

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**  
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**AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

**INSECURITY IN NAIROBI: A CASE OF STREET CHILDREN IN**  
**NAIROBI CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT**

**BY**

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**DECLARATION**

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

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this project to my husband Sammy Kimathi and my children Maria and Ruth who gave me moral support during my studies.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The situation of street children in Nairobi in particular is of great concern to the government of Kenya mainly due to the socio-economic impact it has on the residents, businesses, property owners and individuals in the town and the government in terms of investments by local and foreign investors.

The main study objectives were to determine the criminal activities that street children commit and their effects on the economy, to establish the socio-economic factors that contribute to the criminal behavior among street children and also to assess how street children relate to the law enforcement agencies, the public and the business community. The study examines the most common types of crimes committed by street children, the relationship between street children and security agencies, and how their criminal behaviour affect the country's economic growth. It also examines contributing factors that influence children to run from their homes to the streets. Stratified random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were employed to identify respondents to identify respondents.

The data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected by administering structured questionnaires to a sample drawn from business people, individuals, property owners and security workers in Nairobi. Secondary data was obtained from policy abstracts, government reports and annual reports from relevant ministries.

The study is aimed at providing recommendations to help policy makers in addressing the problem of street children by taking up prevention and control measures and addressing the detrimental effects the street children phenomenon has on the economy of the country.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS**

CBD	Central Business District
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlement
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
PIDS	Philippines Institute for Development Studies
CRC	Convention for the Rights of the Child
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the study**

UNICEF (2002), estimates that there are approximately 100 million street children worldwide and the number constantly growing. It is likely that the numbers are increasing as the global population grows as urbanization continues apace (UNICEF, 2005: 40-41). There are up to 40 million street children in Latin America, and at least 18 million in India (<http://www.oneworld.org/guides/streetchildren/>). Many studies have determined that street children are most often boys aged 10 to 14, with increasingly younger children being affected (Amnesty International, 1999). Many girls live on the streets as well, although smaller numbers are reported due to their being more “useful” in the home, taking care of younger siblings and cooking (Beasley, Rob. “On the Streets,” Amnesty Magazine. April 1999). Girls also have a greater vulnerability to trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation or other forms of child labor.

Homelessness is largely an urban phenomenon, yet children are homeless and living on the streets in every region of the world from developing countries to the most affluent countries. Latin America and India, for example, are known for their large populations of street children (Beasley, Rob. “On the Streets,” Amnesty Magazine. April 1999), despite the significant efforts of some governments and non-governmental organizations. Failing economies and falling currencies in parts of Asia force the poorest families onto the street, often leaving children abandoned and homeless. Unstable political transitions, such as the end of Communism in Eastern Europe, caused unprecedented numbers of street children due to inadequate social security for the poor and those formerly State supported. Children often experience the effects of political, economic, and social crises within their countries more severely than adults, and many lack the adequate institutional support to address their special needs. Eventually, they end up on the streets.

In 1996, the United States had 5.5 million children living in extreme poverty, approximately one million of whom were on the streets (Alston Philip “hardship in the midst of plenty” the progress

of Nations 1998). Poor children in the United States are poorer than children in most Western industrialized countries, since the United States has less generous social programs, the widest gap between rich and poor, and high numbers of poor immigrant and unwanted teen mothers (US. Poor are among world's poorest, New York Times August 11th 1999). The poverty and social conditions many American children face lead to large numbers of homeless and street children. The problem of street children hence is not limited only to the Third World. This is because the reasons for this phenomenon are not just economical; it is a rather complex issue that urges to become a pandemic problem for many governments in the World. Among the most often given reasons by children are; child abuse, neglect, peer pressure, sensation-seeking, other brothers and sisters.

There are more than 1.5 million street children and about 70,000 of them in Manila alone (KASAMA Vol. 19 No. 3). The large number of Filipino children living on the streets threatens the Philippine's ability to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (UNICEF & PIDS, 2010). The plight of street children in Thailand has also been called "alarming" ("Meeting Targets, Addressing Needs," 1991). The situation has been attributed to rapid urbanization and economic crises. In India, street children are victims of family violence, including physical and sexual abuse (Panicker, 1993).

In Africa, local authorities are increasingly confronted with a rising number of street children and all too often do not quite know how to deal with this growing problem (Dzikus & Ochola 2006). There was an estimated 10 million children in Africa without families, mostly in towns as "street children" (UNICEF, 2004). The number of street children in Africa continues to increase as a result of many factors such as sweeping changes in the social fabric, rapid urbanization, poverty, rapid population growth and increasing disparities in wealth. In addition, in the last two decades, Africa has experienced unprecedented level of crisis ranging from such natural disasters such as famine resulting from drought to ethno-religious wars, wars of attrition and the devastating impacts of HIV/AIDS that have added a quantum leap in the number of street children in Africa estimated currently to be in the range of 40 million (UNICEF 2007). The AIDS epidemic and civil wars in Africa have caused a surge in the number of street children as a result of the abandonment of AIDS orphans or fatalities due to armed conflict.

The number of street children has also increased in places experiencing armed conflict, like Freetown (Sierra Leone) and Monrovia (Liberia) where parents or caretakers were killed, the economy disrupted and community ties disrupted (Fisher & Nasar, 1992). According to Geismar, and Wood (1986) poverty is also causing an increasing number of street children on the streets. In some instances, Geismar and Wood noted that it is parents or guardians who send the children to work on the streets to support their parents and others are forced on the streets to find food and shelter which is not forthcoming from their families. The increase in the number of street children is also due to child abuse both at home or at work, peer pressure, sensation seeking and also due to the fact that some of their brothers and sisters are already in the streets (Kierkus, & Baer, 2002).

In Kenya, street children are a by-product of rapid globalization, structural adjustment programs, and increasing poverty and urbanization (Nab Kishore et al, 2005). Kenya being a developing country is faced with this major challenge of street children, including social problems, political and economic instability that encourage tribal clashes, conflict, violence like the 2007/8 post-election violence (Bulcha, M. 1988). The Kenya Government estimates the number of street persons to approximately 300,000 out of a population of over 40 million people. A study commissioned by the Consortium of Street Children (CSC, 2001) reported that there are over 50,000 street children in Nairobi, and the government estimated that their numbers increased at a rate of 10 % per year. In 2001 the estimates indicated that 300,000 children live and work on the streets in Kenya, with over 50% of them concentrated in and around Nairobi. It was estimated in 2007 that there were 250,000- 300,000 children living and working on the streets across Kenya with, with more than 60,000 of them in Nairobi.

The initiatives to rehabilitate street children have been undertaken in varying degrees by organizations such as NGOs, religious institutions, voluntary agencies, and to limited extent agencies of the central or local governments. In particular, NGOs have been at the forefront in initiating the most innovative approaches addressing the street children problem. However, most of the initiatives are only remedial, and provide services such as food, clothing and medical care. Indeed, some initiatives to rehabilitate street children have become fashionable and a tool for increasing institutional publicity, which make it easy to solicit funds (Dzikus & Ochola 1996).

e.g. A Global Initiative on out-of-school-children (UNICEF, January, 2014) ((All children in school) which seeks to see that all children access education in South Asia Regional Study covering India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri-Lanka. A Street Child Care and Welfare Initiative (NGO) in Nigeria that rescues, nurtures and empowers street children in the country).

In Egypt, the main strategy that was designed for street children is the “National Strategy for the Protection, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Street children” launched by the National Council for childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) in 2003. The Strategy adopted five goals: Changing attitudes of the society towards street children; collecting and analyzing comprehensive data on street children; providing qualified and specialized cadres able to deal with street children's problems with new positive attitudes; mobilizing national resources for funding the programs for the protection and rehabilitation of street children; and attracting children away from the street through the elimination of the circumstances pushing them there and building their capacity for reintegration within society.

Community participation and involvement have played a major role in a holistic approach in rehabilitating street children. Street work is the first entry point to rehabilitation, where street workers develop contact and rapport with the children. The next step is to promote community-based rescue centres, where street children are provided with food, clothing, informal education, medical treatment and counselling. These centres function as filters for further referral of children to specialized programmes of NGOs. The programmes range from education, sponsorship, vocational training to programmes for the disabled and HIV-affected. Community-based human settlement improvements in slums and squatter settlements have the greatest potential for preventing potential street children and re-integrating them into their neighbourhoods. So far, the role of shelter has not received much attention in street child rehabilitation (Dzikus & Ochola, 1996).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The street children phenomenon has persisted despite of the initiatives by government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), these children live unhealthy and often dangerous life that leave them deprived of their basic needs for protection, guidance, supervision and exposes them

to different forms of exploitation and abuse (Jonnathan Mtonga, 2011). Once on the streets, children face infinite challenges, among them violence perpetuated by older boys, members of the public and the police. Besides, most of the programmes run by both the government and non-governmental agencies lack adequate funds and equipment which limit their success. Furthermore, children in institutions close to the city easily walk back to the streets adding to the problem. In other instances, children on the streets use institutions near the city centre as drop-in centres. (Jonnathan Mtonga, 2011).

Street children depend on each other to meet their material needs such as food and clothing. They also support each other emotionally and look after one another. Under institutional care, all the basic necessities for the children are provided but strict rules in the institutions can be a hindrance to achieving success in removing street children from the streets. Most of them feel very restricted by the rules in the institutions due to lack of freedom they were previously enjoying in the streets hence return to the streets.

Street children are known to form gangs which pose as security threat to the city of Nairobi hence affecting economy through negative impacts on tourism, foreign investment and lower productivity of the work-force (Kanji, 1993). Although they are relatively harmless as young children, as they grow into adults they are likely to constitute a major source of crime (Kanji, 1996). Therefore there is need to find out how the insecurity they pose is likely to affect businesses, property, investment and also the business community. In addition, it is also important to understand the factors that influence street children to commit criminal activities in Nairobi.

### **1.2.1 Key Research Questions**

The study sought to answer the following research questions

- i. Which areas of the Nairobi CDB are crimes concentrated?
- ii. What factors influence children in the streets?
- iii. What types of crimes do these street children commit?
- iv. How does the public respond to their criminal behavior?

