characteristics:** Refers to factors including economic conditions, age, and marital status, size of family, education levels, mental illnesses and involvement in vices including alcoholism and drug abuse or addiction.

**Perceptions:** Refers to the way recidivist female offenders understand and interpret the rehabilitation measures received during previous imprisonment.

**Education programs:** Refers to academic instructions offered in prisons at all levels from adult basic education to secondary education.

**Vocational training:** Refers to manual training given to prisoners which includes activities such as tailoring, hair dressing, beauty and manicure, decorating, cooking and hospitality.

**Life skills training:** Refers to equipping prisoners with knowledge about personal health, spirituality, substance abuse, anger management and self-esteem.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviewed literature that is relevant for the topic and objectives to assist in understanding the study. It includes literature with information on recidivism in the developing world, social-demographic characteristics of female recidivists, and perceptions of female recidivists on prison rehabilitation programs. It also looks into the influence of inmate education, vocational training and life skills training on recidivism by female offenders in prison. The chapter concludes by presenting a theoretical framework and a conceptual framework.

#### 2.2 Recidivism in the Developing World

Female involvement in crime was not common until recently partly because most societies were dominated by men (Young, 2008). Female crime rates were therefore significantly lower than those by men worldwide. Recently however, females have accounted for a growing proportion of people arrested and convicted for serious offenses (Young, 2008; Patrick & Marsh, 2001). Role changes, more education and almost equal participation in science and technology have placed females in positions of responsibility like providing for families leading to involvement in crime (Obi *et al*, 2014). Females had been discriminated in education, employment, remuneration and ownership of property for a long time and may have a right to equal employment but are not equally remunerated (Oketch, 1999).

West (1967) notes that liberation or emancipation of females from any forms of oppression, exploitation, ignorance and poverty led to awareness of equal rights and commission of crimes. Poor conditions of life in rural areas lead to rural-urban migration which results in unemployment and underemployment in cities (Kamau, 2010). Some of the females who are also less educated and lack reliable income sources engage in illegal activities such as changaa brewing or hawking for survival. When they are imprisoned and later released, they return to commit the same crimes due to dependence on the

particular mode of survival (Kamau, 2010). Crimes committed by female recidivists may lead to financial problems, social stigma, and incarceration and negatively affect a country's national development (Mwaniki, 2012).

Domestic physical or sexual abuse leads females to run away from home into the street where prostitution, stealing, drug abuse, alcohol and violence are common (Siegel & Williams, 2003). Deisher (1983) found that substantial proportions of prostitutes and aggressive females have a history of childhood sexual abuse by a member of their immediate or extended family. Ireland and Wisdom (1994) concluded that there was a relationship between maltreatment and drug abuse or arrests for drug offenses. Unmarried females with children, broken homes due to divorce and separation, as well as being widowed may cause females to commit crime (Young, 2008). Poor socio-economic background and factors such as low self-esteem and peer pressure have also been attributed to female recidivists (Young, 2008).

Bello (2017) pointed out that recidivism took place in developing countries due to several factors, namely incorrigibility or recidivists being beyond reform and failure of the punishment to deter due to being inappropriate, too lenient or too harsh. For example, long term imprisonment for a first-time or minor offender is inappropriate and harsh. Lack of support to prisoners in reintegrating into society and ineffectiveness of support mechanisms also led to recidivism. In addition, failure of programs, peer pressure or social provocations, poor mental health, and lack of support by government and society also cause recidivism (Bello, 2017).

Souverein, Ward, Visser and Burton (2016) identified life-course persistent offenders as a category of recidivists emanating from poor parenting, violence in the home, single parenting and criminality of family members. Life course persistent offenders will continue to offend throughout their life span unless their trajectories of offending are interrupted (Souverein *et al*, 2016). According to Lekalakala (2015), the higher the educational level of offenders, the greater the reduction in re-offending since skills acquisition ensures higher social capital and greater access to legitimate job opportunities

which help recidivists to succeed after release. Inmates who participate in education programmes are less likely to return to prison (Lekalakala, 2015).

Some common trends of recidivism according to Lekalakala (2015) that have uniformity are that most cases of recidivism occur within three years of release or completion of their sentence and that property crimes are the most common recidivism crimes. Drug crimes, housebreakings and common assault are also frequent among recidivists while violent crimes are least likely to recidivate. The earlier an offender is punished, the more likely he or she is to recidivate. As a result, young offenders are also the most frequent recidivists. About one third of recidivists have been previously sentenced to a term of imprisonment and are more likely to receive stiffer penalties especially on cases where they committed the same crime (Lekalakala, 2015).

According to Bello (2017) prison-based education, restorative justice, social integration, probation, parole and re-entry programs have a role in reducing recidivism. Similarly, recidivism may be reduced by addressing the risk factors including substance abuse, unsupportive families and mental and physical illness (Bello, 2017). Antwi (2015) outlines other risk factors to be addressed to reduce recidivism to include past criminal records, lower education, anti-social personality, homelessness and criminal associates.

### **2.3 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Female Recidivists**

The main cause for involvement of female recidivists in crimes is financial constraints (Oketch, 1999; Scott, Dennis & Lurigio, 2017). The bulk of female recidivists come from economically and socially disadvantaged sections of society. They are also typically young and single with dependent children, unemployed or underemployed and have low levels of education (Dennis & Lurigio, 2017). Unlike married females, single and divorced females are more likely to commit socio-economic crimes due to the need to support their children with basic needs (Patrick & Marsh, 2001; Kamau, 2010). Involvement of female recidivists in crime has been attributed to alcoholism, drug abuse, women's emancipation and broken homes (Mwaniki, 2012). Females under the influence

of drugs often make distorted judgments leading to commission of crimes while those involved in drug dealing are also likely to be involved in crime (Mwaniki, 2012).

Low education levels offer less skills leading to low paying jobs or irregular earnings which are not adequate for females to cater for their basic needs which predispose them to commit crime (Patrick & Marsh, 2001; Kamau, 2010). Abortion, infanticide, child abandoning and cruelty to children are also common among poor female recidivists due abandonment by men (Oketch, 1999). Poor female recidivists are more likely to be placed in pre-trial detention due to their inability to afford bail or the services of a lawyer (Patrick & Marsh, 2001). They are also imprisoned due to inability to pay fines (Kamau, 2010). Most are charged with minor and non-violent offences and are not a risk to the public. Many are also affected by mental illnesses and drug addiction but are imprisoned due to discriminatory legislation and practices. For this group, community sanctions and measures would be ideal than imprisonment (Kamau, 2010).

Rutere (2003) states that stigmatization leads to recidivism due to unemployment, living and staying with other criminals and rejection by relatives and friends. Recidivism also occurs due to association with hardened criminals who teach offenders better skills for committing more serious crimes (Obi *et al.*, 2014). Prisons in most developing countries including Kenya are overcrowded where hard core criminals are mixed with petty offenders (Rutere, 2003). Imprisonment also contributes to recidivism since prisoners are not rehabilitated but return to the same economic problems that led them to offend initially. They also return to crime to revenge for the unfair convictions which had sent them to prison in the earlier instance (Rutere, 2003).

Rutere (2003) further adds that females from broken homes such as those separated from their husbands face social and financial difficulties in bringing up children. This leads them to become recidivist and engage in petty crimes including selling illicit beer, bhang and prostitution for survival. Recidivists generally have small families, were employed previously in low paying jobs and had been imprisoned for shorter terms which gave them more time to reoffend (Obi *et al.*, 2014). Peer influence or influence by friends who



engage in crime also lead to recidivism. Some recidivists are habitual or professional criminals while youthful age also contributes to recidivism as some offenders begin committing crime when young and are taken to borstal institutions and later graduate to criminals (Rutere, 2003).

#### **2.4 The Rehabilitation Rationale**

Prisons for female offenders were introduced much later in most communities with females constituting the minority of the prison population (Quaker United Nations Office, 2005). Female prisons were similar to those for men in design, systems and regimes used including buildings, security procedures, family visits, healthcare provision, training and work. As a result, the prison conditions are harsh for females as they do not ensure protection of female rights and dignity as human beings (Quaker United Nations Office, 2005). These prisons are overcrowded with poor sanitation and visiting facilities, spread of infectious diseases and food and water shortages which affect females negatively more than men. Females may also lack sanitary towels and be limited to only one set of clothes (Lipsey, Wilson & Cothorn, 2000).

Areas in which females are affected by imprisonment include their role as primary caregivers for the family and especially for small children, sexual and reproductive health, pregnancy, vulnerability to abuse and mental illness (UN Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, 2000). Some groups of females like the disabled, foreign nationals, juveniles, indigenous and other minorities require specific needs which may not be present (UN, 2000). Girl offenders are especially affected since they share the same prisons with adult female prisoners contrary to international regulations (UN, 2000). There are also fewer programs for females in the areas of detention under protective custody arrangements, vocational training opportunities, transfer opportunities and minimum security imprisonment (Lipsey *al*, 2000).

Increased cases of recidivism among female offenders impact negatively on public safety, lead to congestion in prisons and increased costs for the judiciary, prisons and law enforcement agencies. In response to involvement of females in crime, authorities have

sought to address it in the community and also use rehabilitation measures in prisons (Obi *et al.*, 2014). Rehabilitation involves designing prison sentences for reformation to improve character and rehabilitate the offender (Obi *et al.*, 2014). Rehabilitation is targeted at successful re-entry of former prisoners into society and provides them with options to succeed in society without involvement in crime. This leads to reduction of crime rates and saving tax payers' money as fewer individuals are sent to prison (Lipse *et al.*, 2000). Acquisition of adequate skills is the key to successful rehabilitation and reducing the chances of re-offending. Female offenders' with skills to obtain employment are not likely to reoffend upon release (Singh, 2016).

