

FAMILY ENVIRONMENTS AND DELINQUENT BEHAVIOUR:  
IMPLICATIONS FOR DELINQUENCY PREVENTION EFFORTS.

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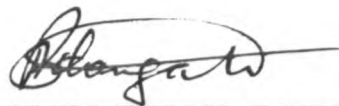
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This thesis has been submitted with  
our approval as University Supervisors.

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## A B S T R A C T

The major hypothesis tested in this study was whether a significant relationship exists between specific family environments and the level of delinquent behaviour of adolescents.

Most of the studies on Juvenile delinquent behaviour have tended to use officially termed delinquents as their respondents. By using such respondents, these studies have not drawn their samples from representative portions of the juvenile population. In order to overcome this, the present study drew its respondents from a section of the juvenile population without regard to their known or unknown delinquent behaviour tendencies.

The research design involved a survey of a sample of form 1 students selected randomly from six secondary schools in Nyeri district of Central Province of Kenya. The schools were themselves selected randomly to include three for boys and three for girls. The survey was undertaken in such a manner that its findings would add to the efforts being made to prevent adolescents in engaging in delinquent behaviour. The basic tools for data collection were a self-administered questionnaire completed by the respondents, and unstructured questions for the headteachers and staff, and available data.

The major findings of the study were that adolescents in secondary schools do engage in juvenile delinquent behaviour, and that the family environments which these children come from, as measured by family size, family stability, level of education attained by the parents, the socio-economic status of the family, the frequency of visits by absent parents, and the religious commitment of the

family, predispose these children towards juvenile delinquent behaviour.

As anticipated in the three theoretical approaches which formed the framework for this study, the process of socialization is crucial to the formation of proper and socially adjusted personalities. Inadequate socialization was found to be a major reason why these children engaged in delinquent behaviour. Those children who had engaged in a high level of delinquent behaviour came from large families, from families in which the parents had attained a low level of education, from low socio-economic status families, from families in which parents rarely visited their children, and from families which had a low level of religious commitment.

It was concluded that a relationship does exist between these family environments and the delinquent behaviour of the children. This relationship has two major implications towards juvenile delinquency prevention efforts. These are:

- (1) That there is a need to look at delinquent behaviour from a wider perspective than is presently the case. This wider perspective should include offering guidance and counselling to the family since it is the first agent of socialization. This is in view of the fact that most children engage in delinquent behaviour due to inadequate socialization. Yet, at present, treatment is only offered to the delinquent children.
- (2) That the study of delinquency should not confine itself to dealing with only officially known delinquents. It should draw samples from the entire juvenile population. This is in view of the fact that a lot of delinquency goes undetected.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This study dealt with young persons of both sexes drawn from selected Kenyan secondary schools in one district. The important aspect among these young persons, and one which was of significance to us, was the various juvenile offences which they have engaged in. These various offences have been referred to variously as juvenile delinquency, delinquent behaviour, or simply as juvenile misconduct.

Studies dealing with this phenomenon have been carried out in Kenya. (Muga, 1972; Muteti, J.K., 1983). However, these studies have had a certain uniformity in that they have dealt with known or what is termed as official delinquents. By this, we mean, that the respondents used in these studies were children who are already institutionalized and, therefore, officially recognized as delinquents.

The present study is unique in that it did not deal with officially recognized delinquents. Instead, it drew its respondents from a section of the Kenyan juvenile population without regard to their known delinquency. In this respect, we saw it as necessary to first outline the manner in which young offenders are apprehended in Kenya, and after apprehension, what procedures are followed when these offenders are taken to the Juvenile Court. We also outline the kind of treatment that might be prescribed for such offenders.

#### Apprehension And Treatment of Juvenile Offenders in Kenya

In present day States, Maintenance of Law and Order in Society falls under the jurisdiction of that individual State's Police Force. In this case, Kenya is no exception. Therefore, juvenile offenders, as individuals who breach our society's law and order, fall under the jurisdiction of the police.

However, as this maybe, problems still arise due to the fact that the police are not evenly distributed in terms of numbers throughout the country. There are more police in urban areas than there are in the rural areas.

In urban areas, the task of apprehending juvenile offenders is easily done by the police, who then take these offenders to the juvenile Court. In the rural areas, the task is not so easy since the police are few in numbers. The task of apprehension is, therefore, subject to the society's feeling that a juvenile is a menace to the people by repeatedly engaging in anti-social acts. In this case, parents and teachers act as the agents of law and order. This is because they are the one's who are closest to the young people. A parent who feels that his/her child is becoming unruly reports that child to either probation officers, children's officers, or to the chiefs, who then apprehend the child with the help of the police and take him to Court pending further investigations. This does not, however, mean that this kind of apprehension is only restricted to the rural areas. Even in urban areas, it can take place, and infact does.

Once the young offender is apprehended, his/her case is heard in the juvenile Court by a presiding judge, who then summons a probation officer. The officer is instructed to trace the family background of the offender so as to know what sort of sentence should be passed, in order for the judge to prescribe treatment. The probation officer, after studying the home background of the offender then prepares a report which is presented to the judge.

This report leaves open four alternative forms of treatment. These are:

- (i) Probation may be recommended by the probation officer if the offence was not very serious and if chances of reform are seen to exist. The offender is then instructed to see the probation officer on prescribed days and at prescribed times. The probation officer is supposed to offer counselling and guidance as treatment to the offender.
- (ii) For those under 16 years, whose home background and history are found not to be promising, commitment to an approved school is recommended. At the approved school, children's officers offer guidance and counselling to the children. At the same time, technical and formal education is offered. The aim of doing this is to rehabilitate the young offender so that he/she can become a "normal" and functioning member of the society after discharge from the approved school.
- (iii) For those above 17 years, and with serious offences, commitment to a borstal institution is recommended. There are at present two of such institutions in Kenya. These are Shikusa in Kakamega and Shimo-la-Tewa in Mombasa. These borstal institutions fall under the Prisons department, hence strict discipline is observed as is the case in prisons.
- (iv) An alternative form of treatment is recommended if not any of the above three. In most instances this alternative happens to be caning of the offender, followed by release, with a promise of good conduct.

The essence of any of the above mentioned forms of treatment prescribed lies in the assumption that the young offender will refrain from committing further juvenile offences. How far these

forms of treatment have succeeded is only open to conjecture. At the same time, the methods used in apprehending the offenders leave no doubt that most offenders are left unapprehended. Further, when we look at the statistics available on apprehended and convicted juvenile offenders, we note that, while a very large number of offenders are apprehended very few are convicted in the juvenile Court. (See Table 1) This might be explained by the selective nature of Court Convictions on the basis of social status and influence of relatives of the offenders who are of higher socio-economic status.