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The overall objective of this study was to investigate the conduct of street children to insecurity within the Nairobi Central Business District.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

This study was guided by the following specific objectives;

The study's specific objectives were:

- i. To determine the criminal activities which street children commit and their effects on the economy,
- ii. To establish the socio-economic factors that contribute to the criminal behavior among street children,
- iii. To assess how street children relate to the law enforcement agencies, the public and the business community.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

In the recent past, crime, particularly by street children have become so common in the country and as such, is one of the major social problems in Kenya. This is despite the fact that the Government spends huge sums of money and resources in the hope of ensuring that its citizens are secure as they carry out their businesses.

The criminal activities that street children commit affect the economic growth of the country which pertain operations of businesses in Nairobi and also the challenge they pose to the pedestrians and also motorists in Nairobi. The findings of the study will be useful to policy makers. The study assessed the factors that have resulted into street children in the country and also the children's relation with the law enforcement agencies. The findings of this study would provide the government agencies and other stakeholders with valuable information that can be used in the design of effective policies and strategies to mitigate the prevalence of crime by street children in Kenya.

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

The street children phenomenon has persisted over time globally despite efforts and initiatives by governments and non-governmental agencies. Approaches towards reducing crime committed by street children must be tailored to match the situation at hand since influencing factors vary from region to region (Fisher, 1992). The study sought to identify the criminal activities that street children commit and how they affect the economy. The study would be helpful to the academicians, civil societies, students, researchers, government officials and all those interested in solving the problem of street children.

## **1.6 Definition of Terms**

### **Street Children**

Those children who the street more than their family has become their home, a situation in which there is no protection, supervision or direction from responsible adults (Inter-NGO, 1985). These are children who live on and off the streets (UNICEF, 2010). The street children sustain themselves by means of begging or engaging in petty trading and vices and criminal activities like stealing from the public, motorists, and drug trafficking as they can easily evade security agencies. These are the street children who come together for either protection, survival and also support. They share the same problems in the streets hence they group themselves into families where they help each other like brothers and sisters.

### **Security**

Security entails the ability of a country or any other institution or organization to advance their interests and objectives, to contain instability, control crime, eliminate corruption, improve the welfare, and quality of life of every citizen.

### **Crime**

This is an action or omission that constitutes an offense that may be prosecuted by the state and is punishable by law. This is action or an instance of negligence that is deemed injurious to the public welfare or morals or to the interests of the state and that is legally prohibited (Siegel, 1989). For the purpose of this study crime means the taking or attempting to take anything of

value from the care, custody or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and putting the victim in fear.

### **Social environment**

Refers to the immediate social setting in which people live or in which something happens or develops. It includes the culture that the individual was educated or lives in, and the people and institutions with whom they interact.

### **Broken family**

These are families where children reside in single-parent households or any other type of household where one biological parent is not present.

### **Employment**

This refers to an occupation in which a person earns a living. Employment is an agreement between an employee and an employer that an employee will provide certain services on the job and in the employer's designated workplace to facilitate the accomplishment of the employer's organization's goals and mission and in return for compensation. The agreement can be verbal, implied or an official employment contract.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

The chapter reviewed crime in Kenya, factors that influence individuals to engage in criminal activities and empirical studies conducted internationally and in Kenya on the street children criminal behaviour. The chapter further discussed the theoretical framework and study variables.

#### **2.1 Crime in Kenya**

According to Onyango (1989), crime in Kenya manifests itself in different ways: individuals, people's homes, businesses and banks among others have been attacked by armed men and robbed of everything and in many cases the owners left dead. The value of property robbed usually runs to billions of shillings. Cars have been robbed at gun point. There are also instances when robbers do not injure their victims but they, however, threaten to injure them if they do not submit to their demands. Mika, (2003) noted that as a country develops; there is an increase in cases of crime, or threat of violence, to secure money or other material objects. The basic reasons for the increase in armed crime lie within the development process itself. The assertion implies that when development is achieved, crime is likely to decrease correspondingly. Some element that exists within the developmental process is responsible for these robberies.

Thus, the developmental process directly or indirectly contributes to armed crime and criminality by disrupting the traditional mechanisms of social control. Because of urbanisation and industrialization, Kenyans are increasingly facing socio-economic alienation in urban and peri-urban areas, urban unemployment especially by the young people and failure to harness the productivity of the poor by the government (Mika, 2003). These challenges directly or indirectly predisposes the urban youth to crime.

Crime is a major factor that defines the investment climate or the enabling environment for private businesses to thrive. A favorable investment climate is crucial for private sector growth, as it reduces the cost of doing business. A good investment climate attracts private investment by assuring business security. Security of both property and individuals influences the investment

climate. Crime and insecurity in Nairobi and in Kenya as a whole has been on the increase over the years (Economic Survey 2004). The perceived insecurity in Kenya has also created a negative image of the country within the international community. In the 1990s, Nairobi was rated by the United Nations (UN) as one of the most dangerous capital cities and was downgraded from class B to C in the UN security classification. Security risk affects performance of firms through various channels. Firms for example loose sales or face low turnover due to reduced demand/market scope, which is partly attributed to limited hours of doing business. Firms also loose sales due to inability to distribute products. Security risk also affects investment decisions, e.g. most firms are reluctant to undertake heavy and new investments especially if the investment decision is irreversible. Other firms opt to postpone making investment decisions due to the feeling of insecurity. Insecurity also increases the cost of capital because it raises the risk-premium tagged on financial capital. New entrants into the market may also be discouraged. Therefore, insecurity slows down business growth and deters employment creation and poverty reduction.

### **2.1.1 Personal Attributes of Robbers**

According to the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR), 90% of those arrested for crime in the US in 1997 were males. Approximately 65% of the arrestees were under 25 years of age. In terms of race, blacks accounted for 57% of all crime arrests, whites 41% and other races 2% (Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), 2006). In Kenya, when it comes to rates of crime by gender and age, the situation is even more spectacular as 95% of those arrested are males and 70% of the arrestees are below 30 years of age (GoK, 2011).

Most robbers in Kenya (66 per cent) are bread winners in their families as they are married. This points to the fact that they have family obligations which compel them to engage in various criminal activities to generate income. Ordinarily, family responsibilities put pressure on family bread winners to engage in income generating initiatives that they could otherwise have not preferred to engage in if they had other legitimate alternative avenues to generate income (GoK, 2011).

Rutere, (2003) found that most of the prison inmates in Kenya had only primary level education. This depicts that majority of them have poor academic backgrounds as they had not attained secondary level or college level of education. From these findings it can be deduced that lack of good academic background motivates individuals to commit crime. The majority of the perpetrators of crime could not anticipate the consequences of their crime before involving themselves in crime owing to their poor level of education.

The majority of prison inmates, robbers included are imprisoned at their youthful age between 18 and 30 years. This can be attributed to the fact that at this age majority of youths have heavy responsibilities and have to find a way of earning a living to meet them. Unfortunately, growing financial needs coupled with limited opportunities to meet them is likely to propel the youths to engage in unlawful activities (Rutere, 2003).

### **2.1.2 Unemployment and Crime**

The World Bank (2010) estimates that 74 million people between the ages of 15-24 are unemployed, which accounts for 41 per cent of all unemployed persons. Research by World Bank (2010) suggests that unemployed youths are disproportionately more likely to be perpetrators, as well as victims of crime and violence. The growing gap between rich and poor members of society is as important as, or even more important than levels of poverty in affecting crime and violence.

Several factors account for the high youth unemployment rates in Africa, most notably low economic growth, which is manifested in low economic activity and low investment. Low economic activity entails low overall job creation. Given the sustained population growth rates, labour markets are not able to absorb all the newcomers, resulting in scarcity of jobs, which leads to more selection by education and experience; precisely the assets that young people are struggling to acquire. This makes majority of the young people to be locked out of the job market, thus, according them minimal opportunities to generate income (Iadicola, 1998).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, lack of job prospects and the likelihood of a desolate future for unemployed young people may contribute to deviant behaviour including involvement in crime as a negative coping strategy for earning a living. Furthermore, this situation could reinforce

marginalization of young people from the labour market and society at large. The rise in crime cases and other forms of crime, drug addiction and prostitution among young unemployed urban migrants is due partly to the combined effects of the lack of social networks and insufficient job opportunities (Graef, 2000).

Crime and violence are on the increase in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa among unemployed youths and adults alike (UN-HABITAT, 2004b). The combination of unemployment and availability of firearms is lethal. According to the Nairobi Youth and Crime Survey, the most common offences for which young offenders were arrested were crime, theft, assault and drug possession (UN-HABITAT, 2004b). There is no doubt that unemployment, especially among young people, is a major factor which contributes significantly to increased crime (WHO, 2004a). Often times, unemployed people are forced to find alternatives to generate income, including activities in the survival-type informal sector and, in extreme cases, crime activity. Between 1979 and 1997, much of the increase in crime and other crimes was attributed to falling wages and rising unemployment among men without college education (WHO, 2004a).

Unemployment disrupts the lives of both individuals and families. The most obvious result of job loss is financial uncertainty. Financial loss alone is a sufficient cause of family stress, but financial deprivation also generates a psychological impact. Unemployed persons report high levels of anxiety, depression and hostility (Piquero, 2001). These people who are unemployed develop feelings of hopelessness, despair, and some even reach such depths of depression and disillusionment that they may decide to commit crime.

A long spell of unemployment ruins a person's self-respect. Unemployment creates a sense of frustration, which sometimes leads to feelings of uselessness. It leaves a person apathetic to ordinary activities and duties or can even make a person ready to lend a willing ear to temptations of crime in order to regain status and a sense of purpose (Barak, 2003). However, employers are reluctant to employ people with criminal records, so the unemployment rate of those with a criminal record is higher than among those without, thus creating an incentive to return to crime if legal employment is blocked (Piquero, 2001). While crime may be seen as a survival alternative in the face of grinding poverty, there are poor communities where crime levels are low because behavior is constrained by informal social and cultural values.