Examples of rehabilitation mechanisms provided by law include remission of sentence, compulsory supervision orders, probation and temporary release on parole (Ross & Richard, 2009). In Kenya, the mainstream rehabilitation programmes are formal education, vocational training and life skills training (Muasya, 2013). Prisons aim to offer rehabilitation programmes for training, counseling and reforming prisoners to assist them with skills to reintegrate into society. The skills enable them to participate actively in positive socioeconomic engagements, secure employment and avoid recidivism when released (Muasya, 2013). The programmes aim at increasing the female recidivists' education or skills level for success in life once released (Ross & Richard, 2009). Lack or poor implementation of these programs hampers re-entry of female recidivists upon release from prison (Jonson & Cullen, 2015).

Prison rehabilitation programs that consider past experience and involve female recidivists in choosing, planning and evaluation yielded more vocational and educational value (Ngozwana, 2017). Rehabilitation programs that are problem-centered are also of value to female recidivists due to the immediate application of knowledge and skills (Knowles, 1980). By providing them with benefits including literacy, training and skills, a good number of recidivists have favorable perceptions on the rehabilitation programs (Ellison *et al.*, 2016). However, others complain of limited resources and irrelevance of some programmes (Qhogwana, 2017). Therefore, perceptions by offenders may determine success or failure of the rehabilitation programs (Qhogwana, 2017).

Mohammed and Mohamed (2014) identified mainstream rehabilitation programmes to include formal education, vocational training and life skills training. Through education, offenders learn literacy and numeracy which increases their chances of employment. Useful skills obtained from vocational training provide certification and enable access employment opportunities. Visher Clipp *et al* (2005) noted that life skills training programmes improve the mental, physical and social well-being of prisoners. According to Ellison *et al* (2016), this leads offenders to participate actively in positive socioeconomic engagements and secure employment. Kamau (2010) concludes that rehabilitation programs offered at Lang'ata Women Maximum Security Prison have been linked to improvement of character, rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

## **2.5 Penal Correctional Programs**

Penal correctional or rehabilitation programs are measures designed by prisons to offer training and counseling to reform and equip prisoners with skills to reintegrate into society. The programmes provide prisoners with options to re-enter society and succeed without involvement in crime. Among the mainstream rehabilitation programmes are formal education, vocational training and life skills training.

### **2.5.1 Formal Education**

Formal education or academic instructions provided in prisons are part of rehabilitation Programmes for prisoners provided within the prison or in vocational schools, colleges or universities (Visher Clipp, Winterfield Loret & Brutt, 2005). Prison based education programs focus on high school diploma education as well as college degree programs. In addition, vocational training may be offered (Bello, 2017). Adult beneficiaries could be offered classes in mathematics, reading, and writing in English (Webber & Chernikova, 2017). These education programs are designed to help inmates gain skills they can utilize when they are released into society. Educational programmes are offered at all levels from adult basic education to secondary education. Despite facing funding limitations, formal education programmes are popular due to perceived effectiveness (Bello, 2017).

Formal education programmes include educational programmes at all levels from adult basic education to secondary education (Stephen & Linda, 2003). Educational attainment has been found to have positive impacts on recidivists' discipline, confidence and stability which increase chances of employment after release (Mohammed & Mohamed, 2014). According to Farley and Pike (2016), prisoners are enabled to access education primarily as a way of helping them develop skills and abilities to avoid re-offending upon release from custody. Education programmes have been found to occupy prisoners' time, relieve monotony and cope with prison conditions (Farley & Pike, 2016).

Higher levels of education are able to transform some prisoners and make them more risk-averse. This includes increased cognitive ability and new pro-social thinking patterns which foster effective self-expression and negotiation of agreed outcomes without having to resort to violence (Jonson & Cullen, 2015). Prisoner exposure to positive civilian role models or educators also creates positive institutional cultures (Jonson & Cullen, 2015). Improvements in cognitive processing, communication abilities and enhancement of long term prospects afforded by education and training may result in prosocial behaviors, emotional maturity, empathy and control (Stephen & Linda, 2003).

Educational programmes offer literacy and numeracy abilities to prisoners, majority of whom complete the programmes pointing to its popularity (Mohammed & Mohamed, 2014). Recidivism has been linked to low levels of education and vocational skills before and after release from prison (Solomon, Visher, Lavigne, & Osborne, 2006). However, when educational programs are offered to only few individuals within a prison, they are less likely to produce positive outcomes (Jonson & Cullen, 2015). There is also little evidence to confirm that educational and other programs have lasting effects including reducing offender recidivism (Jonson & Cullen, 2015). However, the prison environment itself, availability of programmes, attitude and perceptions of prison staff may affect education programs negatively (Farley & Pike, 2016).

### **2.5.2 Vocational Training**

Vocational training aims to equip prisoners with useful skills to be used after completion of their sentences (Muasya, 2013). Vocational training provides certification and makes recidivists valuable to potential employers (Mohammed & Mohamed, 2014). Vocational training also reduces recidivism by providing recidivists with technical skills and enables them to gain communication and organizational skills. Through vocational training, recidivists become motivated to change and are able to access employment opportunities (Mohammed & Mohamed, 2014). Globally, vocational programmes include training in agriculture, carpentry, masonry, plumbing, wiring, welding, lathe machine, motor mechanics, tailoring, beauty culture, the garment industry, and other appropriate vocations (Webber & Chernikova, 2017).

In Kenya, offenders sentenced to serve terms in prisons are sent to penal institutions according to the type of prisoner and length of sentence. Females are held separately from men, young offenders are separated from adult offenders while youth are mainly sent to borstal institutions (Muasya, 2013). Offenders serving long term sentence are scheduled to undergo various training in industrial trades like carpentry and joinery, wood processing, masonry, leather work, taxidermy, soap manufacturing, mechanics, blacksmith, upholstery and sign writing among others. These inmates sit for trade tests to obtain official qualifications (Muasya, 2013).

Prisoners serving less serious offenses in short-term medium security prisons train in simple industry involving carpentry, simple repairs and tailoring. Female recidivists participate in hair dressing, tailoring, beauty and manicure, decorating, cooking and hospitality (Ngozwana, 2017). Agricultural training is also offered to prisoners serving less serious offenses in short-term medium security prisons (Muasya, 2013). This includes agriculture and livestock rearing such as cattle, poultry and piggery projects. These activities also include landscaping and gardening for growing vegetables and horticulture (Ngozwana, 2017).

### **2.5.3 Life Skills Training and Psycho-social Services**

Life skills programs target the challenges that female offenders face in efforts to live normal lives (Abrams & Lea, 2016). These programmes improve the physical and social well being of prisoners, as well as providing them with job training and other skills (Visher Clipp *et al*, 2005). Job skill training is meant for offenders with limited work experience or problems with getting or maintaining a job (Bosma & Kunst, 2016). These programs have been identified as an efficient way to reduce violence within facilities and also to reduce recidivism rates upon release (Davis, Bozick, Steele, Saunders & Miles, 2013). Key components of life skills programs include training in financial literacy, parenting, conflict resolution, and job search skills or job skill training (Davis *et al*, 2013).

Ngozwana (2017) notes that life skills training for female recidivists also include equipping them with knowledge about diseases such as HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB) and cancer among others. Newton and Day (2016) note that levels of education, training, and employment for ex-prisoners are generally much lower than for the general population. Former prisoners face difficulty in reintegrating into local communities. Former prisoners are highly likely not to be able to find stable housing. They also face restricted employment opportunities due to having a criminal record, limited employment histories and residing in communities with high rates of unemployment (Abrams & Lea, 2016).

Prison administrators seek to address these problems by offering a range of different pre and post-release services that aim to improve the employability of ex-offenders and ex-prisoners. These include work readiness training and job placement to improve skill sets and address poor work histories (Newton & Day, 2016). It is often assumed that offenders who find employment will be less likely to re-offend than those who do not. It is also assumed that employment will strengthen social bonds and ties to social institutions that act as key protective factors against crime (Cherney & Fitzgerald, 2014).

Psychosocial services impart psychosocial skills through cognitive-behavioral methods to address dysfunctional cognitive processes and maladaptive behaviors or psychological problems (Wilson, Allen & Mackenzie, 2015). These programs produce the best results that target and change maladaptive behaviors through reinforcement and modeling. Cognitive skill training aims to improve cognitive skills that are necessary to independently live, develop, and function in society. Cognitive skill training also help offenders cope with addiction to alcohol or drugs (Wilson *et al*, 2015). These programmes also improve the mental and social well-being of prisoners. Psychosocial programmes also include spiritual courses, anger management and self-esteem training (Webber & Chernikova, 2017).

Due to lack of qualified personnel in psychology and social work, most of these skills are provided by various stakeholders such as NGOs and other civil society groups (Herbig & Hesselink, 2016). In many prisons around the world, outside clinical psychologists and mental health workers are brought in to train staff on how to counsel beneficiaries (Webber & Chernikova, 2017). In addition, successful individuals from the community engaged in social and cultural events and become mentors to the prisoners. These individuals demonstrated to prisoners the ability to succeed in life without resorting to crime. Other psychosocial programs included theater, drama, dance, music, bibliotherapy, and creative writing programs (Webber & Chernikova, 2017).

The programmes also have a component of individual and group counselling and therapy offered to female recidivists in the correctional centers (Herbig & Hesselink, 2016). Huynh, Hall, Hurst and Bikos (2015) state that psychosocial programmes offer unique possibilities for effective change for offenders during incarceration. The programmes foster talent and character strengths and improve psychological functioning. For example, abstinence from substance abuse has been correlated with hope, higher quality of life and well-being. Huynh *et al* (2015) also point out that the three core positive psychology constructs that have been related to positive mental health outcomes are gratitude, life satisfaction and hope.

## **2.6 Perceptions of Female Recidivists on Prison Rehabilitation Programs**

Ngozwana (2017) found that female recidivists were not taught the skills or just performed vocational activities as part of their daily routine work and regarded the activities as of little vocational or educational value. Consulting and using the female recidivists' past experiences can enable them to choose programs and activities that are of interest to them (Ngozwana, 2017). The theory of andragogy by Knowles states that adults need to be involved in planning and evaluating their instruction. The instruction should be problem-centered and not content oriented since their orientation to learning is for immediate application of knowledge and skills (Knowles, 1980).