TABLE 1: Juveniles apprehended, charged and convicted under the penal Code, Chapter 63, Laws of Kenya. (1980 and 1984)

	1980				1984			
	Male	Female	Total Arrested	Total Convicted	Male	Female	Total Arrested	Total Convicted
Murder (including attempts)	24	2	26	-	10	10	20	-
Manslaughter	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-
Rape (including attempts)	4	1	5	1	13	-	13	4
Assault	148	43	191	42	191	37	228	50
Other offences against the person	60	11	71	15	77	12	89	20
Robbery and allied offences	93	3	96	17	106	1	109	12
Breakings	366	18	384	76	390	15	405	69
Cattle thefts	8	-	8	-	6	1	7	5
Theft of other Stock	14	-	14	6	13	1	14	3
Theft of over 400 KShs	120	21	141	33	173	28	203	26
Other thefts	405	56	461	118	468	48	519	129
Theft from Vehicles	29	-	29	3	74	-	74	3
Theft of Bicycles	20	1	21	8	21	-	21	2
Theft of produce	40	2	42	12	77	4	81	22
Theft by servant	52	68	120	15	54	73	127	16
Receiving stolen property	18	1	19	10	32	1	33	3
Other offences against property	66	9	75	18	65	8	73	14
All other penal code offences	125	20	145	40	175	37	212	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>1592</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>1848</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>1947</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>2232</b>	<b>429</b>

Source: Kenya Police Headquarters, Nairobi

As Table 1 shows, the numbers arrested in 1984 have risen by a tremendous 384 juvenile offenders. Though the numbers arrested in both years were high, there were very few convicted for both years (22.4% and 19.2% for both years respectively). This may be a reflection of the selective nature of the Courts in passing sentences on the offenders.

### The Problem

In Kenya juveniles who are reported and apprehended after having committed offences are charged under the Children and Young Persons Act, Chapter 141 Laws of Kenya. Such juveniles, after appearing before a presiding judge in the juvenile Court, maybe placed under probation, put in an approved school, or committed to a borstal institution. The aim of following any of these three alternatives is to offer a "cure" for the young offender. In any case, careful watch is kept of the offender by trained officers of the relevant departments. These officers offer treatment in the form of counselling, guidance and any other form of assistance deemed necessary.

Before the court can, however, decide on what sentence to pass on the young offender, a thorough study of the home background of the offender is carried out by an officer of the Court. The reason for carrying out this study of the homeground is to provide information concerning the up-bringing of the child. Home background information which is sought includes the financial status of the family, the parents' marital status, the offenders' life in school and at home, and many other related facts. The assumption made here is that by knowing the homebackground of such a child, necessary and adequate treatment can be prescribed. (back

Incidentally, even after treatment has been prescribed, and the offender has served the sentence passed by the presiding judge, no



follow-up of this offender is done after discharge. It is assumed that he/she has reformed. There are, therefore, no statistics which can be used to show failure or success of the whole exercise. At the time of this survey, we therefore, assumed that there must be children who, even after their home backgrounds have been studied before treatment is prescribed, will revert to their original behaviour after undergoing the so-called treatment. The only conclusion open to us is that the treatment prescribed and offered has not shown any marked signs of success which was the aim of the exercise.

The Children and Young Person' Act, Chapter 141, Laws of Kenya, is supposed to see to the protection of children and Young Persons. The Children's department was created to see to the day to day operations of the Act. With the existence of these two bodies it would be expected that at least adequate ways of preventing juvenile delinquency have been found. But, sadly enough, this is not the case, as statistics indicate. In 1968, there were a total of 1898 children arrested under the juvenile penal code. By 1969, this figure became slightly reduced since there were only 1232 juvenile arrests. Ten years later, (1980) the figure had risen to 1848, while in 1984, it had risen to the tremendous figure of 2232 children (See Table 1).

The figures showing juvenile arrests raise two question which are of vital importance if answered, and if adequate delinquency prevention efforts are to be achieved. The first question has to do with whether, as a matter of fact, we should continue trying to "treat" only the young offender or should we not also include in the treatment the immediate group to which he belongs, namely the family? The second question which we should try to tackle concerns whether we should continue to deal with samples drawn from a population already termed delinquent. By a population already termed delinquent, we mean those juveniles who have

been apprehended and charged in a juvenile Court. Should we not seek an alternative population, namely a representative sample of the juvenile population in order to offset the bias introduced when we use officially termed delinquents as our respondents?

It was in response to the above two major questions that this survey was designed. It was an attempt to deal not with an already officially termed delinquent population, but with samples drawn from a section of the juvenile population without regard to their known delinquency.

The setbacks posed when dealing with institutionalized juvenile delinquents have been topics of focus by Scholars such as Cohen, 1955; Hirschi 1969; Freeman and Jones, 1970; and various others. The major criticism levelled against the use of official delinquency reports or statistics, is that they do not present us with a true picture of the extent of juvenile delinquency in any one country. In this regard, Kenya is no exception, as the Commissioner of Police recently pointed out. (Njiiru B.K., 1986:4). The main reason advanced as to why such official statistics are unreliable in gauging the extent of juvenile delinquency is that the police and the Courts are usually very selective in handling juvenile cases. This happens to be especially so where status differences are involved. Young offenders from high socio-economic status families never reach the courts due to the influence which such families have over the forces of Social control in society.

As an observation, The National Foundation For Educational Research in England and Wales in 1965 recommended that "delinquency requires study within the framework of normal behaviour and education so that knowledge of its causes and methods of prevention and treatment can be extended and improved."

(Slough, B;1965:134)

However, the defects and shortcomings of official data had already been recognized by Cohen (1955), when he suggested that "in order to overcome the defects, we must start not with known delinquents but with representative samples of the juvenile population drawn without regard to their known delinquent histories". (Cohen;1955:170)

The views and observations made by such scholars led us to design a survey to deal with adolescents in schools. We assumed that these adolescents have at one time or another engaged in delinquent behaviour whether in or outside the school setting. This survey was limited to the school setting due to the fact that these juveniles offered us a representation of the juvenile population in Kenya. Furthermore the majority of adolescents in Kenya (over 80%) attend school, with very few non-attenders. At the same time, the period and funds at our disposal would not have allowed us to **extend** the survey otherwise.