### **2.1.3 Family Factors and Crime**

Parental behaviours play a strong role in shaping a child's risk of later involvement in criminality. Parental criminality appears to be strongly correlated with an increased risk of a child developing conduct problems and later criminal involvement. In explaining the origins of delinquency, criminologists have argued that in formal social controls derived from the family (for example, parental supervision, monitoring and parent-child attachment) mediate the effects of individual and structural background variables and are the most powerful predictors of juvenile delinquency (Loeber & Stouth Amer-Loeber, 1986). Poor parenting practices, such as poor parental supervision and parents' rejection of a child, are modest predictors of subsequent delinquency by the child. Children who experience severe or harsh parental practices have increased rates of conduct problems, substance abuse, depression and anxiety and violent crime in early adulthood, compared to those whose parents did not use physical punishment (Strategic Policy Brief, 2009).

Family violence and maltreatment of children have significant inter-generational effects on an individual's likelihood of becoming involved in crime. Some research suggests that maltreatment during childhood doubles an individual's probability of engaging in many types of crime. The effect of family influence appears to be greatest during the early years of a child's life and reduces as they get older, although poor parental supervision and low levels of warmth between parents and their teenage children have also been identified as contributing risk factors for future offending (Strategic Policy Brief, 2009).

Family factors influence the possibility of committing crime. The likelihood of offending is significantly correlated to individual dispositions, for example, impulsiveness, and immediate social situations, like family conditions (Loeber and Farrington, 1999). In the 20th century, significant changes in family arrangements have occurred; modern family structures vary widely and include many one-parent and homosexual households as well as extended family arrangements.

Thornberry (1987) suggests that children's attachment to their parents influences youths mostly when they are younger primarily because children, as opposed to teenagers, are monitored more closely. According to social reaction theory, society is primarily responsible for juveniles

exhibiting delinquent behaviors. Rules are set up by the members of a society, and individuals establish what is considered the norm. Violators of the norm are labeled deviant or abnormal. The ways in which society chooses to deal with violators of the norms influence whether or not juveniles exposed to the juvenile justice system will be more prone to being chronic offenders in adulthood (Mahoney, 1974).

#### **2.1.4 Physical Environmental Factors and Crime**

How might physical features influence behavior? Researchers have made several assumptions about how physical features affect both potential offenders and residents or users in a setting. Offenders often operate in a rational fashion; they prefer to commit crimes that require the least effort, provide the highest benefits, and pose the lowest risks. Researchers have applied this rational offender perspective to a range of crimes (Clarke, 1983, 1992; Clarke and Cornish, 1985). This view suggests that crimes are most likely to occur when potential offenders come into contact with a suitable crime target where the chances of detection by others are thought to be low or the criminal, if detected, will be able to exit without being identified or apprehended. In short, the crime site lacks a natural guardian. Physical environment features can influence the chances of a crime occurring. They affect potential offenders' perceptions about a possible crime site, their evaluations of the circumstances surrounding a potential crime site, and the availability and visibility of one or more natural guardians at or near a site. Offenders may decide whether or not to commit a crime in a location after they determine the following:

- How easy will it be to enter the area?
- How visible, attractive, or vulnerable do targets appear?
- What are the chances of being seen?
- If seen, will the people in the area do something about it?
- Is there a quick, direct route for leaving the location after the crime is committed?

These questions assume a rational offender perspective. The relevance of this perspective to an understanding of crime depends on a range of factors, including the type of crime and the familiarity between offender and victim or target. The offender-based perspective relates to

residents or users in a setting when it suggests potential offenders consider a setting's natural guardians. Much of the work in this area, which relies on empirically grounded models of human territorial functioning (Taylor, 1988), assumes residents or users may respond to potential offenders. The probability and type of response depends on a range of circumstances—social, cultural, and physical. Physical features may influence reactions to potential offenders by altering the chances of detecting them and by shaping the public vs. private nature of the space in question.

There is a general consensus that if the environment is planned, designed and managed appropriately, certain types of robberies can be reduced. Environmental design has formed an integral part of many crime prevention initiatives in countries such as the UK, USA, Canada, The Netherlands and Australia. Certain environments can impart a feeling of safety, while others can induce fear, even in areas where levels of crime are not high. In this regard, planning and design measures can be utilised very successfully to enhance feelings of safety in areas where people feel vulnerable (Michael, et. al 1994).

### **2.1.5 Social Environmental Factors and Crime**

The American Sociological Association (ASA) formed a study group in the 1990s in an effort to understand and examine the social causes of violence and how individuals define and perceive violence. Among the conclusions drawn were that “violence is a social behaviour that reflects long and short term socialization effects. It occurs in the context of at least two people, and it is more probable under certain social situations and conditions than others”. They also found that individual and group perceptions of violence and its seriousness are mediated by social change and by cultural and social norms about what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Different individuals and cultures therefore define violence differently (Ferguson, 2009).

Socio-cultural factors influence the strategies of behaviour and personal beliefs, values, needs, and desires a person acquires over his or her life. These have been the focus of many well known theories of crime that emphasized such things as social learning, rational choice, self-control, and social strain. They include the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and other cultural information we

learn through interactions with other people and groups—as well as from cultural artefacts such as books and movies. (Robert, 1992)

### **2.1.6 Peer Pressure and Crime**

A high proportion of adult criminals have a background of early delinquency. Theft is the most common offense by children; however, more serious property crimes are most frequently committed in later youth. The causes of such behaviour, like those of crime in general, are found in a complex of psychological, social, and economic factors. Clinical studies have uncovered emotional maladjustments, usually arising from disorganized family situations, in many delinquents. The gang, a source of much delinquency, has been a common path for adolescents, particularly in the inner cities. For many boys whose contact with adult men was relatively limited, the most readily available source of male approval was peers; and, in some areas, the few successful men who might serve as adult male role models might be known to fund their lifestyle through crime. Both factors could increase the likelihood of the boys being recruited into crime in turn (Larzelere, 2000).

It has been known for a long time that young people who associate with delinquent peers are more likely to be involved in crime (Kierkus, 2002). However, when the importance of family factors first came to be appreciated, some criminologists argued that delinquent peer influence exerted little or no influence on participation in crime. The strong association between having delinquent peers and being involved in crime was dismissed as a case of ‘birds of a feather flocking together’. However, more recent research suggests that family factors and delinquent peer influence interact in their effects on delinquency. Most studies examining the joint effect of family factors and delinquent peer influence find that family factors appear to exert little or no influence on the risk of involvement in crime in the presence of controls for delinquent peer influence. It would appear, however, that juveniles are more likely to form strong attachments with delinquent peers when parental controls or parental attachments are weak. This suggests that parental factors may be a cause of involvement in crime, association with delinquent peers being a proximate cause.

It is also thought that juveniles who mix with delinquent peers are more at risk of involvement in crime simply because, delinquents communicate deviant attitudes and values. The successful commission of many kinds of crime including crime requires a certain measure of knowledge and skill. Delinquents are a valuable source of information about various techniques and opportunities for committing and/or profiting from crime. Gang membership, in particular, often provides a valuable source of information about how to reduce the risk and increase income associated with crime (Kierkus, 2002).

Criminal behavior may be affected by peer effects that occur in the family, in school, on the street corner, in a gang, in the neighborhood, or in prison. Such peer effects may arise from any number of underlying mechanisms related to the social interactions between two individuals or a group of individuals. Similarly, exposure to peers with a greater intensity of criminal experience can reduce or reverse this stigma, thereby increasing the propensity of the individual to participate in criminal activity (Geismar, 1986).

Social learning may occur because individuals use the experiences of their peers to update their beliefs concerning the expected benefits or punishments of committing particular crimes, making individuals more or less likely to commit these crimes. Alternatively, social learning may take the form of the acquisition of crime-specific skills and knowledge, such as how to steal a car, how to disconnect a burglary alarm, or how to avoid being caught by the police. In this case, interactions with individuals who have experience committing a particular type of crime may allow an individual to acquire this knowledge more easily, thereby leading to increased activity in the corresponding crime category. Finally, access to individuals with experience in a given criminal activity might assist in the formation or expansion of an individual's criminal network. Networking of this sort is especially important in more complicated criminal activities such as robberies (Derzon, 2000).

In many instances, these peer effects have a reinforcing nature, whereby exposure to peers with a history of committing a particular crime increases the probability that an individual who has already committed the same type of crime recidivates that crime. This form of a reinforcing peer effect is positive and significant for the cases of burglary, felony drug offenses, felony weapon offenses, and felony sex offenses in our main specification, and it is positive and significant for

auto theft, grand larceny, petty larceny, misdemeanor drug offenses, and crime in alternative specifications that refine the peer measure in various ways. There is strong evidence that older individuals exert stronger peer effects than younger individuals, in part because of their more extensive criminal experience, and they exert these peer effects more intensely on younger individuals (Barak, 2003, Derzon, 2000, Geismar, 1986 and Kieerkus, 2002).

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by Strain Theory also called anomie theory that was developed by Robert Merton (1936). The theory argues that crime is as a result of the frustration and anger people experience over their inability to achieve legitimate social and financial success. This is corroborated by the fact that if a society's culture adores ownership of property and other forms of wealth, individuals with no employment or education are bound to attempt to acquire these through robbery. Strain theory does not focus directly on crime, but rather upon various acts of deviance, which may be understood to lead to criminal behavior. Merton notes that there are certain goals which are strongly emphasized by society. The society emphasizes certain means to reach those goals such as education, employment, hard work; however, not everyone has the equal access to the legitimate means to attain those goals, thus setting stage for strain.

According to Merton, there are five modes of adapting to strain caused by the restricted access to socially approved goals and means which are; conformists, innovators, ritualists, retreatists and rebellious. Not all the people who are denied access to society's goals became deviant. Rather the response, or modes of adaptation, depends on the individual's attitudes toward cultural goals and the institutional means to attain them. Conformists accept both the goals as well as the prescribed means for achieving the goal. Conformists accept, though not always achieve the goals of society and the means approved for achieving them. In a balanced or stable society this is the most common mode of social adaptation. The innovators on the other hand accept societal goals but are incapable or rejects legitimate means to achieve those goals, they thus innovate (design) their own means to get ahead. The means to get ahead may be through crime, embezzlement or other such criminal acts. Of the five social adaptations, innovation is most closely associated with criminal behavior. This condition accounts for the high rate of crime in poor areas, where access to legitimate means is severely limited. However, innovative adaptations can occur in any social

class when members perceive a lack of appropriate means to gain social success. For example, stock frauds and tax evasion schemes are carried out by the rich (Siegel, 1989).