Ngozwana (2017) also noted that female recidivists complained about limited resources such as shortages of qualified teachers, inadequate materials and no clear budget and policy for the programmes. Some female recidivists regard some courses offered for rehabilitation not to be relevant for every offender (Ngozwana, 2017). A non-supportive, punitive relationship between prison officers providing supervision and female prisoners was related to anxiety which in turn was related to high recidivism (Patrick & Marsh, 2001). The role of psychologists and social workers in rehabilitation has been found to be positive as it helps some female recidivists to learn to be open and deal with the sense of shame and guilt relating to the crime (Qhogwana (2017). The education programmes empower inmates and diverts attention away from focusing on life stressors including the sentences (Patrick & Marsh, 2001).

According to Qhogwana (2017), rehabilitation programmes such as studies or formal education should be started early to increase chances of finding work and being able to support one's family when released. Completion of prison terms for female recidivists may often usher in a new beginning to other challenges including the possibility of reoffending on return to society. These difficulties include unemployment, finding a place to stay, keeping away from alcohol or drugs and regaining custody of children taken during imprisonment. These factors are closely related such that when the female recidivists fail to secure employment, they also do not get accommodation and are therefore not able to regain the custody of children. For these reasons, female recidivists



are not able to resume normal lives after imprisonment which may be one of the reasons for recidivism (Qhogwana, 2017; Muasya, 2013).

Further, even when they succeed to secure employment and accommodation, the women may face challenges in reconciling with their children (Muasya, 2013). The children may have become grown-ups or developed close relationships with those who had been caring for them which may be a source of tension between the parties (Muasya, 2013). Most female recidivists who are lucky to secure employment after prison earn about ten to twenty percent the amount they earned before incarceration (Qhogwana, 2017). Imprisonment also leads to social isolation, strained relationships and financial challenges. Mental problems and drug or alcohol abuse or addiction are the other challenges that some of the female recidivists released from prison experience (Qhogwana, 2017).

## **2.7 Theoretical Framework**

The study utilized Social Control Theory and Social Cognitive theory to explain female recidivism and prison rehabilitation.

### **2.7.1 Social Control Theory**

Proponents of Social Control Theory are Hirshi (1969) and Williams (2001) who suggested that delinquent acts result when an individual's bond to society is weak or broken. Internal restraints and external restraints determine the strength of this kind of bond. These internal and external constraints develop as a result of families and communities setting certain standards of behavior and rewarding conformity or punishing nonconformity (Abadinsky, 1990). The extent of an individual's social bond in his or her society such as attachment to other people determines his or her chances to deviate (Williams, 2001).

Most female recidivists may have criminal history and companions and may have mental and substance abuse issues among other anti-social behaviors. They are also unemployed, undergo financial constraints and face social and housing challenges. As a result, they are stigmatized and rejected by relatives, friends and society in general. In this study, female

recidivists may have committed crimes due to lack of social and or self-control, lack of attachment to society and non-involvement in the society's activities due to the aforementioned socio-demographic factors. Social control theory is relevant to this study as it shows that crime and delinquent acts are committed by people whose ties to the conventional order or normative standards are weak or largely none-existent and these are the characteristics of recidivists' offenders.

### **2.7.2 Social Cognitive Theory**

Albert Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory proposes that people are driven not by inner forces, but by external factors. This model suggests that human functioning can be explained by a triadic interaction of behavior, personal and environmental factors often known as reciprocal determinism. Environmental factors represent situational influences and environment in which behavior is performed while personal factors include instincts, drives, traits, and other individual motivational forces. Several constructs underlie the process of human learning and behavior change. These variables may also intervene in the process of behavior change (Godin & Kok, 1995). They include self-efficacy which refers to judgment of one's ability to perform the behavior and outcome expectations which is judgment of the likely consequences a behavior will produce. The importance of these expectations may also drive behavior.

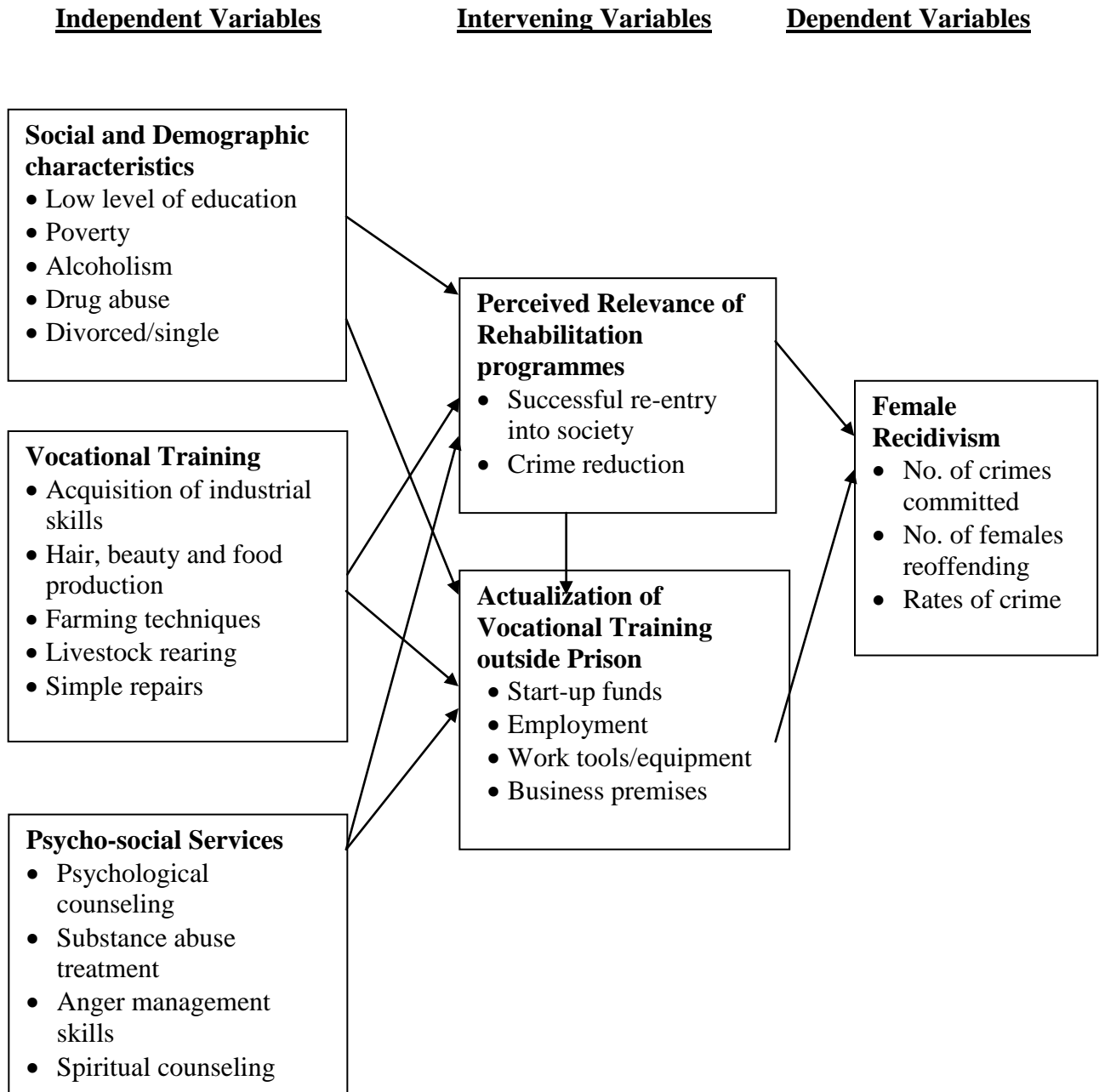
Self-control is the ability of an individual to control their behaviors while reinforcements increase or decrease the likelihood that a behavior will continue. Emotional coping is the ability of an individual to cope with emotional stimuli while observational learning refers to the acquisition of behaviors by observing actions and outcomes of others' behavior. To increase levels of self-efficacy, it may be important to provide resources and support to raise individual confidence. In order to raise self-efficacy, behavior change should be approached as a series of small steps (Badly *et al*, 2003). Similarly, even when individuals have a strong sense of efficacy, they may not perform the behavior if they have no incentive (Bandura, 1986:58).

Behavior change among female recidivists may require provision of incentives and rewards, shaping the environment by providing opportunities for change, assisting with those changes and offering social support. Prisons can shape the environment in order to encourage behavior change among female recidivists. Prison authorities may succeed in reducing female recidivism by implementing successful rehabilitation programmes that target unemployment, mental and substance abuse issues and social and housing challenges among others.

## **2.8 Conceptual Framework**

Figure 2.1 is the conceptual model illustrating the main variables of the study. A conceptual framework is a diagrammatic presentation of the relationship between dependent and independent variables (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). In this study the dependent variable is female recidivism while the independent variables include socio-demographic factors, rehabilitation measures. Socio-demographic factors such as alcoholism, drug abuse, unemployment and low level of education leads to recidivism among female offenders. Rehabilitation programmes such as vocational training and psychosocial services are used to enhance successful re-entry of ex-prisoners in the society. However, if the skills acquired in the prisons are not well utilized due to lack of start-up funds, tools and equipment, the unemployed female recidivists will return to committing crime. The figure on the net page explains conceptual framework.

**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework**



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the research methodology that was utilized in the study and includes research site, research design, Units of analysis and observation, Data collection and tools sample design and Data analysis.

#### **3.2 Site Description**

This study was conducted at Langata Women Maximum Security Prison. The institution is under Kenya Prisons Service Department and is the largest female prison institution in Kenya. At the time of the study Langata Women Maximum Security Prison had approximately 500 female inmates under approximately 350 members of staff. It accommodates some of the most serious female offenders in the country. It is the oldest prison for women in the country and is located along Lang'ata Road, about 5 kilometers South West of Nairobi Central Business District. It has a remand section for inmates, who are waiting for their court cases, Short term section, Medium security section for inmates who are in prison for 1-3 years and a Maximum security section for inmates convicted for very serious offences. At the time of the study, 120 inmates were serving long term imprisonment and had been convicted once, 170 inmates were serving medium term and had been convicted twice, 210 inmates were serving short term and had been convicted more than three times, 43 children were living with their imprisoned mothers. The prison rehabilitates inmates through formal education, vocational training, life skills and psycho-social training.