By dealing with this kind of population, the survey was designed to answer the second question posed earlier, namely, of whether we should continue to deal with samples drawn from a population already officially termed delinquent when conducting delinquency related research. The first question was expected to be answered in the implications resulting from our data.

In order to make it more appropriate in answering our **posited** questions, this survey was designed in such a way so as to try to relate the delinquent behaviour of the adolescents to their family **environment**. The guiding principle used here was essentially the same one used by the juvenile courts in helping them to pass sentence on the juvenile offenders, namely, that of studying the homebackgrounds of the young offenders before deciding what treatment should

be prescribed.

By relating the family environments of the adolescents to their delinquent behaviour, this survey limited itself to trying to seek a relationship if there was any. However we cannot pretend to offer the causes of delinquency as such a task would be enormous. In this light then, the problem of this study was stated as follows:

"Is there any relationship between family environments and the level of juvenile delinquency among school-children?"

#### Definition of major concepts

In this survey, the major concepts which need to be defined in order to suit our purposes are two. These are: "family environments" and, "juvenile delinquency".

The concept of family was defined by Murdock (1949:4-11) as "a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship, and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually cohabiting adults." This definition obviously poses problems in our present day understanding of a family. In the first place, it emphasises common residence, which we know does not necessarily have to be there today since some parents or one of the parents may not reside at home fulltime, yet he or she still constitutes part of the family. In the second place, the definition underlines the presence of "adults of both sexes sharing a socially approved sexual relationship." But we in Kenya have come to observe homes which have only one parent, especially where the mother never married.

Yet she still has children obtained from sexual relationships which have not been socially approved - assuming that by social approval **Murdock** meant being recognised as man and wife **or uniting** in marriage. In essence, **Murdock's definition** constitutes what we may refer to as the nuclear family made up of a man and wife and **their** children, own or adopted. Yet, in Kenya, we at present have families made up of children, not of the two spouses nor legally adopted, but living within that family as if they belonged to it - especially those of relatives.

Consequently, **Murdock's** definition appeared too narrow to suit the purposes of this survey. Therefore, the survey was designed in such a way that the term family would **encompass** almost all that we understand to be constituted by that term. In this case, the survey chose to recognize the single parent family, the extended family in the form of children of relatives, and the nuclear family.

However, to be more concrete, the survey chose to view the family in terms of six postulated factors which will be referred to as "environments." The idea of viewing the family in terms of these six environments was prompted by such studies as that of the Gluecks (1962) and that of Getzels and Jackson (1961). In their study, the Gluecks **postulated** very many family environments' since their's was a complex study. However, Getzels and Jackson (1961 : 354) had only seven family environments. These were, "education and occupation of parents, age of parents, mothers memories of own home, reading interests in the home, parental satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the child and with his school,

parental satisfaction with the child rearing practices, and kinds of friends preferred for their children."

Although their study was not on delinquency, their family environments helped a lot in the postulation of the family environments used in this survey, and it is on them that they were modelled. As such, the six family environments postulated for this survey were;

- (1) Family size
- (2) Stability of the family
- (3) Level of education of the parent(s)
- (4) Occupation of parents
- (5) Residence of the parent(s)
- (6) Religious commitment of family.

The second major concept of this survey is juvenile delinquency. Various people have offered numerous definitions of this concept. However, generally speaking, when adolescents (aged between 7 and 17 years) engage in or display antisocial or wayward behaviour, they are said to engage in juvenile delinquency, and are referred to as juvenile delinquents or juvenile offenders in the legal realm.

The Gluecks (1962:4) define juvenile delinquents as "children between 7 and 17 years of age who commit repeated acts of a kind which when carried out by persons beyond the statutory juvenile court age of 16 are punishable as crimes." This definition is of course in line with the legal definition of a juvenile delinquent under British law. Surprisingly enough, it is not so far removed from the definition given in Kenya of a juvenile delinquent. Under laws of Kenya " juvenile delinquent is a child

, between the statutory court age of 7 and 16 years who commits an act which when committed by persons beyond this statutory juvenile court age would be **punishable** as a crime, or as an act injurious to other individuals or the public, that is, the state or government.

(Muga, 1972: 141). Basically, there is no difference between the above **two** definitions except in the age limits set for the definition of a juvenile. This is not surprising since societies set their own age limits for that kind of definition. However, the observation that can be made here is that both definitions stem from the legal arena and are, therefore, official definitions.

For this study, juvenile delinquency was viewed as those acts which when committed by adolescents (between 7 and 16 years) and detected would result in punishment of the person committing them by the larger society or by the institution within which those acts are committed. In this case, juvenile delinquent acts include destruction of property, violence against both persons and property, stealing, smoking, handling and consuming alcohol, running **away** from school, and other variously related acts.

By defining delinquency in this way, we were able to go **beyond** the legal definition and make it easier to deal with our population. At the same time, we recognized the limitations of such a definition in the face of the legal **realm**, and in view of the **assertion** by Cloward and Ohlin (1960: 4) that "delinquent acts are distinguished from other deviant acts by the fact that they result or are likely to result in the **initiation** of official proceedings by agents of criminal justice". At the same time, we kept in mind the reason why we chose to deal with samples drawn from the juvenile population.

Consequently, our definition may be seen as constituting deviant acts which if brought before a legal officer would or may constitute delinquent acts. Furthermore, the method used in obtaining our data propelled us to use the above definition of juvenile delinquency without overlooking its assumptions.

#### Justification for the study

The major purpose of the study is to provide us with data which may help in offering guidelines for juvenile delinquency prevention efforts in Kenya. This study was motivated by the fact that very little research has been carried out in Kenya on the very important subject of juvenile delinquency. Much of the available literature on the subject has been written for and about other countries. Yet, as we know, each country has its own peculiarities in terms of culture and other social phenomena. In view of this, this study may uncover facts which have not been uncovered in the existing literature, and may, therefore add to, or build on the limited knowledge about the subject of juvenile delinquency.

At the same time much of research done on delinquency, has been carried out using the already institutionalized children as subjects. These children have already been officially recognized as juvenile delinquents. Yet, such subjects are not representative of the juvenile population. This study was, therefore designed to use a sample drawn from the Kenyan juvenile population in Nyeri district of Central Province, selected without regard to their known delinquencies. This does not mean that our sample will be wholly representative of the Kenyan juvenile population. In order to, at least, be wholly representative of the Kenyan juvenile population, we would require much more time and funds, which are limited.