The ritualists follow rules obsessively but abandon the goals they once believed to be within their reach. On the other hand, retreatists, refer to those who give up not only the goals but also the means. They often retreat into the world of alcoholism and drug addiction. These individuals escape into a nonproductive, non-striving lifestyle. Included in this category are the psychotics, psychoneurotic, pariahs, outcasts, drunkards and drug addicts. The final adaptation model is that of rebels who emerge when both the socially accepted goals (for the individuals create their own goals and their own means, through protest or revolutionary activity. This adaptation is typical of revolutionary, who wish to promote radical change in the existing social structure and who call for alternative lifestyles, goals and beliefs (Siegel, 1989).

One may move from one adaptation to another depending on the prevailing circumstances. Street children live under difficult conditions and these forces then to adapt to some survival adaptations. This explains why children take to the streets. They simply try to resolve conflicts and bring down social pressure exerted on them at school and also at their homes. Thus, if the government is keen on containing crime, especially within the CBD, it has to exert more effort on creation of employment opportunities targeted at the less educated bulging population of the youth. However, in adopting this theory, the researcher is not ignorant of its weaknesses including the fact that Strain theory does not focus directly on crime, but rather upon various acts of deviance, which may be understood to lead to criminal behavior).

### **2.2.1 Differential Association Theory**

According to Sutherland (1939), criminality neither stemmed from individual traits nor socio-economic position, instead it was a function of a learning process which could affect any individual in any culture. The theory has various principles. The first principle of differential association is that criminal behaviour is learned. This means that criminal behaviour is not inherent and that a person who is not trained in crime does not invent criminal behaviour. By suggesting that criminal behaviour is learned, Sutherland implied that it can be classified in the same manner as any other learned behaviour such as writing, painting or reading.

The second principle indicates that criminal behaviour is learned in interaction with other persons in a process of communication. Sutherland believed that illegal behaviour is learned actively and an individual does not become a law violator simply by living in a criminological environment. People actively participate in the process with other individuals who serve as teachers and guides to crime.

The third principle of differential association theory is that learning criminal behaviour occurs within intimate personal groups. People's contacts with their most intimate social companions such as family, friends and peers have the greatest influence on their learning of deviant behaviour including crime as the relationship with these individuals control their interpretation of everyday events.

Learning criminal behaviour includes learning the techniques of committing crime, which are sometimes complicated and learning the specific direction of motives, drives and attitudes. Since criminal behaviour is similar to other learned behaviour, it follows that the actual techniques of criminality must be acquired. For example, young robbers learn from their experienced associates the proper way to rob a business premise or even a neighbourhood.

The specific direction of motives and drives is learned from perceptions of various aspects of the legal as being favourable or unfavourable. Since the reaction to social rules and laws is not uniform across the society, people constantly come into contact with others who maintain different views on the utility of obeying the legal code. The attitude towards criminal behaviour of significant others in an individual's life influence the attitudes that the individual develops Siegel, (1989).

Another principle of differential association theory is that a person becomes a criminal when he/she perceives more favourable than unfavourable consequences to violating the law. Commenting on Sutherland's theory of differential association, Mushanga (1999) admits that a person becomes a criminal such as a robber because of an excess of definitions favourable towards violation of law, like when friends talk about committing crime over definitions unfavourable to violation of law.

To some extent, differential association theory explains crime, since crime like any other criminal behaviour is learned from interaction with others. Robbers share their experiences with intimate friends; especially their fellow inmates in prison. This influences them to become robbers once they are released.

### **2.2.2 Rational Choice Theory**

The rational choice theory adopts a utilitarian belief that man is a reasoning actor who weighs means and ends, costs and benefits, and makes a rational choice. Rational choice theory has sprung from older and more experimental collections of hypotheses surrounding what have been essentially, the empirical findings from many scientific investigations into the workings of human nature. Rational choice theory insists that crime is calculated and deliberate. All criminals are rational actors who practice conscious decision making, that simultaneously work towards gaining the maximum benefits of their present situation.

Crime therefore can be influenced by opportunity which is related to cost benefits, socio-economic status, risk of detection, situational contexts, type of offence and access to external benefits. In addition, opportunities are dependent on the individual's current surroundings and consequential factors. This theory better explains instrumental crimes rather than expressive crimes. Instrumental crimes involve planning and weighing the risks with a rational mind. An example of an instrumental crime can include: crime, tax evasion, traffic violations, drinking and driving, corporate crime, larceny and sexual assault. On the other hand, expressive crime includes crimes involving emotion and lack of rational thinking without being concerned of future consequences. Expressive crimes can include: non pre-mediated murder such as manslaughter, and assault. As a result, punishment is only effective in deterring instrumental crime rather than expressive crime since the later does not involve planning.

According to Samaha (2005), the core of rational choice theory is that a man can be presented as an actor who reasons and carefully makes choices which are largely rational by carrying out a comparison of benefits and costs as well as ends and means. Towards this end, many criminologists as well as behaviourists believe that criminals will carefully plan and execute their criminal acts in a way that minimizes the probability of their being apprehended. It is important

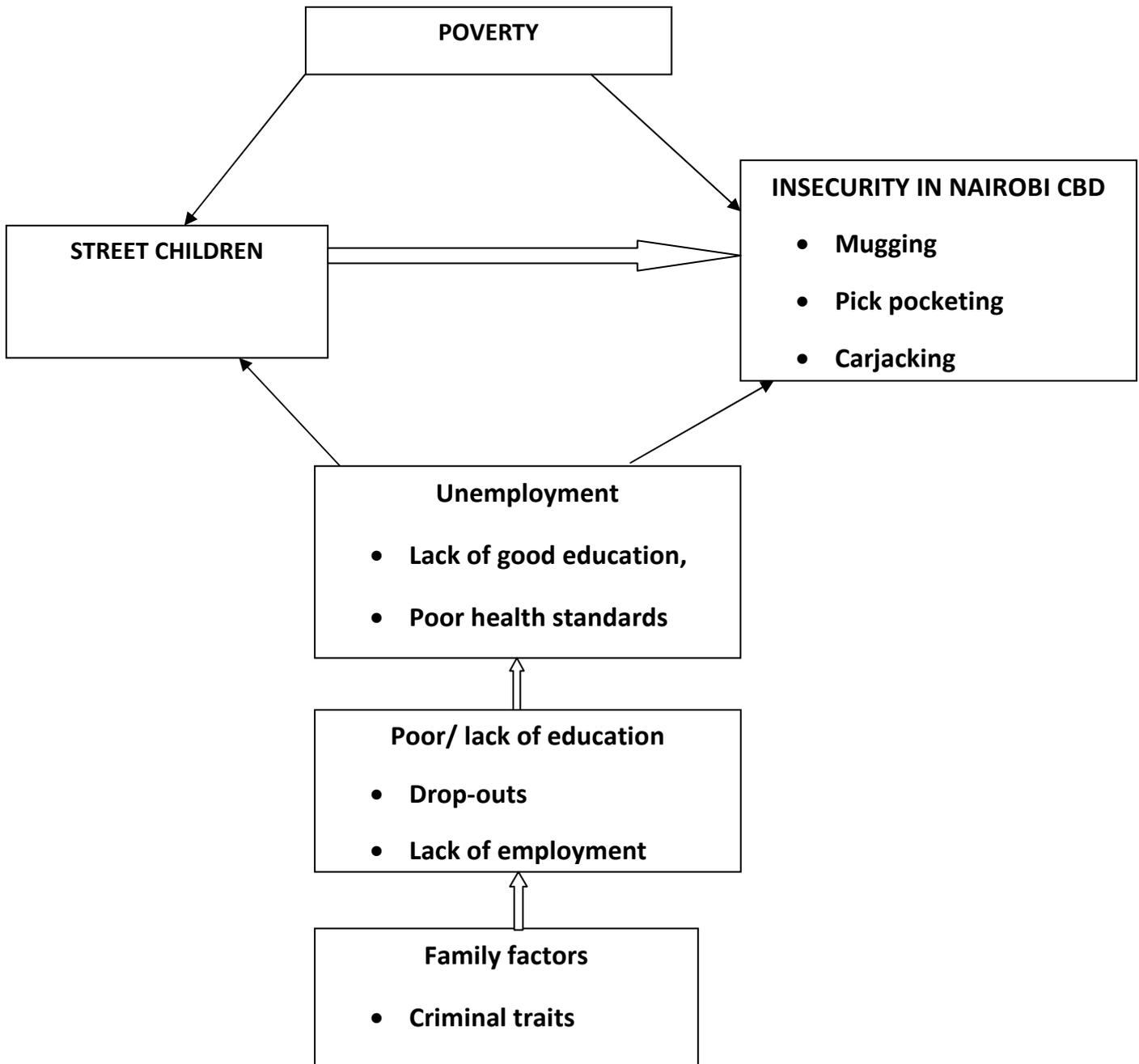
to note that over time, studies have concerned themselves with the human nature and it is as a result of these investigations as well as hypothetical collections in regard to crime and its nature that the rational choice theory has been founded.

In addition, Maahs and Holmes (2006) noted that the relevance of the rational choice theory is based on the logical consistency exhibited by the theory as well its wide scope when it comes to explaining crime causation. Ideally, rational choice theory can be used to explain almost any kind of crime. If we take crime into consideration, criminals may be motivated to engage in the same for a number of reasons including, but not in any way limited to, economic gain which may be realized when the offender sells the stolen commodities. The offender could also steal for personal gain when the property stolen is used for personal use. Further, most offenders exhibit rational choice in their planning of criminal acts. For instance, most robbers and thieves go to the scene of crime with some form of clothing designed to conceal their real identities and a means to facilitate the theft process. This is may be through carrying along a torch, forged keys (to facilitate entrance to locked buildings) as well as an assortment of weaponry to thwart any attempt to apprehend them.