#### **3.3 Research Design**

The study used descriptive research design to study the phenomenon from large number of cases in order to generalize the results to a larger population (Kothari, 2006). This method involved use of questionnaires to collect data from recidivist female convicts at Langata Women Maximum Security Prison.

### 3.4 Unit of Analysis and Observation

The unit of analysis for this study is the relationship between female recidivism and Prison rehabilitation. The units of observation were: 15 Correctional officers and 130 female recidivists serving time at Langata Women Maximum Security Prison.

### 3.5 Target Population

Langata Women Maximum Security Prison currently holds 500 women convicts of whom 130 of them were recidivists. Accordingly, the target population for this study constituted the 130 female convicts who had been incarcerated more than once. Table 3.1 below shows how this target population of recidivists was distributed according to committal period in terms of years of imprisonment.

**Table 3.1: Target population of the recidivists and years of imprisonment**

<b>Prison Term (Years)</b>	<b>Target Population</b>
Long term prisoners (4years and above)	30
Medium term prisoners (1-3years)	47
Short term Prisoners (1-11months)	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>

### 3.6 Sampling Procedure

Due to the large number of female recidivists falling under different categories of imprisonment, stratified sampling method was used. Stratified sampling groups the target population into strata from which the desired sample is selected. The strata were long term prisoners, medium term prisoners and short term prisoners. Thus, from the target population of 130 repeat convicts, a sample of 52 convicts (i.e. 40% of the target population) was randomly selected for interview purposes. This sample was proportionately distributed along the strata of periods of prison terms (i.e. long term, medium term and short term prisoners) **Table 3.2** below, shows the proportionate distribution.

**Table 3.2: Prison terms of the target population and proportionate distribution of the sample**

<b>Prison Term</b>	<b>Target Population</b>	<b>Sample Distribution</b>
Long term	30	12
Medium term	47	19
Short term	53	21
	<b>130</b>	<b>52</b>

The three strata of female recidivists from Langata Women Maximum Security Prison gave a sample size of 52 respondents. The 52 respondents were selected using simple random sampling or the lottery method in each stratum. This method entailed that each convict in the respective strata was assigned a number on a piece of paper that was folded and put in a box. The pieces of papers in the box were then mixed before randomly picking the required number of respondents in the stratum (i.e. category of prison term). All the 52 respondents participated in the study. Fifteen (15) key informants were also selected through purposive sampling.

### **3.7 Data Collection Methods and Tools**

This Study was both qualitative and quantitative and used survey and key informant interviews. Survey involved the use of questionnaires requiring both structured and unstructured responses. The officer Incharge of Langata Women Maximum Security Prison allowed the researcher access into the Institution after the researcher presented authorization letter from the Commissioner General of Prisons. The researcher administered the questionnaires on the female recidivist's convicts and guided them on the areas where they did not understand well. Questionnaires are more objective since responses are gathered in a standardized way, do not require detailed information and data can be collected from a large number of respondents. Some of the female recidivists were found to be illiterate or semi-literate as reported by previous studies. The researcher filled the questionnaires through personal interviews with this category of respondents in

Kiswahili. The key informants were interviewed on appointment using the interview guide which was the source of qualitative data.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

The University letter of introduction was used to explain to the respondents that the research was purely for academic purposes and that the respondents' privacy was protected by a strict standard of anonymity. After validation of research tools, the researcher sought authorization from the relevant authority. The researcher obtained a letter from the Commissioner General of Prisons to collect data. The administered questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and collected after a mutually agreed time.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

The researcher used SPSS version 20 programme to analyze quantitative data. The programme enabled the researcher to run descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, tables and percentages. The researcher applied descriptive statistics that included frequency distribution and percentages. The researcher presented the data using graphs, charts, and tables. All the data was interpreted and research findings were presented. The qualitative data derived from the unstructured questions was edited, cleaned up grouped into various thematic areas and used to reinforce quantitative data. The qualitative data was analyzed by content analysis.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between female recidivism and prison rehabilitation at Lang'ata Women Maximum Security Prison. This chapter presents and analyses data collected from 52 recidivist female convicts and 15 prison officers at Lang'ata Women Maximum Security Prison. It discusses the background information of the respondents, their socio-demographic characteristics as well as perceptions on prison rehabilitation programs, the effect of formal education, vocational training and life skills training on female recidivism.

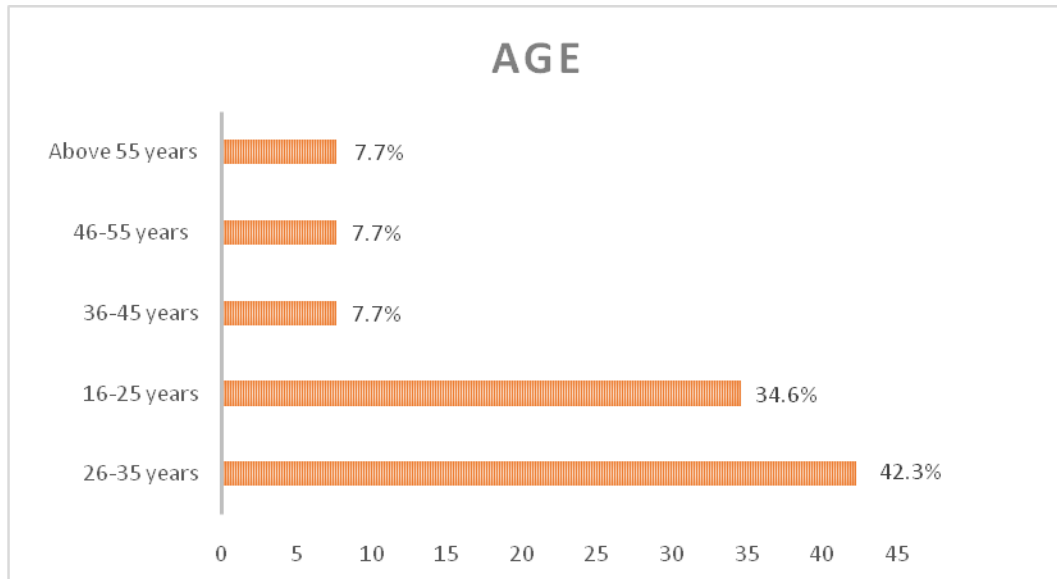
#### 4.2 Background Information

This section presents the background information of the respondents including age, marital status and religion.

##### 4.2.1 Age of the respondents

Figure 4.1 shows that 42% were between 26-35 years followed by 34.6% who were between 16-25 years. The rest of the respondents 7.7% each were in the age brackets of 36-45 years, 46-55 years and above 55 years. These results shows that majority of recidivist female criminals are relatively young which can be attributed to changing roles of women becoming bread winners due to high unemployment and low incomes (Obi *et al.*, 2014).

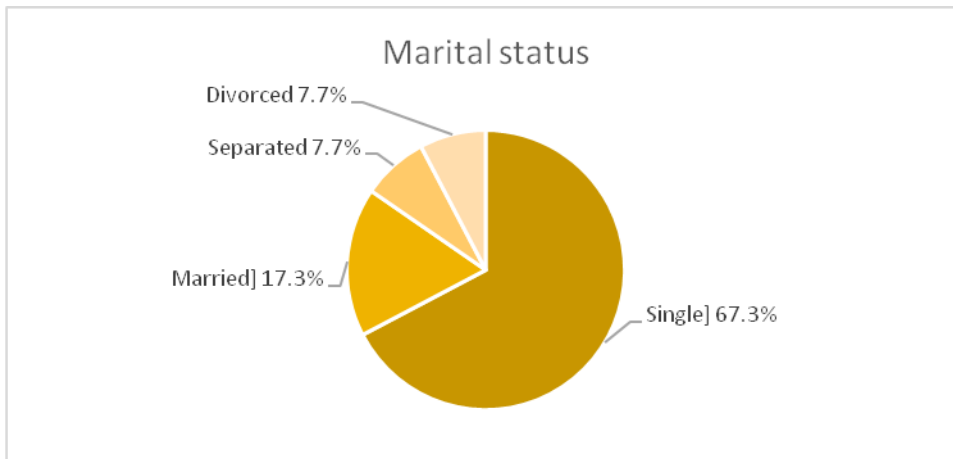
**Figure 4.1: Respondents' Age (N=52)**



#### **4.2.2 Marital status of the respondents**

Figure 4.2 shows that 67.3% of the respondents were single while the rest were married 17.3%, separated 7.7% divorced 7.7%. Domination in crime by women who are single can be attributed to increased learning opportunities and developments in science and technology which has exposed women to similar opportunities for committing crime (Obi *et al.*, 2014). Women have also become bread winners due to single parenthood while migration to urban areas has compounded the situation as women struggle for limited opportunities in domestic work, petty trade, and casual labour (Obi *et al.*, 2014). Single and divorced women are more likely to commit socio-economic crimes due to the need to support their children with basics needs (Kamau, 2010).

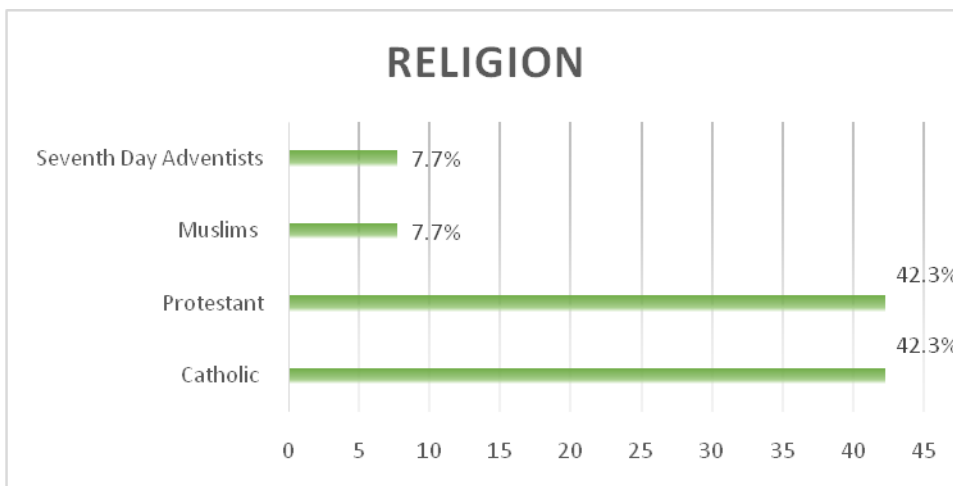
**Figure 4.2: Marital Status of the Respondents (N=52)**



### 4.2.3 Religion of the Respondents

Figure 4.3 shows that equal number of respondents 42.3% each who were Catholic and Protestant while only 7.7% each were Muslims and Seventh Day Adventists. These results reveal that Christians and specifically Catholics and Protestants form the largest number of female recidivists in the institution. This might be attributed to inadequate religious guidance during formative years of growth. It is probable that there is relationship between involvement in crime and religion (Mbiriri, 2017).