Nevertheless, it is our belief that data gathered from the present sample will be of vital use to those interested in the prevention of juvenile delinquency and even to school disciplinarians.

Further, at the time of this survey, it was observed that statistics gained from official sources show that the majority of the institutionalized children come from Rift Valley, Nyanza and Central Provinces. (Muga, 1972)

Consequently, we cannot overlook the fact that Kenya is a developing country. As the 1970, United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and treatment of offenders concluded, "As any country begins to open up, outgrow its traditionalism, and respond to outside influences or new ideas by modernizing, industrializing and concentrating people in certain areas, its people and particularly its younger generation seize the many new opportunities. And in doing so, a small but progressively increasing number of them succumb to temptations and seek illegal satisfaction through crime". (Clinnard and Abbot, 1973: 11).

By taking a sample from Central Province, in which Nyeri is a district, we hope that it will help us to see whether this is one region in Kenya which is experiencing development. It will also help us to erase the myth that juvenile offenders are only to be found in urban slums and their neighbourhoods.

At the same time, this study, which will be carried out in an area which is experiencing rapid social change and development, may throw more light on whether rapid social change and development are related to the level of crime rate in a country. This may assist planners and social-workers in formulating their social and development policies in future.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### General Overview

A lot has been written on the subject of delinquency and especially so on juvenile delinquency by various scholars using different approaches to the subject. In their attempts, they have come up with various views and conclusions on the subject.

It is the purpose of this chapter to discuss the findings of some of these researches so as to provide a general background for the present study. The study does not intend to replicate what has already been done by these researchers. It only intends to test some of the propositions advanced on the subject of juvenile delinquency within our own cultural setting -(namely in Kenya-) and to suggest any new ideas which might be uncovered for further research on the subject.

Scholars on the subject of delinquency are variously agreed that family factors play a vital and important role in determining whether one will become delinquent or not. Such scholars include the Gluecks (1934, 1950, 1962); Hirschi (1969); Sutherland and Cressay (1970); and various others.

Several factors within the family have been advanced as being explanatory variables in the causation of juvenile delinquency. Such factors include size of family, the broken home, criminality in the family and others. In the course of advancing these factors, several methods have been used in this effort to determine the importance of the home and family in its relation to juvenile delinquency.

Sutherland and Cressey (1970: 204) have cited three general methods which have been used in the attempt to determine the importance of the family and home conditions as factors leading to delinquency.

The first of these involves evaluating the home as a whole by means of a rating device or scale. The home is then appraised by setting a "normal" standard for homes, and concluding that home conditions are the cause of delinquency if most delinquents come from homes below this set "normal" standard. This method was used extensively during the early stages of delinquency research.

The second method involves evaluating the influence of the home by a general study of individual cases. This method, like the first one, was also used in the pioneering stages of delinquency research. In his study, Healy (1915), used this method and estimated that the home was a major factor in delinquency in 19% of a series of a thousand cases in Chicago, and a minor factor in 23.5%. Two hundred and thirty of his delinquents came from homes having extreme lack of parental control. This method permits the researcher to evaluate the meaning which a particular set of home conditions has for the specific child, and this makes allowances for the fact that "bad" homes do not always produce delinquent children. However, its major setback is that the method is subjective, and findings are very likely to reflect the preconceptions of the particular researcher.

The third method used is statistical and is a technique which varies from simple calculation of the comparative incidence of certain home conditions among delinquents and

non-delinquents, to more sophisticated techniques of holding constant certain variables while determining the degree of association between delinquency - the dependent variable, and one other independent variable. In this way, the technique aims to identify certain specific home conditions which are associated with delinquency, rather than measuring the influence of the home as a whole. This happens to be currently the most popular method and has been used by scholars such as Nye et al (1967); Dentler and Monroe (1961); the Gluecks (1962); Vaz (1967); Hirschi (1969); and Brown (1984).

By using the three methods cited above, scholars have striven to show various family factors and their relation to delinquency. The findings of these researchers indicate that delinquents frequently come from homes or families characterized by one or more of the following family factors or environments.

- (i) Other members of the family are criminalistic, immoral or alcoholic.
- (ii) The absence of one or both parents by reason of death, divorce or desertion.
- (iii) Lack of parental control because of ignorance or illness.
- (iv) Home uncongeniality as evidenced by domination by one member, favoritism, oversolicitude, overseverity, neglect, jealousy, crowded housing conditions, or interfering relatives.
- (v) Racial or religious differences; differences in conventions, and standards; being in a foster home or an institutional one.

(vi) Economic pressures such as poverty, unemployment, or the family being of low socio-economic status.

The above are what Wootton (1959: 84) has referred to as "the twelve criminological hypotheses" after having narrowed them down due to the fact that they are the ones which, on the one hand underlie currently popular explanations, and on the other hand, which actually happen to have attracted the interest of researchers. It is these same factors which will be further discussed within the context of researches carried out by other scholars.

In their study, the Gluecks (1950) matched a sample of five hundred delinquent boys drawn from a correctional school with a sample of the same size of non-delinquents. The matching was done on such variables as age, intelligence, residence, and other related ones. Data was obtained from the two samples through interviews carried out over a period of time. By tests of statistical significance of associations between variables, the researchers found drunkenness, crime or immorality in the homes of 90.4% of the five hundred delinquent boys, and in 54% of the homes of the non-delinquent sample who made up the control group. They also found unsuitable supervision by the mother in the homes of 64% of the delinquents, and only 13% in those of the control group. Discipline was also lax in 57% of the delinquents homes and in only 12% of the homes of non-delinquents. The analysis of the data also revealed that the parents of the two samples did not differ in age, but they differed in other respects. The parents of delinquents turned out to have made forced

marriages. They were also more burdened with serious physical ailments, mental retardation and serious emotional disturbances. This also happened to be the case with the siblings of the delinquents. The families of the delinquents were the victims, not only of less stable households, but of broken homes. The delinquents had substitute parents to a far greater extent than the non-delinquents. Most of these substitute parents included foster parents, step mothers and fathers, while the others lived with relatives.

Even though this study by the Gluecks was a rather complex one due to the fact that they were also dealing with what they referred to as "traits", it nevertheless underscored the dominant role of the family environments in shaping behaviour and personality. It also formed the basis for the Gluecks later study (1962) in which they used the same samples as used in the earlier study (1950).