### **2.3 Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework below is a diagrammatic representation of how variables are linked. An attempt to establish the relationship between independent and dependent variables was made. The dependent variables (security in the Nairobi CBD) are linked with independent variables (criminal behaviour, factors influencing criminal behaviour among street children) respectively.

**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework**



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter describes the theoretical framework and procedures that were followed in the study. It includes research design, unit of analysis and observation, target population, sampling procedure, study sample, sources of data, data collection methods, research instruments and data analysis techniques that were used in the study.

#### **3.1 Site Description**

Nairobi is the capital city of Kenya and headquarters of both Government and majority of private sector corporations. Nairobi is also the headquarters of many international organizations and foreign missions operating in Kenya and in the region. It is the largest city in Kenya, with a population of approximately 2,143,254. Nairobi Central Business District was purposively selected for this study because of its role as the commercial hub of Kenya and also because it has a high incidence of crime prevalence in the country. Nairobi town is the largest city in East Africa and it is one of the leading cities in Africa. Nairobi is the host of over a million numbers of people. Most of the people are from the rural areas that come to Nairobi/ urban area to look for employment and this has led to overcrowding and over stretching of the available resources. The study also visited Missions Mercy and Starehe Boys' Centre children's institutions. The visits were made to get first hand information from the children in the institutions on the main factors that influenced them in to the streets

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The study used a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques. Both methods of research are preferred because the researcher was able to collect in-depth data to answer questions concerning the status of the subject of study. The quantitative approach used questionnaires that enabled the researcher to collect descriptive data.

### **3.3 Target Population**

According to Kothari (2004), a target population is a well-defined set of people, services, elements, and events, group of things or households that are being investigated. Mugenda, (2003), explains that the target population should have some observable characteristics, to which the researcher intends to generalize the results of the study. This definition ensures that population of interest has common characteristics. The general population of this study consists of street children in various correctional facilities in Nairobi, city resident as well as administrators and police officers. The specific target population for this study was 320 respondents.

### **3.4 Sampling Procedures**

The selection of the study site was purposely done. Nairobi was selected because it is of the capital cities with the highest number of street children. Sampling is a process by which a relatively small number of individual objects or events are selected and analyzed in order to find out something about the entire population from which it is selected (Singleton et al, 1998). The study focused on street children in various children's institutions and programmes in Nairobi CBD to identify the factors that have influenced them to the streets. According to Babbie 1950, sampling is where one selects a sample based on one's knowledge of the population, its elements and the nature of the research. This study used stratified and purposive to select sampling units sampling that is representative of the population. Missions Mercy and Starehe Boys' Centre children's institutions, I got the required information by dividing the children into three categories according to their length of stay in the centers, i.e. less than one year, more than one year and more than two years. I interviewed 21 respondents from both institutions. In this study also, stratified random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were also employed to identify respondents and out of a population of 320 consisting of city residents, business owners, property owners and security agents, a sample of 30 per cent was taken using stratified random sampling technique which gave each item in the population an equal chance of being selected. Therefore the study sample size was 120 respondents

### 3.5 Sample Size

Type	Number
Missions Mercy and Starehe Boys' Centre children's institutions	21
Nairobi residents, business owners, property owners and security agents	120

Through stratified and purposive sampling, a sample size of 120 respondents was arrived from a population of 320 consisting of business owners, Nairobi residents, property owners and security agents. At Missions Mercy and Starehe Boys' Centre children's institutions, a total of 21 respondents was arrived at using snow ball sampling procedure.

### 3.6 Unit of Analysis

According to Bakeer, 1994, the unit of analysis is the social entity whose social characteristics are the focus of the study. The same view is held by Babbie; 1995 that is what a researcher seeks to understand. The unit of analysis can therefore be an individual or a group of people. The unit of analysis is the object about which generalizations are made based on an analysis. It is the major entity analyzed in a study. The unit of analysis in this study is the street children and Missions Mercy and Starehe Boys' Centre children's institutions.

### 3.7 Unit of Observation

The unit of observation is a basic concept in quantitative research that represents the objects that are observed and about which information is systematically collected. It is the unit described by the data that one analyzes and it is the object about which information is collected. According to Mugenda & Mugenda 2003, a unit of observation is defined as the subject, object or entity from which one measures the characteristics or obtains the data required in the research study. The unit of observation in this study was the street children in the streets of Nairobi and Missions Mercy and Starehe Boys' Centre children's institutions.

### **3.8 Data Collection Methods and Instruments**

According to Koul (1984), methods of data collection are the ways to obtain relevant qualitative and/or quantitative data or information for a particular study from the relevant sources. This study used questionnaires and key informants interviews as methods of collecting data. The researcher administered the questionnaire to the property owners, business owners and city residents who are the main respondents. The researcher also used key informant interview guide to collect data from the key informants.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

The research yielded both qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data collected consisted of words and observations which were summarized to make them more intelligible. It was then categorized into variables by summarizing patterns in the responses and therefore reducing the huge mould of data into small meaningful quantities, which enabled the researcher to identify the existing relationship and variations between dependent and independent variables of the study.

The quantitative data generated was subjected to the descriptive statistics feature in Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The data was entered into computer spread sheet and then transferred to SPSS for formal summary and analysis to generate mean and standard deviation, which was then presented using tables, frequencies and percentages. On multiple response questions, the study used Likert scale in collecting and analyzing the data whereby a scale of 5 points was used in computing. They were then presented in tables with appropriate explanations being given in prose.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents results on analysis of security in Nairobi: a case of street children in Nairobi Central Business District (CBD). The study therefore sought to establish CBD areas concentrated with criminal activities, the socio-economic (push and pull) factors that cause street children get involved in crime, to establish the criminal activities street children involve themselves in and also the reactions by the members of public to these criminal activities. The study targeted property owners, business owners and city residents who are the main respondents and also street children from two institutions.

#### 4.1 Response Rate

The study through the questionnaire and the interview guide targeted 320 respondents. While the questionnaires targeted property owners, business owners and city residents, interview guides were used to collect data from key informants who included the street children and security agents. Out of the 320 anticipated respondents to the study, the study received 108 respondents which was adequate for the purpose of this study.

#### 4.2 Background characteristics.

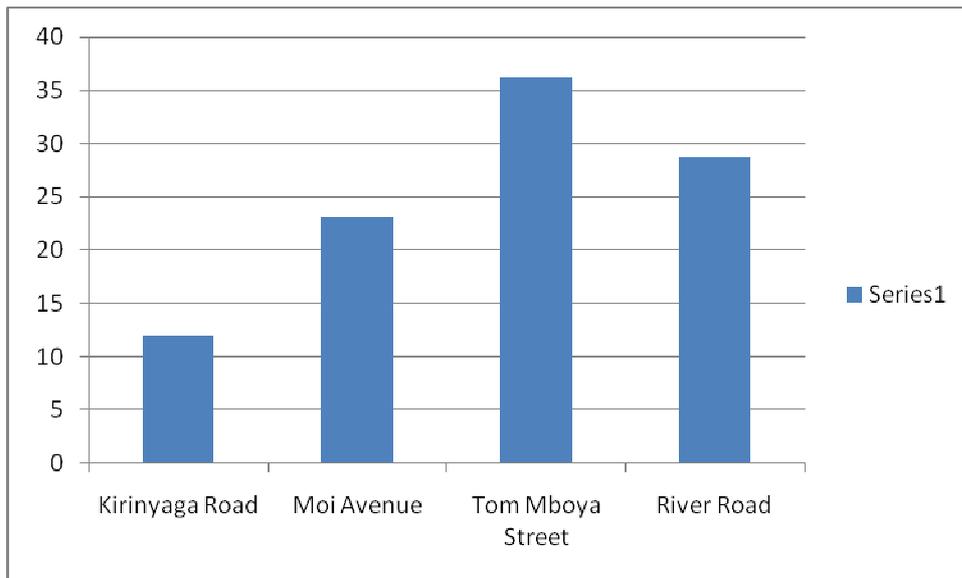
Data was collected on various characteristics of the sample including gender

**Table 4.1: Gender of the respondents**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	67	62
Female	41	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>

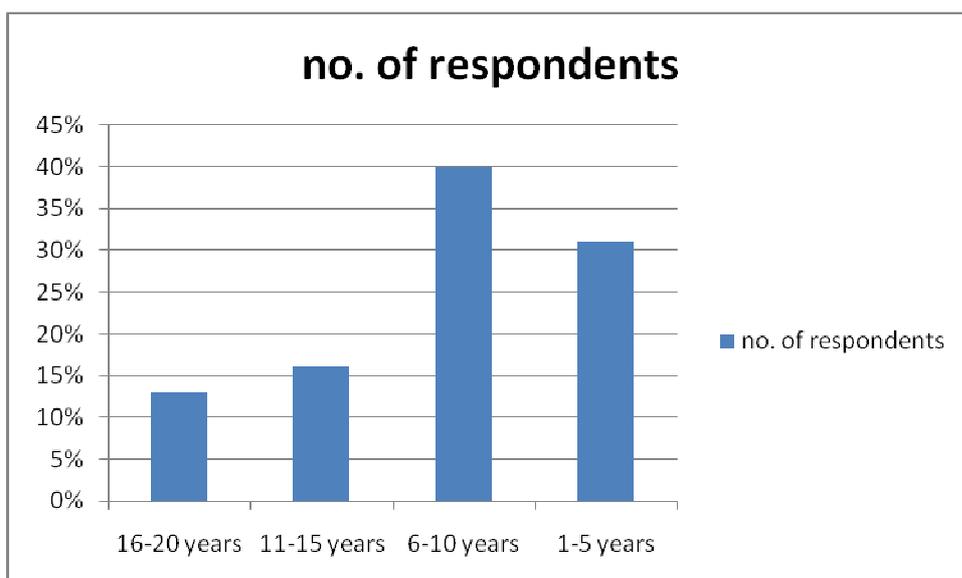
On the gender of the respondents, the study established that the 62% of respondents were males while females were 38%. It depicts therefore that the study targeted both genders equally.