**Figure 4.3: Religion of Respondent (N=52)**



### 4.3 Objective One: Respondents' Socio-demographic characteristics

This section discusses the socio-demographic characteristics of female recidivist. It includes academic qualifications, occupation, monthly income and prisoner type. The section also discusses rank, offence committed, number of times imprisoned, reasons for committing crime, duration of sentence and length imprisoned.

#### 4.3.1 Academic qualifications

Table 4.1 shows that a majority of the female recidivists 57.7% had reached secondary school while 25% of them had primary school level of education, followed by diploma or certificates 5.76% and Bachelor degrees holders 3.8%. Only 7.7% of the recidivists had no formal education. Low education levels have been attributed to women involvement in crimes such as petty thefts of property and possession of bhang (Mwaniki, 2012). Low education levels offer less skills leading to low paying jobs or irregular earnings which are not adequate for women to cater for their basic needs which predispose them to commit crime (Kamau, 2010). These low academic qualifications may become a challenge in implementing the rehabilitation programmes.

**Table 4.1 Academic level of Female Recidivists**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Bachelors	2	3.8
Diploma/certificate	3	5.8
Secondary	30	57.7
Primary	13	25.0
None	4	7.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.3.2 Occupations of the respondents

Table 4.2 shows that respondents indicated that they were involved in low income economic activities including small businesses 50%, casual work 25%, domestic work or house help 17.3%. A few of the respondents were unemployed 7.7%. Low income, poverty, unemployment and financial constraints are the likely cause for female

recidivism (Boakye, 2013). Low education levels offer less skills leading to low paying jobs or irregular earnings which are not adequate for the women to cater for their basic needs which most likely predispose them to commit crime (Kamau, 2010).

**Table 4.2: Vocational engagement**

<b>Type of Work</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Small business	26	50.0
Casual work	13	25.0
Domestic work	9	17.3
Unemployed	4	7.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **4.3.3 Monthly income**

Table 4.3 shows that a large number of the respondents 42.3% earned an average monthly income of below Kshs 2,000, followed by 28.9% of the respondents who earned Kshs 2,000 – 7,999 and 11.5% who earned Kshs 14,000 – 19,999. 7.7% of the respondents earned Kshs 8,000 – 13999, 5.8% of them indicated that they earned Kshs 20,000 – 25,999 while 3.8% earned Kshs 32,000 and above. Hence the likely cause for involvement of the women in crime is financial constraint (Oketch, 1999; Scott, Dennis & Lurigio, 2017). In fact financial constraints have been cited as the likely main cause for female recidivism. Poverty and broken homes leads to financial constraints and eventually to female recidivism (Mwaniki, 2012). It's therefore assumed here that discrimination of women in education, employment, remuneration and ownership of property may lead women to commit crimes (Young, 2008).

**Table 4.3: Monthly income**

<b>Income (Kshs)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Below 2,000	22	42.3
2,000 – 7,999	15	28.9
14,000 – 19,999	6	11.5
8,000 – 13,999	4	7.7
20,000 – 25,999	3	5.8
32,000 and above	2	3.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**4.3.4 Offences Committed**

Table 4.4 shows that a large number of the respondents 50% were currently in prison for petty offences followed by 32.7% of the respondents imprisoned for medium crimes and 17.3% of the respondents who were in prison for committing serious offences. Most female recidivists may have mainly committed petty crimes including petty thefts of property, prostitution and hawking without licenses (Rutere, 2003). Some of the crimes reported to have been likely committed by women include stealing, affray, creating disturbance, malicious damage, assault, child neglect and possession of drugs and illicit brews (Mwaniki, 2012).

**Table 4.4: Offences Committed**

<b>Offences</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Petty	26	50.0
Medium	17	32.7
Serious	9	17.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**4.3.5 Frequency of imprisonment**

Table 4.5 shows that majority of the respondents 90.4% had been imprisoned two times before the current sentence as compared to 9.6% of the respondents who had been imprisoned thrice. These results are corroborated by Rutere (2003) who noted that

recidivists had been imprisoned for shorter terms which gave them more time to reoffend. Some recidivists are likely to be habitual or professional criminals while youthful age may also contribute to recidivism as some offenders begin committing crime when young and later graduate to criminals (Rutere, 2003).

**Table 4.5: Number of imprisonments**

<b>Number of times</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Two	47	90.4
Three	5	9.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **4.3.6 Reason for committing crime**

Table 4.6 shows that a large number of respondents 42.3% indicated that they had committed crimes due to poverty while 32.7% of the respondents had committed crimes as a result of anger. The rest of the respondents 25% indicated that the reason behind their commission of crime was unemployment. Most female offenders are likely to have committed petty crimes such as petty thefts of property, prostitution and hawking without licenses (Rutere, 2003). These findings may be attributed to financial constraints faced by single, separated or divorced women in their own survival or in bringing up children (Young, 2008). Anger as a reason for committing crime may commonly be experienced in crimes of passion and likely to result into manslaughter and assault.

**Table 4.6: Motivations for Committing Crime**

<b>Crime Motivations</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Poverty	22	42.3
Anger	17	32.7
Unemployment	13	25.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.3.7 Duration of the Sentence

Table 4.7 shows that respondents had been sentenced for a total of 1-3 years 32.7%, 10 years and above 25% and 1-11 months 17.3%. The rest of the respondents had been sentenced for durations of 4 – 6 years 9.6%, 7-9 years 7.7% and sentenced to life in prison 7.7%. It can be deduced that female convicts sentenced to shorter durations make the largest number of recidivists. These results are corroborated by Rutere (2003) who noted that recidivists who had been imprisoned for shorter terms which may have likely given them more time to reoffend. Some recidivists may be habitual or professional criminals while youthful age may also contribute to recidivism as some offenders begin committing crime when young and later graduate to criminals (Rutere, 2003).

**Table 4.7: Duration of Imprisonment**

<b>Sentence</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1-3 years	17	32.7
10 years and above	13	25.0
1-11 months	9	17.3
4 – 6 years	5	9.6
7-9 years	4	7.7
Life sentence	4	7.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.3.8 Duration of sentence already served

Table 4.8 shows that respondents had actually been in prison for 2-3 years 28.9%, 1-11 months 19.2% and 4–6 years 17.3%. The rest of the respondents had actually been in prison for 7-9 years 15.4%, 10 years and above 11.5% and 1-2 years 7.7%. These results show that the respondents had stayed in prison for varied durations were likely able to give insight on recidivism and Prison rehabilitation.



**Table 4.8: Time served in prison**

<b>Duration</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1-11 months	10	19.2
1-2 years	4	7.7
2– 3years	15	28.9
4-6 years	9	17.3
7-9 years	8	15.4
10 years and above	6	11.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **4.4 Objective Two: Recidivists perception on Prison rehabilitation Programs**

This section discusses the perceptions of the recidivist as regards the rehabilitation measures they receive including rehabilitation programmes taken, choice of training programme and level or qualification acquired under the programme. The section also discusses whether the recidivists will receive certificates at the end of their imprisonment.

##### **4.4.1 Penal Rehabilitation programmes**

The respondents indicated that the rehabilitation programmes they had undertaken during previous imprisonment were psychological counseling (92.3%), vocational training (84.6%), life skills training (71.1%) and formal education (51.9%). These results can be attributed to the need for prisoners to have good mental health, relationship skills and reliable sources of livelihood. A smaller number of prisoners require formal education programmes since majority of them are imprisoned while already holding primary and secondary education. Rehabilitation programmes offer prisoners with the means for economic independence, skills and education to reintegrate into society. The expectation is that the skills will enable them to avoid recidivism and secure employment (Muasya, 2013). But released prisoners may go back to crime due to financial constraints, housing and social challenges they face.

**Table 4.9 Rehabilitation programmes in prison**

Rehabilitation programmes	Yes	No	Total	
			N	Percent
Psychological counseling	92.3	7.7	52	100.0
Vocational training	84.6	15.4	52	100.0
Life skills training	71.1	28.9	52	100.0
Education	51.9	48.1	52	100.0

**4.4.2 Selection of Rehabilitation programmes**

Table 4.10 shows that a majority of respondents 53.9% indicated that prison officers selected the rehabilitation programmes they undertook during their previous imprisonment. This was followed by those who observed that it was prisoners themselves 21.1% and mentors 25%. These results may be attributed to prison officers managing the programmes and by the lack of professional staff including psychologists and vocational trainers.

**Table 4.10 Selection of the Rehabilitation Programmes**

Person who selected programme	Frequency	Percent
Prison officers	28	53.9
Prisoners	11	21.1
Mentors	13	25.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**4.4.3 Respondents' Level of qualification**

Results in Table 4.11 shows that a large number of respondents 42.3% indicated that they had acquired a primary level of qualification followed by secondary 32.7% and tertiary 25%. These results show that prisoners gained advanced qualifications in vocational programmes and formal education through trade tests and KCPE or KCSE. All the respondents also indicated that they had received the certificates and qualifications while

in prison. It can therefore be deduced that long term prisoners undertake trade tests in vocational programmes and national examination for formal education. Offenders serving long term sentence are supposed to undergo various training in industrial trades and sit for trade tests so as to obtain official vocational qualifications. The programmes likely aim at increasing the female recidivists' education or skills level for success in life once released (Ross & Richard, 2009). Based on reception by society upon release, some female recidivists may be able to secure employment in line with the acquired skills. However, a majority of female recidivists may not find employment likely due to stigmatization and lack of support for funding.