In this study, the Gluecks (1962:16) sought to ascertain which of the traits studied in the earlier study were conditioned by the family environments of the respondents in the sample. The traits in question included such factors as fear, emotional conflicts, stubbornness and various others. The social factors (family environments) under investigation included the crowded home, delinquency of mother or father, financial dependence of family, incompatibility of parents, and other family related factors.

The data collected in this study was also analysed using tests of statistical significance of association between social factors and traits.

The general findings of this study indicated, however, that the home environments operated selectively to propel toward maladjustment and delinquency, certain children who are characterized by specific traits which enhance their vulnerability and disposition toward delinquency. Essentially, this meant that social factors and individual traits operated jointly to produce delinquency or non-delinquency. However, the Gluecks further stated that "some of these traits are of an essentially constitutional orientation, and are, therefore, relatively rigid; others are predominantly the product of sociocultural conditioning and are, therefore, more plastic and modifiable; still others- those for which evidence exists that they are brought about by the considerable influence of both genetic endowment and environmental stimulation "(Gluecks, 1962:155).

This study by the Gluecks showed that the combined effect of both factors (social or environmental) and traits among the boys in the sample was most operational in predisposing the boys toward delinquency. This shows the influence of social factors and individual traits in their relation to juvenile delinquency.

Hirschi (1969) drew a sample from a population of seventeen thousand five hundred students entering eleven junior and senior public high schools in the United States.

He stratified this sample by race, sex, school and grade in order to obtain a total of one hundred and thirty sub-groups. By using existing school records, together with police records, and a questionnaire completed by the students, data was gathered from this sample.

The findings of this study indicated that children who were attached to their parents through intimacy were less likely to have committed delinquent acts. This reinforces the view that where parents are more concerned with their children, there is less likelihood that the children will engage in delinquent behaviour. Hirschi also examined other factors said to be related to juvenile delinquency such as age, size of family, ordinal position of the child in the family, and the broken home. He found a relation to exist between family size and delinquent behaviour, but found a very weak relationship where the broken home was concerned. He concluded that though delinquency research is repeatedly accused of being on the one hand atheoretical, and on the other inconclusive and inconsistent, yet the relations in the present data are very much like those revealed by previous research. (Hirschi 1969:243)

This study by Hirschi has merit in that it was more representative, as it used a sample drawn from the juvenile population selected without regard to their known delinquent behaviour. Furthermore, it supported through its findings, the results of other earlier studies which dealt with similar or related variables especially those related to family factors.



In their classic longitudinal study, West and Farrington (1977), followed the lives of some four hundred males born between 1951 and 1954. These boys were chosen as research subjects in the period 1961 and 1962, and all were attending six adjacent state primary schools in a working class area of London. The boys were aged between 8 and 9 years. The sample selected was fairly representative of the normal male population of that particular area and generation, and most probably, similar to the male population of many comparable urban working class neighbourhoods.

The boys were followed up for fourteen years with reports coming in when the boys were in primary school and later in secondary school. The first report was compared with the second, and with juvenile delinquency records of the boys, obtained up to the boys seventeenth birthdays. The findings of this study overwhelmingly demonstrated the extent to which features of behaviour, observable at an early age, predispose boys to become juvenile delinquents. This was made possible by the two reports of the boys which were made during the course of the study. The study had a lot to commend it, the most important being that the boys could be observed constantly and the reports on them filed for further reference. However, the overwhelming demerits of a longitudinal study cannot also be overlooked. Prominent among these are the time and finance necessary to see it through to the end.

Muga (1972:142) carried out a study in Kenya with the major objective of knowing the background of the children in trouble as related to the environment in which they had been brought up. The word "trouble" as used here means that the researcher was concerned with those institutionalized children. The data was, therefore, gathered by using police records, records of the juvenile court, and direct interviews with the delinquent children in remand homes and approved schools in Kenya. The subjects totalled one thousand one hundred and seventy one. The study showed that most of the delinquents were between the ages eleven to fifteen. All were affiliated to some religion. Of the parents, only five fathers had attained form four level of education. The majority had dropped out between standard two and three, thus only obtaining very little formal education. The majority of the children studied had both parents living together, (an indication of a stable family) with the minority coming from families where the mother was single or a prostitute.

Of the one thousand, one hundred and seventy one parents, six hundred and seventy nine were either divorced, separated or dead, while one hundred and twenty five of the mothers were prostitutes. The children of such mothers had therefore no permanent and real fathers. The average family size of the group was six, with a larger number of children coming from the rural areas.

Most of the parents of these children were peasants, with those in paid employment numbering three hundred and ninety. The occupation of the parent or parents is of course, a reflection of the socio-economic status of the household or family when other factors are held constant. Such factors would include the presence of older siblings who are earning and who repatriate part of their earnings back home.

Even though this study raised some points of importance especially in uncovering the backgrounds of those children, one thing stands out clearly. This is the fact that it actually dealt with a very select sample of the juvenile population and only those children who had been adjudged juvenile delinquents. It is most likely that if one had studied these children before they were apprehended, charged and institutionalized, other factors relating to them would have emerged. At the same time, the researcher did not bother to go into details as to why a certain number of children fell into a certain category, while others did not. The study is, therefore, to a certain extent inconclusive. It, however, has the merit in that it underscores the importance of family factors and their relation to delinquency, which we cannot easily ignore. Furthermore, it is one of the few studies carried out in Kenya, and its very inconclusiveness provides a basis for further research on the subject of delinquency in Kenya.

The researches of the Gluecks (1950 and 1962); Hirschi (1969); Muga (1972); and West and Farrington (1977), so far discussed, seem to clearly indicate that family environments

in which children are reared play a vital role in predisposing them (the children) towards juvenile delinquent behaviour. However, it is not only family factors that play a vital role in predisposing children toward juvenile delinquent behaviour. As the study by the Gluecks (1962) showed, individual traits also interact with family factors to enhance delinquency.

Although other studies have been carried out on the subject of delinquency (Dentler and Monroe, 1961; Wise, 1967), the one's cited above will suffice for the purposes of this study since they provide us with an adequate background on the subject. We will now turn to the task of formulating an adequate theoretical framework on which to base our study.

## Theoretical Framework

There is no one single theory of crime and delinquency. Instead, there are numerous theories which have been advanced in the attempt to explain crime and delinquency. These have normally fallen under two broad categories. On the one hand, there are the psychologists who explain crime and delinquency in terms of the individual. On the other hand there are the sociological theories which explain it in terms of the group.