**Figure 4.1: Place of work**



According to figure 4.1 above, most of the respondents work along Tom Mboya Street, River Road and Moi Avenue. In addition others work along Kirinyaga road.

**Figure 4.2: Duration of respondents' employment**



According to figure 4.2 above, most of the respondents have worked in their respective places as follows: 40% had worked for between 6-10 years, 31% had worked for between 1-5 years, 16% had worked for between 11-15 years and 13% had worked for between 16-20years. This clearly indicates that the respondents have worked long enough to know about the security problems in Nairobi especially about street children.

**Figure 4.3: No. of times crime is experienced in the last two years**

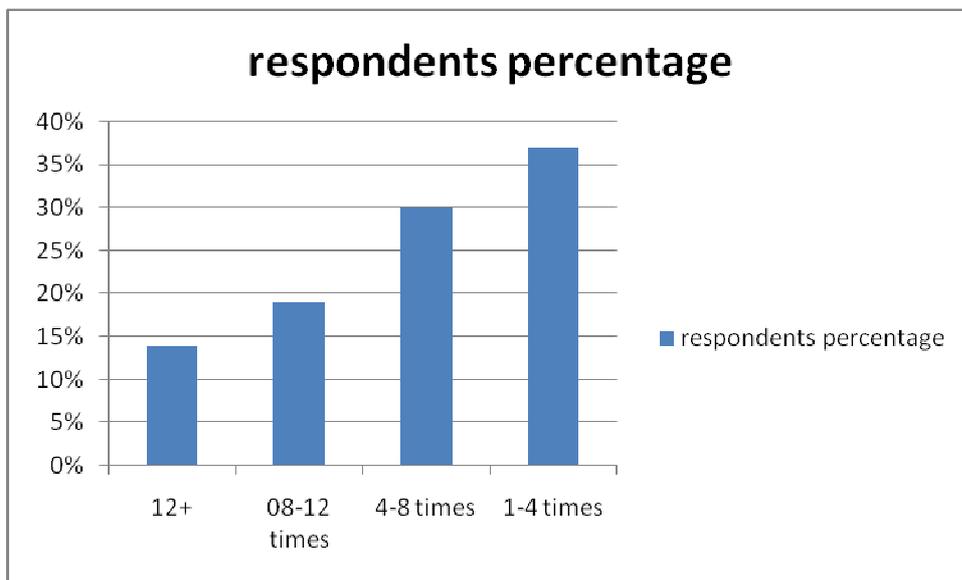


Figure 4.3 above shows that a total of 37% respondents had experienced or witnessed crime in the last two years between 1-4 times, 30% of the respondents had experienced crime between 4-8 times, 19% of the respondents had experienced crime between 8-12 times while 14% indicated more than 12 times. This illustrates the presence of street children in the streets of Nairobi.

**Figure 4. 4: Streets mostly used by street children.**

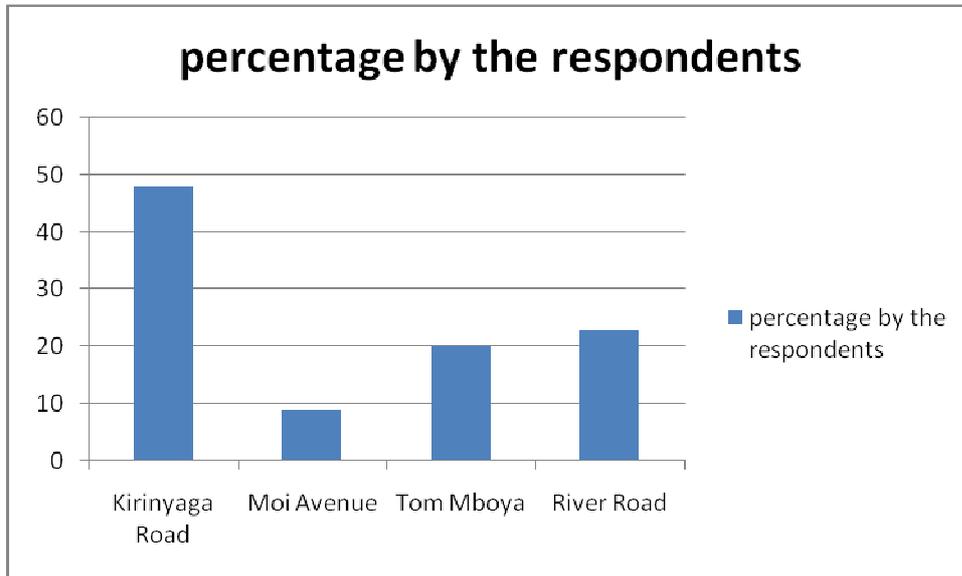
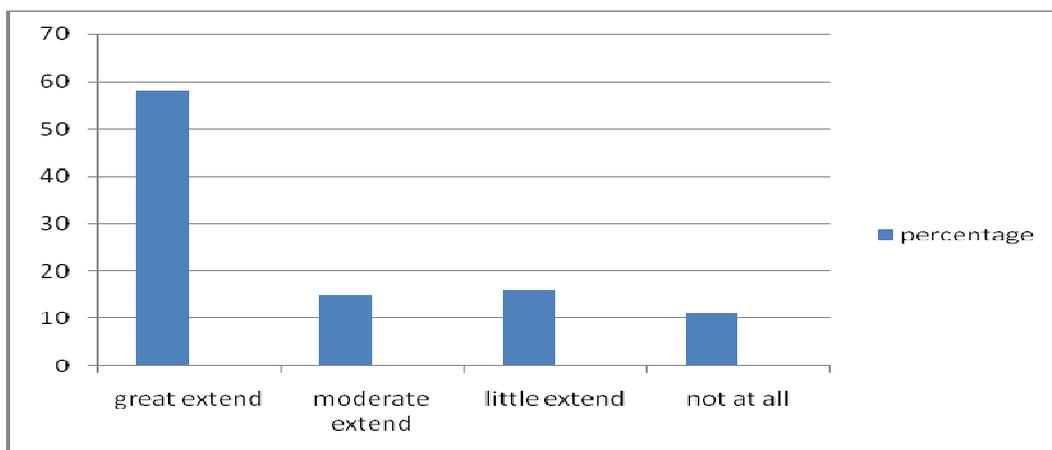


Figure 4.4 above shows that 48% of the respondents indicated that street children are mostly found along Kirinyaga road, 23% of the respondents cited River road, 20% of the respondents pointed Tom Mboya Street and 9% of the respondents referred to Moi Avenue. This illustrates that most of the crime by street children is committed along Kirinyaga road. This could be because Kirinyaga road is perceived to be far from law enforcement agents by the street children.

### **4.3 Unemployment, Street Children and Criminal Activities**

The study sought to establish from the key informants the extent to which unemployment causes street children to commit crime.

**Figure 4.5: Unemployment, street children and crime**

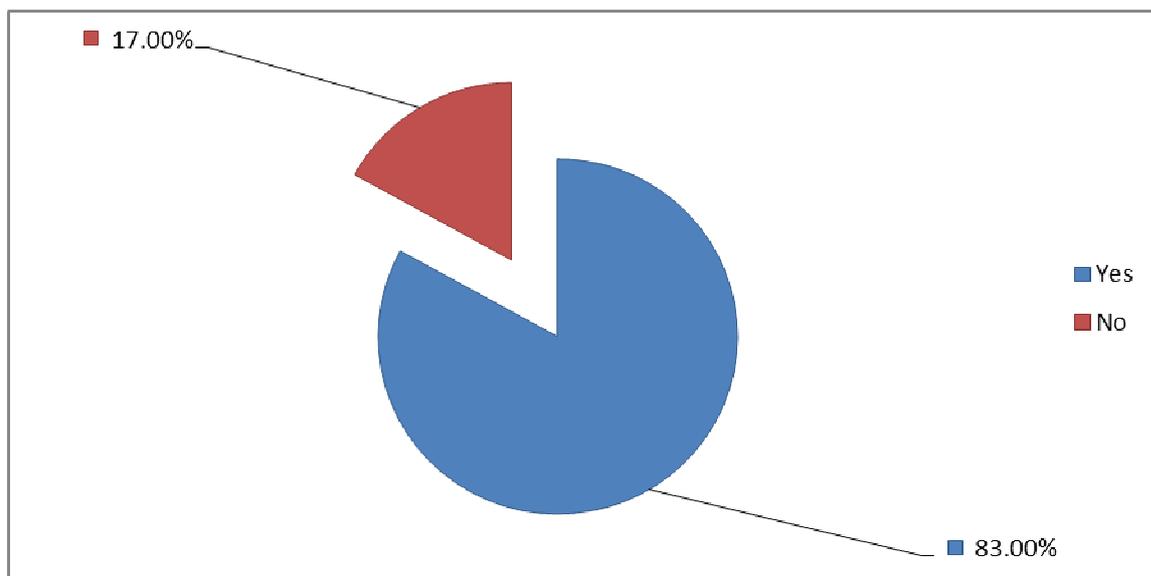


According to the results, the majority of the respondents 58 % posited that unemployment causes street children to commit crime to a great extent, 15.9 % to a little extent, 14.8 % to a moderate extent and 11.4 per cent indicated that unemployment does not cause street children to commit crime. The finding depicts that unemployment, as a factor, increases the propensity of individuals to commit crime. This finding is corroborated by the Nairobi Youth and Crime Survey in 2004, which established that the most common offences that were committed by young offenders were robbery, theft, assault and drug possession (UN-HABITAT, 2004b). There is no doubt that unemployment, especially among young people, is a major factor which contributes significantly to increase in cases of crime (WHO, 2004a).