**Table 4.11: Qualifications of respondents**

<b>Qualifications</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Primary	22	42.3
Secondary	17	32.7
Tertiary	13	25.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **4.5 Objective Three: Effect of Respondents' Education Programmes on Recidivism**

This section discusses the effect of respondents' education programmes on the problem of recidivism. It looks at the relevance of the education programmes offered in prison in relation to life upon release, and utility of the education programmes in preventing recidivism among female criminals. The section also discusses the levels of education programmes offered in prison.

##### **4.5.1 Relevance of the Education Programme**

The responses of the respondents on the relevance of the education programmes offered in prison in relation to life upon release are shown in Table 4.12. A number of respondents 42.3% indicated that formal education was strongly relevant in relation to life upon release. Only 25% respondents indicated that formal education was not relevant in relation to life upon release. These results suggest an above average result on the relevance of education programmes in relation to life upon release. Education may have a

significant relevance to life upon release since it prepares female recidivists positively. It is well known that education provides literacy and numeracy abilities which may impact on increased chances of employment or self-employment after release. This likely follows from positive influence on recidivists' discipline, confidence and stability (Mohammed & Mohamed, 2014).

**Table 4.12 Relevance of Education programmes**

Programme	Strongly relevant	Relevant	Not relevant	Total	
				N	Percent
<b>Formal education</b>	<b>42.3%</b>	<b>32.7%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **4.5.2 Utility of Formal Education Programmes**

A majority of the respondents 76.1% and 28.9% indicated that education qualifications they received while in prison were very useful and useful respectively in their lives and with their families. These results are shown in Table 4.13. Providing education to female recidivists improves their lives through the experiences of discipline, instilling confidence and stability. Education likely has positive impacts on female recidivists' physical and mental wellbeing, contribute to their literacy which may improve their employment prospects and enlightens them against recidivism. Education may therefore empower female recidivists with awareness on family, social and financial issues to take care of their families (Ellison, Szifris, Horan & Fox, 2016).

**Table 4.13 Utility of Education programmes**

Programme	Very useful	Useful	Total	
			N	Percent
<b>Formal education</b>	<b>76.1%</b>	<b>28.9%</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

A young medium term prisoner indicated the following on the utility of the education programmes:

*“The education programmes enable prisoners to gain literacy through primary and secondary education”.*

A middle aged prisoner indicated the following on utility of the education programmes:

*“The education programmes that we are attending are quite effective and can even improve if the challenges are adequately addressed. These programmes have played a positive role in our lives through literacy and preparing us for employment opportunities”.*

A prisoner serving in long term section indicated the following on benefits of education programmes:

*“The programmes made us not to be idle”.*

Short term prisoner indicated the following on whether the education programmes are appropriate:

*“The rehabilitation programmes have helped me change to a positive mindset bringing hope to me and my family”.*

Senior prison officer education section made the following observation on the utility of education programmes:

*“The education programmes that we offer to the inmates improve their employment prospects through impartation of knowledge and confidence to them”.*

A prison officer from short term section made the following comment:

*“Prisoners who successfully complete their educational programmes earn academic certificates which give them opportunity to access legitimate modes of livelihood”.*

From the above comments, it can be observed that educational programmes enable prisoners to gain literacy, prevent idleness and instill a positive mindset. In this way, the programmes may assist prisoners to avoid reoffending, modify their behavior and enable them gain education which prepares them for employment opportunities.

#### **4.5.3 Popularity of Educational programme**

When respondents were asked to indicate educational levels which were popularly pursued by prisoners, a majority of the respondents 67.3% indicated that secondary level qualifications were popular. The rest of the respondents 32.7% indicated that primary level qualifications were popular in prison. These results are presented in Table 4.14 and show that prisoners pursue secondary and primary education due to the need to gain

KCPE and KCSE qualifications. The risk of female recidivism may be attributed to the higher number of offenders with lower educational achievement (Olson *et al*, 2015). Low educational standards are of great concern as many female recidivists may lack literacy skills among other basic fundamentals of education (Mohamed & Mohamed, 2015). Lack of literacy skills may reduce chances for female recidivists to qualify for employment opportunities.

**Table 4.14: Level of Education**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Secondary	35	67.3
Primary	17	32.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **4.6 Objective Four: Effect of Vocational Training Programmes on Recidivism**

This section discusses the types of vocational training programmes obtained by female recidivists while in prison. It also comprises of the relevance of vocational training offered in prison in relation to life upon release and the influence of vocational training programmes on recidivism at Lang’ata Women Maximum Security Prison. The section also discusses utility of vocational training in preventing recidivism among female criminals.

##### **4.6.1 Types of Vocational Training programmes**

More respondents 25.0% had participated in the hair dressing programme followed by dress making 19.2% and beauty and manicure 17.3%. The rest of the respondents indicated that they had participated in cooking and hospitality 15.4%, decorating 11.5% and agricultural training 11.5%. These results are presented in Table 4.15 and show that skills that offer direct services to clients are preferred due to demand that exists in the society. Vocational training may enable some female recidivists to access employment opportunities or become self-employed which motivates them to change (Mohammed & Mohamed, 2014). Apart from giving offenders organization skills, vocational training

may therefore enable female recidivists to participate actively in positive socioeconomic engagements (Ellison *et al*, 2016).

**Table 4.15: Types of Vocational Training programmes**

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Hair dressing	13	25.0
Dress making	10	19.2
Beauty and manicure	9	17.3
Cooking and hospitality	8	15.4
Decorating	6	11.5
Agricultural training	6	11.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **4.6.2 Relevance of Vocational Training programmes**

The responses from the respondents on the relevance of the vocational training programmes offered in prison in relation to life upon release are shown in Table 4.16. Over half of the respondents 53.9% indicated that vocational training was strongly relevant in relation to life upon release. A correspondingly large number of respondents 40.3% also indicated that vocational training was relevant in relation to life upon release. Only a few respondents 5.8% indicated that vocational training was not relevant in relation to life upon release. These results can be attributed to employment opportunities and organizational skills that vocational training provides to female recidivists (Mohammed & Mohamed, 2014). Vocational training also imparts female recidivists with technical skills enabling them to derive a source of income from employment. Being able to earn income brings financial independence leading to reduction in crime and recidivism (Mohammed & Mohamed, 2014).

**Table 4.16 Relevance of Vocational programmes**

Programme	Strongly relevant	Relevant	Not relevant	Total	
				N	Percent
<b>Vocational training</b>	<b>53.9%</b>	<b>40.3%</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 4.6.3 Utility of the Vocational Training Programmes

An overwhelming number of respondents 92.3% indicated that the vocational training they received while in prison were very useful in sustaining them and their families as shown in Table 4.17. The goal of vocational training is to equip prisoners with useful skills to be used after completion of their sentences (Muasya, 2013). Useful skills obtained from vocational training provide certification and may enable access to both employment and self-employment opportunities (Mohammed & Mohamed, 2014). Vocational training may also reduce recidivism by providing technical, communication and organizational skills (Mohammed & Mohamed, 2014).

**Table 4.17 Utility of Vocational programmes**

Programme	Very useful	Useful	Total	
			N	Percent
<b>Vocational training</b>	<b>92.3%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

A middle aged prisoner indicated the following on the utility of the vocational training programmes:

*“The programmes will equip me with skills to fit in the society and also gain employment”.*

A long serving prisoner indicated the following on utility of vocational training:

*“I am interested in the programmes because the certificates will enable me to gain employment”.*

Short section prisoner indicated the following on improvement of their situation as a result of the vocational training programmes:

*“Through improved self-reliance, we have hope to become respectable members of the society.”*

A 35years old prisoner indicated the following on her experiences with the dressmaking programme:

*“The dress making programme keeps me busy not to think of crime”.*

Long serving prisoner made the following observation:

*“The learning facilities including equipment, classes and workshops are not adequate to accommodate all prisoners. There is need for government to improve the facilities for the rehabilitation programmes”.*

Officer in charge of Long term Section made the following observation on how the capacity of the institution affects vocational training:

*“Our prison is currently holding more prisoners than it is supposed to hold and this has made the facilities to become inadequate”*



From the above comments, it can be concluded that vocational programmes are likely to assist prisoners to avoid reoffending, modify their behavior and enable them gain skills for employment and self-employment opportunities. These may enable them to attain self-reliance and fit in the society. Skills including dressmaking, hair dressing, and beauty and manicure assist female recidivists to be self-employed and fit in society.

#### **4.7 Objective Five: Effect of Life Skills Training and Psycho-social Services Programmes on Recidivism**

This section discusses the types of life skills training programmes and psycho-social services at Langata Women Maximum Security Prison. It also discusses the relevance of life skills training offered in prison in relation to life upon release and the influence of life skills training programmes and psycho-social services at Lang'ata Women Maximum Security Prison. The section also discusses utility of life skills training in preventing recidivism among female criminals.

##### **4.7.1 Life Skills Training and Psycho-Social programmes**

A large number of respondents 23.1% indicated that they had gone through conflict resolution and anger management training followed by financial literacy and job search skills 19.2%. Other respondents indicated that they had undergone psychological problems, dysfunctional cognitive processes and maladaptive behaviors 17.3% and parenting 15.4%. The rest of the respondents went through counselling on terminal diseases and substance abuse 11.5%, spiritual courses 7.7% and self-esteem training 5.8%. These results are shown in Table 4.18 and show that life skills training and psychosocial services may assist the prisoners by changing aspects regarded as contributing to criminal behavior. These include attitudes, cognitive processes, personality, mental health, social relationships and unemployment (Wilson *et al*, 2005).