As is apparent in the literature review, the reality of delinquency is part of a wider social reality which cannot be simply explained by a single theory. Therefore, on the basis of the literature review and our approach to the problem of delinquency in this study, we will use what can be termed as the multiple factor approach. This approach will be used in the attempt to explain delinquent behaviour among adolescents.

The rationale behind this is that delinquency and social reality are multifaced and, therefore, cannot be confined to single explanations. In this respect, we find it necessary to base our study on various theoretical explanations. The hypotheses to be tested in this study are stated as empirical generalizations and proof of the relationship between the variables is based on the statistical level.

Specifically, the following approaches from different perspectives are to be used in combination.

- (1) From the theory of culture, the basic assumption is that inadequate socialization tends to lead to inadequate conformity, which in turn leads to delinquency. Culture theory is based on the transmission of societal norms, values, roles, goals, etc. The view is that the acquisition of these aspects of society is inadequate. The agents of society, transmission of these societal aspects, with the family playing a major role, do not succeed in this duty. Consequently, delinquents are the result of this inadequate acquisition of the cultural values of society.
- (2) Closely related to the above view is what is referred to as symbolic interactionism. This approach assumes that delinquent definitions of situations tend to be facilitated by the absence of relevant symbols such as a father-image, habits, and various others which can be identified with.

Fundamental to symbolic interactionism is the relationship between individual conduct and forms of social organization. It asks how selves emerge out of social structure and social situations. The interactionist assumes "that human beings are capable of making their own thoughts and activities objects of analysis; that is, they can routinely, and even habitually manipulate symbols and orient their own actions towards other objects" (Denzin. N, 1969:923).

These actions, take part as part of the socialization process. The very absence of relevant symbols in the course of the

socialization process may tend to facilitate delinquent behaviour.

- (3) From Merton's theory of differential opportunity, delinquent behaviour is seen as a problem solving response. Merton's operating premise was that "some unknown but substantial proportion of deviant behaviour does not represent impulses of individuals breaking through social controls, out, on the contrary, represents socially induced deviations - deviations which the culture and the social organization conjoin to produce." (Gibbons D. C, 1982: 114)

In his analysis, Merton distinguished between two major elements of social and cultural structures: the culturally defined goals human beings are enjoined to pursue, and the social structure that regulates and controls the acceptable modes or means for the pursuit of goals and interests.

These goals and the institutionalized norms for achieving them may vary independently of each other, sometimes leading to malintegrated states, one extreme being the instance of excessive stress on goals with little concern for prescribed means of achieving these goals. In this state, all individuals in society do not have the same opportunities for realizing these shared goals. There are those who have access to the institutionalized means, and those who do not, thus resulting in differential opportunities.

When individuals in society find that they cannot achieve the shared goals through the use of the legitimate

and institutionalized means, they turn to the simplest way possible: In this case deviance. In our study, delinquency is the technically most effective procedure for acquiring desired goals, rather than the legitimate and institutionalized means.

Richard A. Cloward has contributed further to Merton's theory of differential opportunity. Cloward directed his attention to the existence of differentials in illegitimate opportunities as well as to the legitimate opportunity structures. His thesis rests on the observation that the lower classes have lesser opportunity than the other classes for achieving success in a legitimate or conforming manner. He, however, points out that aside from having the problem of differential legitimate opportunity, the lower classes also have the problem of differential illegitimate opportunity (Gibbons, D. C. 1982: 115). This means that some members of the lower classes have lesser opportunity than others of the same classes, for achieving success through illegitimate means or deviance. Cloward, however, basically agrees with Merton on the general orientations of the perspective.

#### Specific Family Environments

On the basis of our literature review and theoretical discussion, we will identify the six family environments to form the basis of our study.

#### Family Size

In dealing with a variable such as family size, various problems are encountered. The first question posed involves



asking who should be included in a particular family, should we deal with only the immediate children of that particular family, or should we include those who are adopted? Nonetheless, most people dealing with this variable seem to have included the immediate children of the spouses, and any other children who live within that particular family, for example those of relatives or another wife.

One of the earliest observations made was that delinquents usually come from large families. However, the term "large" as used here leaves us wondering by what standards a family is evaluated as being either large or small. One factor which stands out clearly is that scholars seem to have considered the average family size in the total population, or of the population of the particular area, under study.

The Gluecks (1934), used the average size of the family in England which was 4.5. Their findings in this study indicated that the delinquents came from families with an average size of 4.98, which was higher than the average in England. A similar observation was made by Hirschi, (1969: 239), when he stated that "As family size increases the likelihood of delinquency increases". Hirschi had used samples drawn from a section of the juvenile population without regard to their known delinquent behaviour.

In their other study the Gluecks (1950: 220) observe that "in relation to family size, it is reasonable to conclude that greater crowding of the home meant increased competition on the part of the children for parental attention, more likelihood of emotional strain, tension, friction, and

less privacy with resulting sexual and emotional trauma".

Social interaction and emotional involvement in group life and activities are more intense in smaller groups than in large ones. The family, as a basic social group is in this case no exception. Intense interaction in the family should offer an atmosphere more conducive to closer parent - child relationship, thus resulting, presumably, in more effective socialization and better internalization by the child of what is imparted to it by the parents.

However, though the above observation may be the case, we should keep in mind that family size itself alone cannot cause delinquency. Other factors such as socio-economic status must also be considered, and further, we should consider the individual characteristics of the particular child.

#### Stability of the Family

The absence of one or both parents is bound to have far - reaching effects not only on the children, but also on the parent who is left alone, due to the increased pressure brought upon this present parent since he/she has to play both the role of father/mother in socialization of the children.

The absence of one or both parents may occur as a result of death, divorce, separation, desertion or when the mother never marries, thus remaining a single parent. These various factors may result in what has been termed as the "broken home" or the single parent family.

One of the major research hypotheses has been that a complete family consisting of father, mother, and children is essential to the development of a balanced and socially adjusted personality. " (Shulman, 1959:130) This means that the absence of either of the above should consequently result in an unbalanced and an antisocial personality.

In their 1934 study, the Gluecks had found a high incidence of broken homes to be the source of a larger number of their delinquents. These homes were broken by either divorce, separation, death, or by the prolonged absence of a parent from the home. This conclusion by the Gluecks was supported by Wootton, (1959:123) when she concluded that "a fairly large proportion of the highly miscellaneous collection of offenders covered does not come from homes in which two of the parents are living together in respectable matrimony." This was in reference to her wide - ranging collection of studies which had been carried out in Britain and in the United States.