#### 4.4 Drug Abuse and Crime

The study sought to establish the extent to which drug abuse influence street children to commit crime. The pie-chart below, an overwhelming majority of the key informants 83% who posited that drug abuse causes individuals to commit crime. Only 17% of the respondents attested that drug abuse never causes individuals to commit crime. This therefore, illustrated the existence of a structured relation between drug abuse and crime

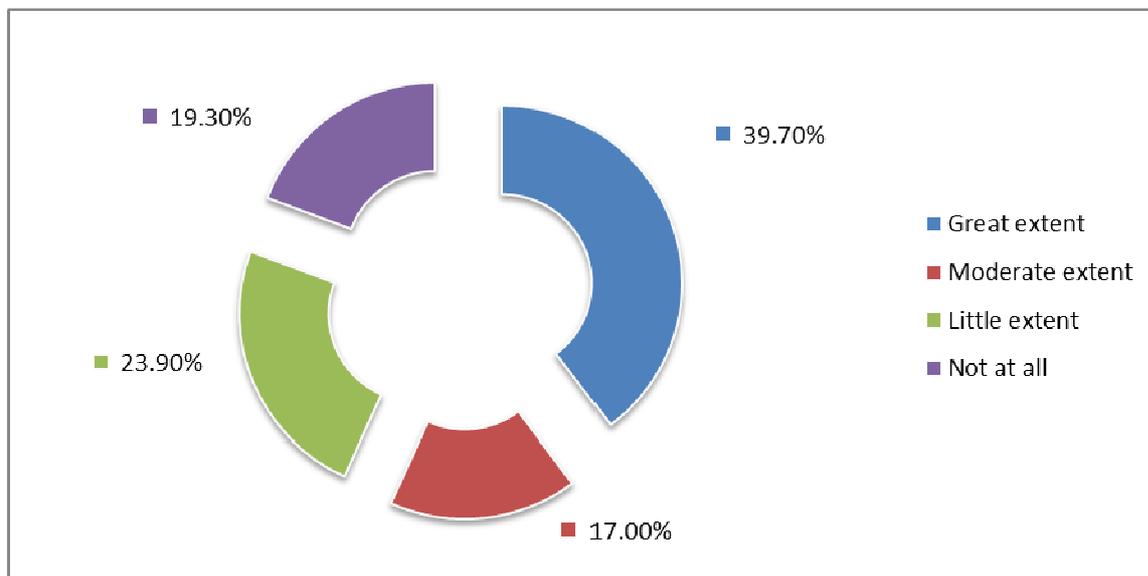
**Figure 4.6 Drug Abuse, Street Children and crime**



From the below findings, 39.7% of the respondents attested that drug abuse induces individuals to commit crime to a great extent, 23.9% to a little extent, 19.3 not at all while 17% posited that drug abuse induces individuals to commit robbery to a moderate extent. Thus the majority of the key informants interviewed (56.7 per cent) were in agreement that drug abuse led to addiction which in turn motivates individuals to commit crime as it reduced their moral conscience, thus contributing towards involvement in crime.

The findings generally illustrate that drug abuse increase the propensity to engage in crime. Dependency on illicit drugs is therefore likely to influence street children to commit more serious offenses to fund their drug addiction, as besides interfering with their reasoning capabilities, they make them to believe that they cannot be easily apprehended when they commit the crime. The findings are in line with DeMelo's, (1999) who postulated that there is a significant influence of illicit drugs on street children where those who commit crime also consume illicit drugs.

**Figure 4.7: Drug Abuse influence on Street Children and crime**

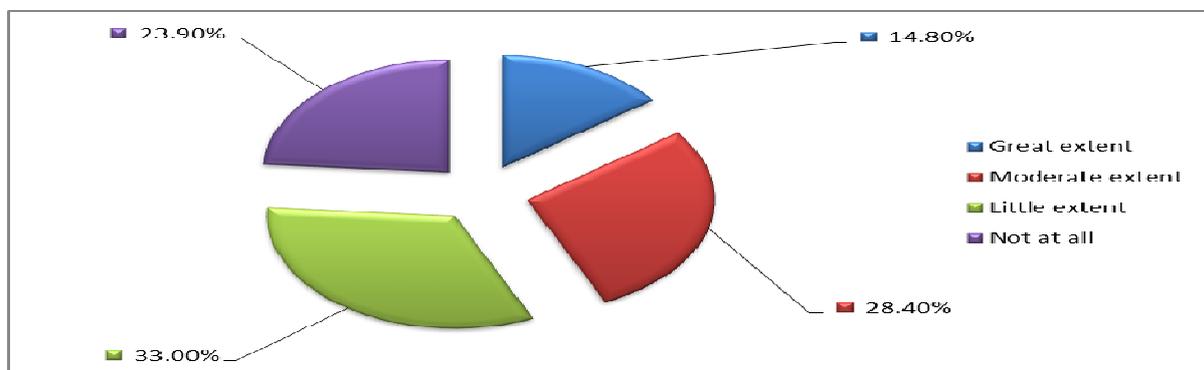


#### 4.5 Family factors

The study established that 70% of the key informants indicated that individuals who came from a family with criminological history tend to commit crime. Only 30% of the key informants

indicated that individuals who came from a family with criminological history do not involve in crime. The findings reveal that the nature of the family influenced the tendency of the individuals to commit crime whereby respondents who are involved in crime were likely to learn the behavior from their close associates in their immediate families. It is most likely that convicts acquire the habit through socialization either from parents, elders or role models in the society.

**Figure 4.8: Family factors, street children and crime**

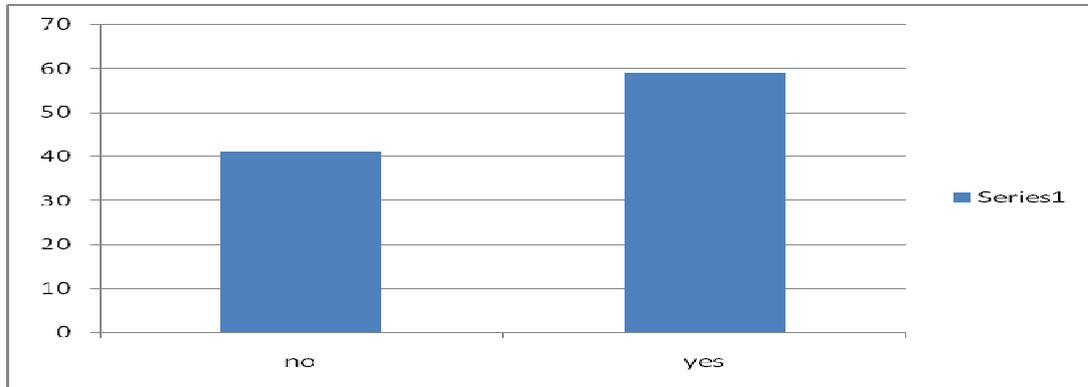


From figure 4.8, 33% of the key respondents were of the view that the family criminological history caused individuals to commit crime to a little extent, 23.9% to not at all, 28.4% to a moderate extent while 14.8% said that the family criminological history caused individuals to commit crime to a great extent. This illustrates that family criminological history encourages or predisposes individuals to commit crime to a small extent. The findings concur with Tarolla, Wagner, Rabinowitz, & Tubman, (2002) who established that in part because parents monitor and provide nurturance to children; it is thought that the loosening of bonds among family members other than the criminological history of the parents may result in more criminal involvement.

#### **4.6 Physical Environment, street children and crime**

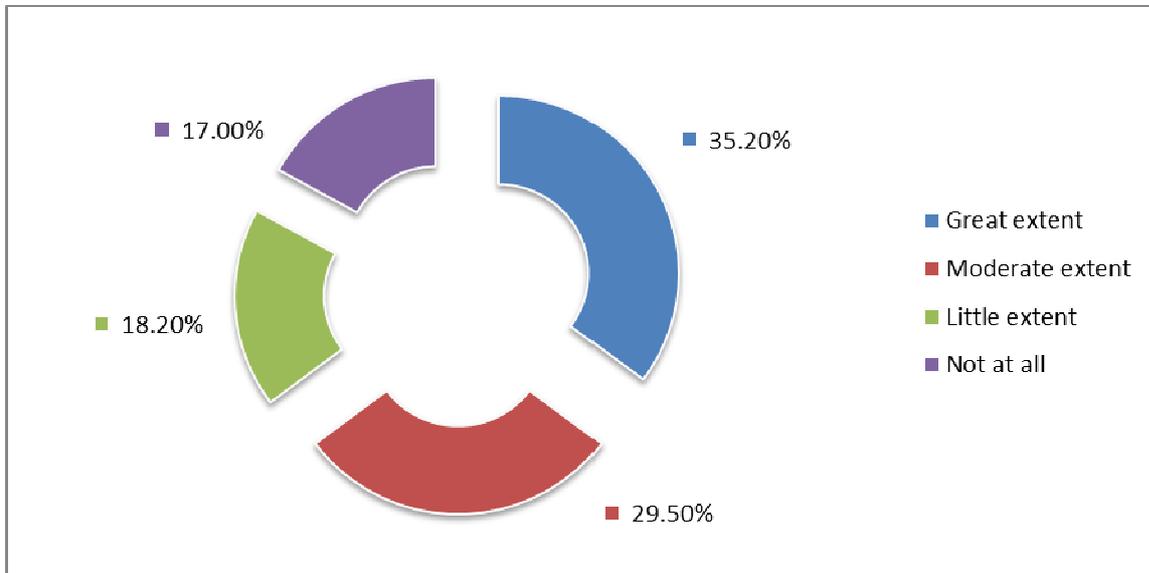
The objective of the study was also to inquire from the key response on whether physical environment influences street children to commit crime. The research inquired on the extent to which a person's physical environment predisposes him/her to commit crime.

**Figure 4.9: Physical environment influence on street children and crime**



From the figure 4.9 the majority of the respondents (59.1%) were on the view that the physical environment influences individuals to commit crime, while 40.9% of them posited that physical environment never influences one to commit crime.