**Table 4.18: Types of Life Skills and Psychosocial Training Programmes**

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Conflict resolution and anger management	12	23.1
Financial literacy and job search skills	10	19.2
Psychological problems, dysfunctional cognitive processes and maladaptive behaviors	9	17.3
Parenting	8	15.4
Counselling on terminal diseases and substance abuse	6	11.5
Spiritual courses	4	7.7
Self-esteem training	3	5.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **4.7.2 Relevance of Life Skills Training and Psycho-Social programmes**

The responses from the respondents on the relevance of the life skills training and psycho-social services programmes offered in prison in relation to life upon release are shown in Table 4.19. Almost half of the respondents 44.2% indicated that life skills and psycho-social services were very relevant in reducing recidivism among female recidivists. Life skills training alleviate unemployment and economic hardships through job search skills and training in financial literacy. Psycho-social services improve the mental, physical and social well-being of prisoners. Psycho-social services enable female recidivists to avoid substance abuse and violence and attain psychological wellness. Almost the same number of respondents 40.3% also indicated that life skills training and psycho-social services programmes were relevant in relation to life upon release. A small number of respondents 15.5% indicated that life skills training and psycho-social services programmes were not relevant in relation to reducing female recidivism.

These results can be attributed to life skills and psychosocial services addressing challenges faced by female offenders including substance abuse, violence and

unemployment (Herbig & Hesselink, 2016). Training in financial literacy, conflict resolution, psychological wellness and job search skills may reduce recidivism upon release (Davis *et al*, 2013). Life skills training programmes improve the mental, physical and social well-being of prisoners (Ellison *et al*, 2016). These programs may also reduce violence within facilities and reduce recidivism rates upon release (Davis *et al*, 2013). These programs have been linked to improvement of character, rehabilitation and reintegration into society (Kamau, 2010).

**Table 4.19 Relevance of Life Skills/Psychosocial programmes**

Programme	Strongly relevant	Relevant	Not relevant	Total	
				N	Percent
<b>Life Skills training</b>	<b>44.2%</b>	<b>40.3%</b>	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Psychosocial training</b>	<b>44.2%</b>	<b>40.3%</b>	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.7.3 Utility of Life Skills Training Programmes

A majority of the respondents 84.6% indicated that life skills training and psychosocial services they received while in prison greatly impacted the lives of female recidivists especially with their families and society because they gained skills that enabled them to relate well as shown in Table 4.20. Life skills training and psychosocial services is likely to enlighten female recidivists about financial literacy, parenting, conflict resolution, and job search skills (Wilson *et al*, 2005). Life skills training and psychosocial services may equip female recidivists with knowledge about diseases such as HIV/AIDS and cancer while guiding offenders through spiritual courses, substance abuse treatment, anger management and self-esteem training (Ngozwana, 2017).

**Table 4.20 Utility of Life Skills Training programmes**

Programme	Very useful	Useful	Total	
			N	Percent
<b>Life skills training</b>	<b>84.6%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Psycho-Social training</b>	<b>76.4</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

A prisoner serving long term indicated the following on improvement of their situation as a result of the life skills training and psycho-social services programmes:

*“The programmes have enabled many of us to change our behavior and improve our lives. Through improved behavior, we have hope to become respectable members of the society.”*

A prisoner serving medium term indicated the following on benefits of the programmes:

*“These programmes have made me a better person and I can interact with other people. These programmes have also assisted us very much like, counseling makes us to know ourselves and how to deal with challenges”.*

Middle age prisoner indicated the following on benefits of the programmes:

*“The programmes will equip me with skills for employment and self-employment And fit in the society. The programmes enable us to handle stigma and also gain employment”.*

When asked to state what motivates them to participate in the programmes, a prisoner made the following comment:

*“I gain knowledge and learn from my mentors who are the prison officers”.*

It can be concluded from the comments above that life skills training and psychosocial services programmes assist in behavior change and personality improvement. The programmes also assist prisoners in social interaction, employment achievement and in overcoming challenges and stigma.

It can be concluded that life skills training and psychosocial services programmes are likely to improve the lives of most of the female recidivists by transforming their lives and assisting them to lead a positive and constructive life upon release. Counseling may assist to create positive emotions for prisoners. The programmes may ensure that a prisoner receives adequate treatment and be less likely to recidivate, give resources and means to succeed in society and creates full awareness and readiness for transition back into society.

#### ***4.8 Ways of improving the rehabilitation measures***

The results show that the respondents made suggestions for improving the rehabilitation programmes which included qualified staff and better training tools.

A long term prisoner made the following suggestions for improving the rehabilitation programmes:

*“More qualified staff, workshops and a good counsellor should be provided so that the programmes can run smoothly”*

Senior prison officer in charge of welfare made the following suggestions for improving the rehabilitation programmes:

*“The staffs need more training in their areas of rehabilitation and handling prisoners. The staff should also be motivated to address low moral and burn out”.*

Prison officer in charge of short term section made the following comment on what should be done to improve the level of rehabilitation programmes for prisoners:

*“There should be involvement of all stakeholders on the programmes, involvement of prisoners on issues concerning them, adequate provision of resources, and motivation of staff”.*

Senior officer sports department made the following comment on what should be done to improve the level of rehabilitation programmes for prisoners:

*“The aftercare process should be improved to ensure the prisoners make it even after the rehabilitation process”.*

Senior prison officer in charge of medium term section made the following comment:

*“The prison needs to add more resources to the programmes offered and also equip the staff with skills. The government should employ psychologists to handle the psychological issues”*

Prison officer from welfare department made the following on government involvement to improve the programmes:

*“The government should give women fund or other low interest loans so that they engage in projects like poultry rearing. The government should also assist prisoners to secure employment”.*

Short term section prisoner made the following on government involvement to improve the programmes:

*“The health facility should be improved by increasing the doctors and nurses”.*

A prisoner serving life sentence stated the following on improving the programmes:

*“We should be allowed to participate in appropriate external events including seminars and conferences”.*

It can be concluded that the prisons require more qualified staff and vocational instructors, more tools and equipment and increased funding on the programmes. Suggestions from the prisoners are to be considered while efforts to motivate staff are important.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

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

#### **5.1 Summary of Findings**

The findings were made in light of objectives of the study and found that most of the respondents were involved in low income economic activities and earned an average monthly income of below Kshs 2,000. The highest proportion (50%) was in prison for petty offences and had committed crimes due to poverty. The most useful rehabilitation programmes in order of importance were: vocational training, counseling and psychosocial services followed by life skills training and formal education. Secondary qualifications (KCSE); hair dressing and dressmaking; conflict resolution and anger management training and counselling for psychological problems were more popular among the rehabilitation programmes.

##### **5.1.1 Socio-demographic characteristics**

The majority of female recidivists (82.7%) had reached at least secondary school and primary school. They were also involved in low income economic activities including small businesses, casual work and domestic house help work. In fact a large number of the respondents (42.3%) earned an average monthly income of below Kshs 2,000 followed by Kshs 2,000 – 7,999. Fifty percent of them were serving short term imprisonment sentences for petty offences and had been imprisoned two times before the current sentence. The main reasons for committing crimes are cited as poverty and anger.

##### **5.1.2 Perceptions on Prison rehabilitation measures**

The study revealed that the rehabilitation programmes undertaken by most prisoners during previous imprisonment were psychological counseling, followed by vocational training and life skills training. These programmes were selected by prison officers, followed by mentors and prisoners. Majority of them (42.3%) had acquired primary level qualifications followed by secondary qualifications in the programmes. According to the respondents, the most relevant rehabilitation programmes were vocational training followed by counseling, psychosocial services and life skills training.

### **5.1.3 Effect of Inmate Formal Education Programmes on Recidivism**

The study found that formal education was very relevant in relation to life upon release and very useful because through the learned skills and knowledge, they are able to either get employment from potential employers or engage in self-employment which gives them a means of living to sustain them and families. The study found that secondary level qualifications were likely to be more popular than primary level qualification; and that educational programmes may assist prisoners to gain literacy, to have a positive mindset and to modify their behaviors in order to avoid re-offending.

### **5.1.4 Effect of Vocational training Programmes on Recidivism**

The study found that vocational training was strongly relevant in relation to life upon release and very useful in sustaining ex-convicts and their families. In fact the type of vocational training programme which were mainly preferred by prisoners were hair dressing, dress making, beauty, manicure, cooking and hospitality Courses. Thus, vocational training programmes may assist prisoners to avoid reoffending, modify behaviour, gain skills for employment opportunities, attain self-reliance and fit in the society.

### **5.1.5 Effect of Life Skills training Programmes on Recidivism**

The study found that life skills and psychosocial services programmes were very relevant in relation to a prisoner's life upon release. The study also established that life skills training and psychosocial services female recidivists received while in prison were very useful to their lives with their families and society. The study found that life skills and psychosocial programmes most preferred were conflict resolution and anger management training followed by financial literacy and job search skills. The other preferred programmes were counseling for psychological problems, dysfunctional cognitive processes and maladaptive behaviours and parenting skills. As such therefore, life skills training and psycho-social services may assist prisoners to lead a positive and constructive life through behavior change, employment achievement and overcoming challenges and stigma.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

From the above findings, it can be concluded that poverty and anger are likely to be the main causes of female recidivism. Potential for offering employment followed by psychological and physical wellbeing were likely to be the main reasons for choice of the rehabilitation programmes by the prison officers. The rehabilitation programmes were found to likely have a positive impact in reducing recidivism among female respondents through provision of employment and psycho-social wellbeing. However, failure by the society to accept some female recidivists back into the community and to offer them new opportunities for employment may result in further recidivism.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

From the above findings and conclusion, the study suggests the following recommendations:

### **5.3.1 Policy Recommendations**

- i. The Department of Probation and After care Services should be empowered so as to enable them to extend start-up funds and soft loans to female ex-convicts, as an inducement to pursue legitimate modes of livelihoods and as a means of winning them from the pursuit of criminal enterprises.
- ii. The Department of Correctional Services should be empowered through provision of adequate resources, namely, funds, trained manpower, rehabilitation equipment and Community outreach Infrastructure, so as to be able to discharge its rehabilitation function completely and to reach out to ex-convicts and After Care Providers within the respective Communities.
- iii. Penal institutions should enroll Prisoners into formal educational programs at the start of their sentences, so as to be able to complete the education program before completion of their sentences. This will earn them academic certificates, thus improving their chances of accessing gainful employments and/or other legitimate sources of livelihood.
- iv. Relevant stake holders should provide female ex-convicts with start-up funds, working tools and marketing avenues for their products and services. By so doing,



- they will be boosting their sources of income, thus discouraging them from re-offending.
- v. Penal institutions should recruit Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Social Workers and Counselors, so as to provide life skills training to female prisoners, since training in the respective specializations, will motivate female recidivists to cultivate a positive attitude and behaviour towards fellow humans and life in general.