When Hirschi, (1969), carried out a study using the self - report he found no significant differences among children from broken homes, and unbroken ones.

We may, however, hasten to point out that even with the absence of real parents (father and mother), the presence of a mother/father figure may help to reduce the impact of isolation on the child, which would have been experienced had there not been any such figure.

Furthermore, the nature of the parent - child relationship may matter even more.

#### Level of education attained by the parents

The level of educational attainment by the parent or parents is of utmost importance in influencing and determining the outlook to life of the children. An underlying assumption exists that where the level of education of the parents is low, little or no motivation is offered to the children. The children in such cases, show little or no interest in education since no motivation is offered by the parents. After all, the parents usually are the immediate reference group of their children. Parents who have attained a low level of education also offer very little or no guidance and supervision to their children. The children are therefore, left on their own in terms of guidance and supervision.

On the other hand, parents who have attained a high level of education, presumably, impart the merits of education to their children who may feel challenged to emulate their parents. At the same time, such parents feel they would want their children to be like them in many respects.

McClelland (1953) came up with what he referred to as "achievement motivation," which Rosen, (1961:74) said "involves standards of excellence, and such standards are typically learned from parents who urge

the child to compete against these standards ...". We may look upon a high level of education achieved by the parents as a standard of excellence which the parents urge the child to compete against. At the same time, the parents will, presumably, not only emphasize education, but will also warn against behaviour which they themselves would not consider as "normal".

In his study, Muga (1972: 155) obtained data which showed that "of the 1171 parents of the delinquent children 29.7% were illiterate, while 61.2% had achieved an education of between standard two and form three (either one or both parents)." In present - day Kenya, this is a low level of education. And considering that education achieved has a bearing on the type of occupation one will be engaged in, the situation would have been dismal in the case of the parents in Muga's study. Today, the higher the level of education attained, the higher one is likely to be placed in the occupational hierarchy, and the higher the socio-economic status.

#### Occupation of the Parents

The occupation of the parents is vital in that it bears heavily on the socio-economic status of the family. Much of the research on occupational background and delinquency has tended to come up with the view that most delinquents stem from the lower occupational levels of society (ie - lower-socio-economic strata). Occupation is

most often than not, the direct result of educational attainment, and is also directly related to income level. The greater the occupational precariousness, the lower the income the family has to survive on, and consequently, the greater the scarcity of essential facilities in the family.

In their 1950 study, the Gluecks found marked fundamental differences between the families of the delinquents and those of the non-delinquents who made up the control group. "The families in which the delinquent boys were reared were more inadequate in terms of financial capability than those in which the non-delinquents grew up. The quality of family life was also poor in the homes of the delinquents as was reflected by their poor standards of conduct." (Gluecks, 1950: 88).

However, the relationship between the socio-economic status of a family and the delinquency of children has continued to be of concern to scholars on the subject. When Nye et al (1967), used a sample drawn from high school students to test for the relationship between the two (socio-economic status and delinquency), they concluded that there were no significant differences in delinquent behaviour of children from different socio-economic strata. Hirschi, (1969) also failed to uncover any significant differences between children from different socio-economic strata.

The contradictions found in the above findings point out the need for further research which may help to clarify the differences. These differences in findings may be a result of who scholars on the subject have used as respondents, and how socio-economic status has been defined/or measured.

#### Residence of Parents

In view of the fact that not all parents reside together with their

children, the residence of the parent or parents is bound to have its effects on the socialization of the children. While some parents reside together in one place with their children, it some times happens that one parent may not be present at all times. More often than not, as is the case in Kenya the father may leave the children with their mother in the rural area while he goes to the urban area to look for employment. In this case, the urban residence of the father is only temporary since the other members of the family reside in the rural area. Since the benefits of employment are only received at the end of the month in the form of a salary (end of month is the conventional time for receiving one's wages), the father is expected to visit the children at home on a monthly basis.

A long absence by the father will deprive the children of a father figure, and consequently, the role he plays in their socialization. This may create a void in the socialization process since a setting for the parent - child relationship is absent. Also in cases where the family is a single-parent one, (usually the mother), the parent has to fend for the children, thus leaving them with no real parental care, except the one provided by substitute parents such as relatives or grandparents. In such cases, the children feel deprived and isolated since their real parents are absent.

Muga, (1972) found that 58.5% of the parents of his delinquents resided in the rural area, while 41.5% resided in the urban area. Muga does not however, tell us whether the parents resided with their children or alone, while the children were elsewhere. This could have provided us with some insight into whether residence of parents was related to delinquency of the children. It nevertheless shows that most of the parents came from the rural areas which have been rather neglected in delinquency related research.

## Religious Commitment of Family

In delinquency related research, religion has enjoyed the least popularity. The view that delinquent behaviour may be the result of the decline of religious beliefs or at least religious observance has had little or no publicity.

Wootton (1959:93) preferred to refer to it simply as "church attendance" in reference to how often the delinquents studied attended church services. Yet, from what we know of the part played by religion, we should expect a lot more concerning its relation to misconduct (whether juvenile or adult).

In Kenya, religion is imparted to children from an early age to act as a guide to moral conduct. It plays a vital role in the socialization of the children. It tells them what one should and should not do. We should therefore, expect a marked difference between those who do observe religion and those who do not.

In her collection of studies, Wootton (1959:95), found that "more of the delinquents studied were non-church attenders while the controls were regular attenders." Wootton did not, however, refer to the rest of the family members of the delinquents in her sample and their response to religion. Muga (1972), also found that all his delinquent children belonged to or were affiliated to some religion. He did not, however, venture into the question of whether the delinquents attended church services even though they belonged to a religion. After all, one can belong to a religion and yet not observe the beliefs and practices of that religion.



For one to determine whether a family is religiously committed, all members of that family must belong to a religion and attend church services regularly, which in itself will be a pointer of the extent to which that family observes the beliefs and practices of their religion.

The above discussion on family environments has so far helped to show that much of the research on delinquency has been carried out in social-cultural contexts very different from the Kenyan one. The question that we may ask is whether the views advanced by these researches would be applicable to the Kenyan context. We hope that this study will provide this information. This would be a pace forward in the effort to prevent juvenile delinquency among the adolescents in Kenya.

### Hypotheses

Having identified the main family environments which form the core of this study, we now turn to the hypotheses tested in the study.