**Figure 4.10 Physical Environment, street children and crime**

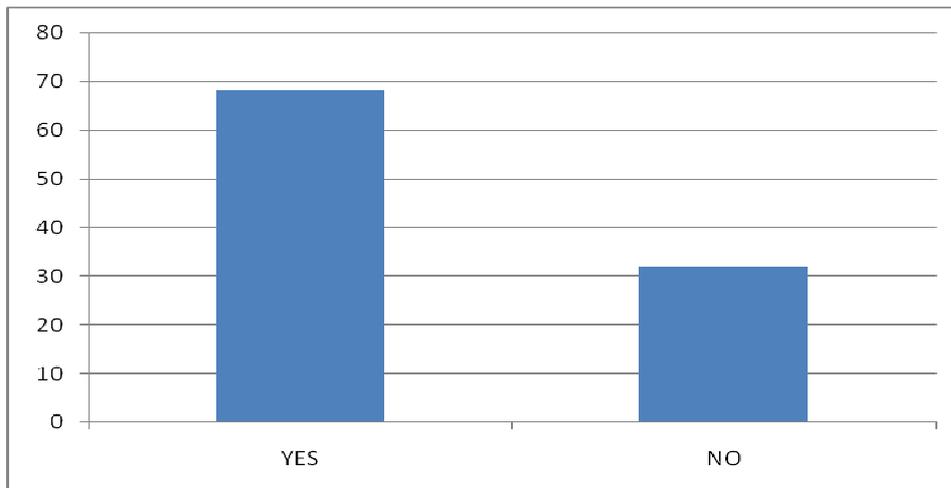


According to figure 4.13 above, 35.2% of the sample respondents indicated that physical environment influences street children to commit crime to a great extent, 29.5% to a moderate extent, 18.2% to a little extent while 17% said that the physical environment did not influence street children to commit crime at all.

#### 4.7 Social Environment and crime

The objective was to establish whether a social environment influences street children to commit crime.

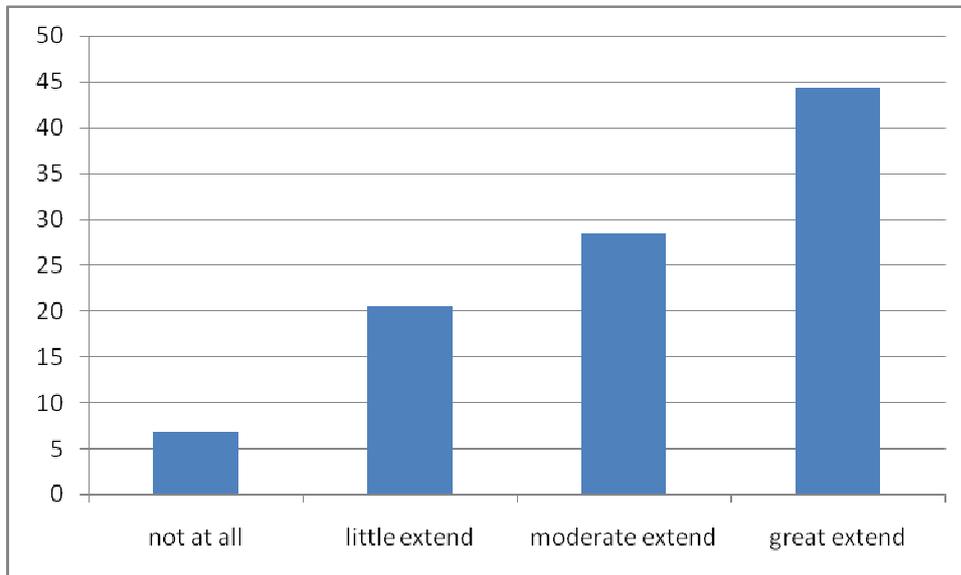
**Figure 4.11: Social environment influence on street children and crime**



From the above findings, majority 68.2% of respondents indicated that social environment influences street children to commit crime, while 31.8% posited that social environment never influences street children to commit crime. The findings therefore illustrates that the social environment contributes towards involvement in crime. Street children who commit crimes are likely to learn about it from the people they live with including their friends, peers and family members (Maahs & Holmes, 2006).

This is also corroborated by Ferguson (2009) who found out that the individual and group perceptions of crimes and its seriousness are mediated by social change and by cultural and social norms about what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Therefore different individuals and cultures define crimes differently. Similarly, DeMelo, (1999) argues that humans are social creatures and their behaviour is a product of their social environment, implying that street children learn about crime from people they interact with in the society.

**Figure 4.12: Extend of social environment on street children indulgence in crime**



From the above findings, 44.3% of the respondents indicated that social environment influences street children to commit crime to a great extent, 28.4% to a moderate extent while 20.5% posited that social environments influences street children to commit crime to a little extent. This finding illustrates that the social environment is a significant factor in influencing street children to commit crime. The finding concurs with the strain theory which stipulates that strain is not created by a sudden social change, but rather by a social structure that holds out the same goals to all its members without giving them equal means to achieve them (Robert, 2001). Strain theory therefore purports that when individuals accept the cultural goals but have no legitimate means to achieve them they tend to come up with their own means which are sometimes illegal. When the goal for instance is money or property, individuals who have no employment and education may rob to acquire these items (Robert, 2001).

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the relationship between street children on crime in Nairobi CBD.

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

The first objective of the study was the areas of the Nairobi CBD where street children are concentrated. According to the study, it was established that street children are mostly found along Kirinyaga road 23%. The other streets mentioned were River road 20%, Tom Mboya Street 20% and then along Moi Avenue 9.2%.

The second objective of the study was the socio-economic factors that contribute to the criminal behaviour of the street children. The study found out that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that unemployment is a major factor that causes street children to involve in criminal activities. It depicted that unemployment increases the propensity of individuals to commit crime.

In addition, the study established that peer pressure, drug abuse, social environment are also factors that influence street children's involvement in crime. Majority of the respondents were of the view that drug abuse causes individuals to commit crime.

Majority of the children indicated that criminological background of their families, their physical and social environment and their parents/guardian unemployment has influenced them to commit crimes so as to supplement their families' meager income. This depicted that individuals at the lower end of the socio-economic status scale are more likely to participate in crime. The respondents were in agreement with the statement that broken families contribute to future criminal activity of the children while absence of close relationships between the children and their parents influence delinquency.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The study therefore concluded that commission of crime by street children is as a result of several factors among them lack of education, unemployment and family breakdown. In addition, crime by street children poses a threat to sustainable economic development; to the quality of life and human rights as investors' consider peaceful environment for investing in any place.

For many years the government of Kenya has been struggling to address the problem of drug abuse and creation of employment for the youth. However, these efforts have not borne much fruits. There is existence of a structured relationship between drug abuse and crime by street children, where drug addicts commit crime in order to fund their drug addiction. Unemployment causes individuals to commit crime as a way of earning livelihood. Furthermore, occurrence of crime is area specific since, street children are likely to attack their victims in certain areas of the town where they cannot be easily apprehended by police. Finally, street children are likely to learn how to be criminals through socialization with the people they live together with including; friends, peers and family members. Street children can also learn about crime from past convicts. There is therefore an urgent need for stakeholder participation in the formulation of strategies, programs and plans to reduce crime by street children.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

There are several recommendations that derive from the findings of the study;

#### **Crime Prevention and Control Measures**

There is need to set up strategies on how crime can be reduced considering its adverse effects. The National Crime Research Centre (NCRC), which is a Government Agency, needs to compile data on the high number of youth aged between 10-30 years committing serious crimes in Kenya and thereafter develop approaches towards reducing it. The National Authority for Campaign against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) should urgently address the drug abuse by ensuring stiff penalties to the culprits and rehabilitation of those already addicted, since

individuals addicted to illicit drugs are likely to commit higher rates of property crime like robbery to fund their addiction.

### **Practical Measures**

The Kenyan Government through the Kazi Kwa Vijana (KKV) initiative and the newly launched Uwezo Fund (UF), (a women youth enterprise fund) should endeavour to provide funds and create more employment opportunities for the youth so as to reduce their involvement in crime, particularly robbery.

The County Governments and other stakeholders, especially the city councils and the municipal councils, should improve the physical environment of urban centres by reducing congestion to curb the occurrence of crimes due to poor planning.

### **Policy Guidelines**

The study also recommends that the government and other stakeholders should conduct regular countrywide sensitization campaign on good parenting practices in order to bring up a young generation with good morals. The Kenyan Government needs to improve and sustain free primary and secondary education since poor academic attainment makes individuals economically vulnerable and some of them use negative coping mechanism to make ends meet.

### **Further Research**

Since this study was on security in Nairobi: a case of street children in Nairobi Central Business District, the researcher suggests that; a similar study should be done on other cities and towns in the country for comparison purposes and in order to allow for generalization of the findings to a wider population and another study should be conducted on factors that influence adults to commit robbery in Kenya as the present was confined only to street children.

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## **APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STREET CHILDREN**

Kindly fill in this questionnaire, your response will be treated with confidentiality. Thank you in advance

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STREET CHILDREN**

#### **Socio-demographic profile**

1. How old are you? (list the exact number of years between 10-16) .....
2. What class are you in? .....
3. Are your parents alive and staying together:  

Yes	No....
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4. If no explain.....

#### **Knowledge, attitude and practice**

5. What do your parents do to earn a living? .....
6. What services are offered in the institution? .....
7. Why do you prefer living in the Centre as opposed to your homes?  
.....
8. When did you come to this institution? .....

**Thank you for your time and participation**

## APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE KEY INFORMANTS

### Section A:

1. Which city streets can you mostly find street children? Explain  
 a) River Road [ ] b) Tom Mboya [ ] c) Moi Avenue [ ] d) Kirinyaga road [ ]
2. What type of crimes do street children commit in the CBD? explain
3. In your own opinion how is the state of crime by street children (on the increase or declining?) explain
4. The following are some of the factors that cause street children to involve in crime? To what extent do you agree? Use a scale where 1- To a very low extent, 2- To a low extent, 3- To a moderate extent, 4- To a great extent and 5-To a very great extent (please tick appropriately).

Factors	1	2	3	4	5
Unemployment					
Drug Abuse					
Family Criminological History					
Physical environment					
Social environment					
Cultural norms, values and customs					
Peer pressure					

5. In your opinion which one of the above factors most influences street children to commit crime?

**Thank you for your time and participation**