### **5.3.2 Recommendations for Further Research**

- 1) This study based its investigations in one, out of 108 Kenyan Prisons. Therefore, a broader study involving more Penal Institutions and Recidivists is recommended, in order to elicit more reliable and generalizable findings.
- 2) Penologists should generate and disseminate Benchmarking and Case study results of reformed female ex-convicts, so as to motivate other Penal Institutions to borrow and implement their best practices.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Letter of Introduction

Walter Ogembo,  
University of Nairobi  
Department of Sociology & Social Work  
P. O. Box 30197  
Nairobi

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

**Re: Exploring the relationship between female recidivism and prison rehabilitation at Lang'ata Women Maximum Security Prison**

I am a Post Graduate student at the University of Nairobi, Department of Sociology and Social Work. I am conducting a final research project on the relationship between female recidivism and prison rehabilitation at Lang'ata Women Maximum Security Prison.

You have been carefully selected to form part of this study. I am kindly requesting you to respond to the questionnaire attached as honestly as possible. The questionnaire is meant for academic purposes only and the response given will be treated with utmost confidentiality. The interview will take about Twenty minutes.

I look forward to your honest participation.

Yours faithfully,

Walter Ogembo

**Appendix II: Questionnaire for female Prisoners at Langata Women Maximum Security Prison**

**I. Background Information**

1. Number .....
2. Age
  - 16 – 25 years [ ]
  - 26 -35 years [ ]
  - 36-45 years [ ]
  - 46-55 years [ ]
  - Above 55 years [ ]
3. Marital status
  - Single [ ]
  - Married [ ]
  - Separated [ ]
  - Divorced [ ]
  - Others (specify)..... [ ]
4. Home County .....
5. Religion
  - Catholic [ ]
  - Protestant [ ]
  - Islam [ ]
  - Other.....[ ]

**II. Socio-demographic characteristics of female recidivist**

6. Academic qualifications
  - None [ ]
  - Adult literacy [ ]
  - Primary [ ]
  - Secondary Education [ ]
  - Tertiary [ ]

- College Diploma/Certificate [ ]
- Bachelors Degree [ ]
- Masters Degree [ ]
7. Profession
- Housekeeper [ ]
- Business person [ ]
- Unemployed [ ]
- Other .....[ ]
9. What was your average monthly income before imprisonment?
- Below 2,000 [ ]
- 2,000 – 7,999 [ ]
- 8,000 – 13,999 [ ]
- 14,000 – 19,999 [ ]
- 20,000 – 25,999 [ ]
- 26,000 – 31,999 [ ]
- 32,000 < [ ]
10. Type of prisoner
- Long term prisoner [ ]
- Medium term prisoner [ ]
- Short term prisoner [ ]
11. Rank
- Trustee [ ]
- Stage Four [ ]
- Stage Three [ ]
- Stage Two [ ]
- Other .....[ ]
12. Please state the offence for which you are currently imprisoned
- Petty crime [ ]
- Medium [ ]
- Serious crime [ ]
- Others.....[ ]

13. How many times have you been imprisoned apart from the current sentence?

Two times [ ]

Three times [ ]

Four times [ ]

Five and over [ ]

14. What were your reasons for committing these crimes?

Poverty [ ]

Unemployment [ ]

Anger [ ]

Other.....[ 5 ]

15. What is the total duration of the current prison sentence?

1-11 months [ ]

1 year – 3 years [ ]

4 years – 6 years [ ]

7 years – 9 years [ ]

10 years and above [ ]

Life sentence [ ]

Death sentence [ ]

16. How long have you been imprisoned for the term?

1-11 months [ ]

1 year – 3 years [ ]

4 years – 6 years [ ]

7 years – 9 years [ ]

10 years and above [ ]

**III. Perceptions of female recidivist on the prison rehabilitation**

17. Did you undertake any rehabilitation programme while in prison? Please indicate.

Formal Education [ ]



- Vocational Training [ ]
- Life skills [ ]
- Any other (specify) [ ]
- None [ ]

18. Who chose the training programme for you, selected in 17 above?

- Mentors [ ]
- Prison officer [ ]
- Self [ ]
- Others.....[ ]

19. Please give the level or qualification acquired under the rehabilitation programme selected in 18 above.

- Tertiary [ ]
- Secondary [ ]
- Primary [ ]
- College [ ]

20. Did you receive the certificate or qualification while in prison?

- 1. Yes [ ]
- 2. No [ ]

21. Please indicate the relevance of the rehabilitation programmes offered in prison in relation to life upon release (Tick appropriately).

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Strongly relevant</b>	<b>Relevant</b>	<b>Not relevant</b>	<b>Strongly not relevant</b>
	1	2	3	4
Formal Education				
Vocational Training				
Life skills				

22. What do you think the Government could do to help women avoid getting into trouble with the law?.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

**IV. Effect of Inmate Education at Lang’ata Women Maximum Security Prison**

**On recidivism**

23. Did you participate in the education programme offered in prison?  
 1. Yes [ ]  
 2. No [ ]
24. If yes to 23 above, could you say that the certificate or qualification you received from the education programme in prison has assisted to sustain yourself and/or your family?  
 1. Yes [ ]  
 2. No [ ]
25. Based on your knowledge and/or experience, how effective is formal education as a rehabilitation programme offered in prisons on reducing recidivism among female offenders? (Tick appropriately)  
 (1) Not useful [ ] (2) Moderately useful [ ]  
 (3) Useful [ ] (4) Very useful [ ]
26. What is your perception of the effectiveness of formal education in preventing recidivism among female offenders?.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

27. How do formal education programmes offered in prisons benefit female recidivists?.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

28. What motivates you to participate in the formal education programmes offered in prisons?.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

29. In your opinion, do you think the formal education programmes were appropriate? Please explain.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

30. Please rate the prison conditions in regard to the aspects listed in the table below (Tick appropriately)

	Excellent 1	Good 2	Moderate 3	Poor 4	Very poor 5
Accommodation					
Food					
Learning facilities					
Observation of inmates' rights					
Health matters					

31. Did the conditions mentioned in the table above influence your performance in formal education programme offered in prison? Please explain.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

32. Which are the underlying obstacles to formal education programmes at Lang’ata Women’s Prison? .....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

33. In what ways can formal education programmes at Lang’ata Women Prison be improved?.....

.....  
.....  
.....

**V. Influence of Vocational Training on Female Recidivism at Lang’ata Women Maximum Security Prison**

34. Did you participate in the vocational training programme offered in prison?

- 1. Yes [ ]
- 2. No [ ]

35. If yes to 34 above, could you say that the certificate or qualification you received from the vocational training programme in prison has assisted to sustain yourself and/or your family?

- 1. Yes [ ]
- 2. No [ ]



41. Did the conditions mentioned in Question 30 influence your performance in the vocational training programmes offered in prison? Please explain

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

42. Which are the underlying obstacles to vocational training programmes at Lang’ata Women’s Prison? .....

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.....  
.....

43. In what ways can vocational training programmes at Lang’ata Women Prison be improved?.....

.....  
.....  
.....

**V. Influence of Life Skills Training on Recidivism by Female Inmates at Lang’ata Women Maximum Security Prison**

44. Did you participate in the life skills training programme offered in prison?

- 1. Yes [ ]
- 2. No [ ]

45. If yes in 44 above, could you say that the certificate or qualification you received from the life skills training programme in prison has assisted to sustain yourself and/or your family?

- 1. Yes [ ]
- 2. No [ ]

46. Based on your knowledge and/or experience, how effective are life skills training as a rehabilitation programme offered in prisons on reducing recidivism among female offenders? (Tick appropriately)

Not useful [ ]                      Moderately useful [ ]  
Useful [ ]                              Very useful [ ]

47. What is your perception of the effectiveness of life skills training in preventing recidivism among female recidivists?.....

.....  
.....  
.....

48. How do life skills training programmes offered in prisons benefit female recidivists?.....

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49. What motivates you to participate in the life skills training programmes offered in prisons?.....

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50. In your opinion, do you think the life skills training programmes were appropriate? Please explain.....

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51 Did the conditions mentioned in Question 30 influence your performance in the life skills training programmes offered in prison? Please explain.....

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52. Which are the underlying obstacles to life skills training programmes at Lang’ata Women’s Prison? .....

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53. In what ways can life skills training programmes at Lang’ata Women Prison be improved?.....

.....  
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.....  
.....  
.....

Thank you for your cooperation



### **Appendix III: Interview Guide for Key Informants (Prison warders)**

My name is Walter Ogembo, an M.A. student from University of Nairobi, Department of Sociology. This questionnaire is aimed at collecting information on the relationship between female recidivism and prison rehabilitation at Lang'ata Women Maximum Security Prison. The information you give will be treated with outmost confidentiality.

1. Which are the most common offences for which female recidivists are imprisoned?
2. What are the reasons for female recidivists committing these crimes?
3. Which is the frequent number of times for which female recidivists are imprisoned?
4. How relevant are the rehabilitation programmes offered in prison in relation to life upon release of female recidivists?
5. How are the rehabilitation programmes offered in prisons useful in preventing recidivism among female recidivists?
6. How does the rehabilitation measures offered in prisons benefit female recidivists?
7. Which underlying obstacles face the rehabilitation measures used at Lang'ata Women Maximum Security Prison and how can they be improved?
8. What do you think the Government could do to help women avoid getting into troublewith the law?

Thank you for your cooperation