#### Hypothesis 1

The larger the family size, the higher the level of delinquent behaviour.

#### Hypothesis 2

The less the family intactness, the higher the level of delinquency.

#### Hypothesis 3

The lower the level of education attained by the parents, the higher the level of delinquent behaviour.

#### Hypothesis 4

The lower the socio-economic status of the family, the higher the level of delinquency.

#### Hypothesis 5

The less the frequency of visits by an absent parent to the children, the higher the level of delinquent behaviour.

#### Hypothesis 6

The lower the level of religious commitment of the family, the higher the level of delinquency.

#### Operational Definitions

The following were the operational definitions for the variables in this study.

##### Family Size

In this study, total number of children was obtained by getting the number of brothers and sisters of the respondents, and then adding any other children living in that particular family.

Family size was then made operational by definitions of small, medium or large. In determining whether a family was small, medium or large, we had to find a standard on which to base this evaluation. The standard which we found to be most useful and appropriate was the average family size obtained from the respondents who made up our sample.

We could however, have used the average family size for the whole country but this was found to be too general and too broad a measure, due to the many variations in family structure throughout the country. In using the average family size calculated from our sample we made the

assumption that it could not have differed greatly from the average size of the family for the area under study (Nyeri).

#### Family Intactness

This is one variable which poses problems when it comes to defining it operationally. However, in this study, the operational definitions for this variable were found in the absence of one or both parents in the family. This absence of one or both parents in the family could have been brought about by death of either one or both parents; by divorce, separation; desertion; or when a mother never married, thus remaining as a single parent; or when both parents had abandoned the children. In all the above instances the children would have been left with either one parent or with no parent at all, thus living with a guardian or with foster parents, a prelude to a broken home.

At the same time, the presence of both parents in the family was also taken into account as an indicator of family intactness. This is in view of the fact that we did not probe further into other family-life squabbles which take place daily. We were more interested in a family situation in which both spouses were living together with their children, in presumably, what can be termed as a stable family, other things being equal.

#### Level of education attained by the parents

This variable was made operational by measuring it in terms of years of schooling completed. This was accomplished

by dividing these into categories ranging from none to the highest level attainable. These categories were: no formal schooling; primary school; secondary school; college education and university education. These categories applied to the father and mother respectively, where both were present, and to the single-parent as the case may have been.

#### Socio-economic status of the parents

This variable was measured by looking at occupation of the parents. The occupational categories comprised: peasant farmer or small trader; general worker eg. hotel maid, cleaner, driver, etc; professional e.g. teacher, doctor, lawyer etc; and senior administrator e.g. minister diplomat, permanent secretary, big-business owners, big-farmers etc. These categories applied to the mother and father respectively, where both were present, and to the single parent as well.

Categorized in this way, the occupation of the parents ranged from low to high, thus enabling us to determine under which category the parents fell in terms of socio-economic status. We thus divided the socio-economic status measure into three major categories. These are: low, middle and high socio-economic status.

#### Frequency of visits by absent parent

This variable was operationalized by looking at the number of times the absent parent visited the children. ie, the frequency of visits.

The indicators of this variable were therefore, found in such terms as: weekly; monthly, yearly; or rarely. In this way we were more able to gauge the contact the absent parent had with the children.

### Religious commitment of the family

In order to make this variable operational, it was necessary to know whether the respondent belonged to a religion or not, and whether other members of the family belonged to the same religion. We further sought to know how often the subject attended church (frequency) and whether the same mode of attendance applied to other members of the family. For this we used the indicators: never, rarely, quite-often, and everytime.

All the above looked at in combination enables us to determine how religiously committed a family was since we could now place it on a continuum of commitment ranging from little or no commitment; some commitment, and high commitment.

### Level of delinquency

The delinquency of each particular child in this study could not have been defined operationally by treating each single offence separately. This could have created too many problems. The level of delinquency was, therefore, defined operationally in two ways;

- (i) By treating delinquency according to type of offence engaged in. This meant that we summed up the scores of the respondents for seven subscales which stood for type of offence. These seven subscales were: all types; status and property; status and persons; status only; (persons and property) property only; persons only; and leaving out those who fell in none of the above categories.
- (ii) By treating delinquency in the form of a scale. In this way we summed up for all twenty four items of

the delinquent offences, according to how a respondent had scored. We then proceeded to place the respondents on this scale in terms of level of delinquency which included either none, mild delinquency, or high delinquency.

This second form of treating delinquency was the one used for major analysis of data.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### The Research Area:

For this study, the selected research area was Nyeri district. This is because Nyeri is a district which the researcher is familiar with and the nature of the research required such familiarity. A general background of Nyeri district will help in providing a better knowledge of the area, and the reasons why it was selected as the research site.

Nyeri district lies in the Central province of Kenya (figure 1). It has an area of 3,284 square kilometers, and is situated between mount Kenya to the east and the Aberdare mountain range to the West. It is bordered by Laikipia districts to the North, Muranga to the south, and Nyandarua to the West.

Administratively, it is divided into seven divisions. These are Othaya, Mukurweini, Tetu, Mathira, Kieni East, Kieni West and the Municipality (figure 2). These divisions are themselves further subdivided into twenty four locations, and one hundred and fifty six sublocations.

The district is situated on elevation which varies from 1600 meters to 3000 meters above sea level. The soils in Nyeri are generally good, and the climate is of a moderate type. This affords the people the opportunity to practice agriculture, especially small-scale farming.

The 1969 census had estimated the population of Nyeri at 360,845 persons. By 1979, this had risen to 486,477. The central Bureau of statistics estimates the districts annual population growth between 1980 and 1990 will be 3.65% (Nyeri district Dev't plan: 1984 - 1988. This figure is, of course, close to that of the whole country's population growth rate of 4% annually.

One major indicator of the socio-economic progress of Nyeri district is that it has no famine relief programme. The people are relatively well-off especially in the divisions of Othaya, Tetu, Mathira, and Mukurweini. The rest of the district is rather marginal, with the exception of the municipality area. The four divisions of Othaya, Tetu, Mathira and Mukurweini also happen to be the major ones which have shown rapid strides in socio-economic developments when indicators such as health, incomes and social welfare are looked at. These four divisions, forming the southern third of the district, also are the most densely populated. The 1979 census shows that this region had a total population of 370,420

persons, accounting for 76.1% of the districts total population (Nyeri District Dev't plan: 1984-1988). This maybe due to the fact that this region is the most productive part of the district.

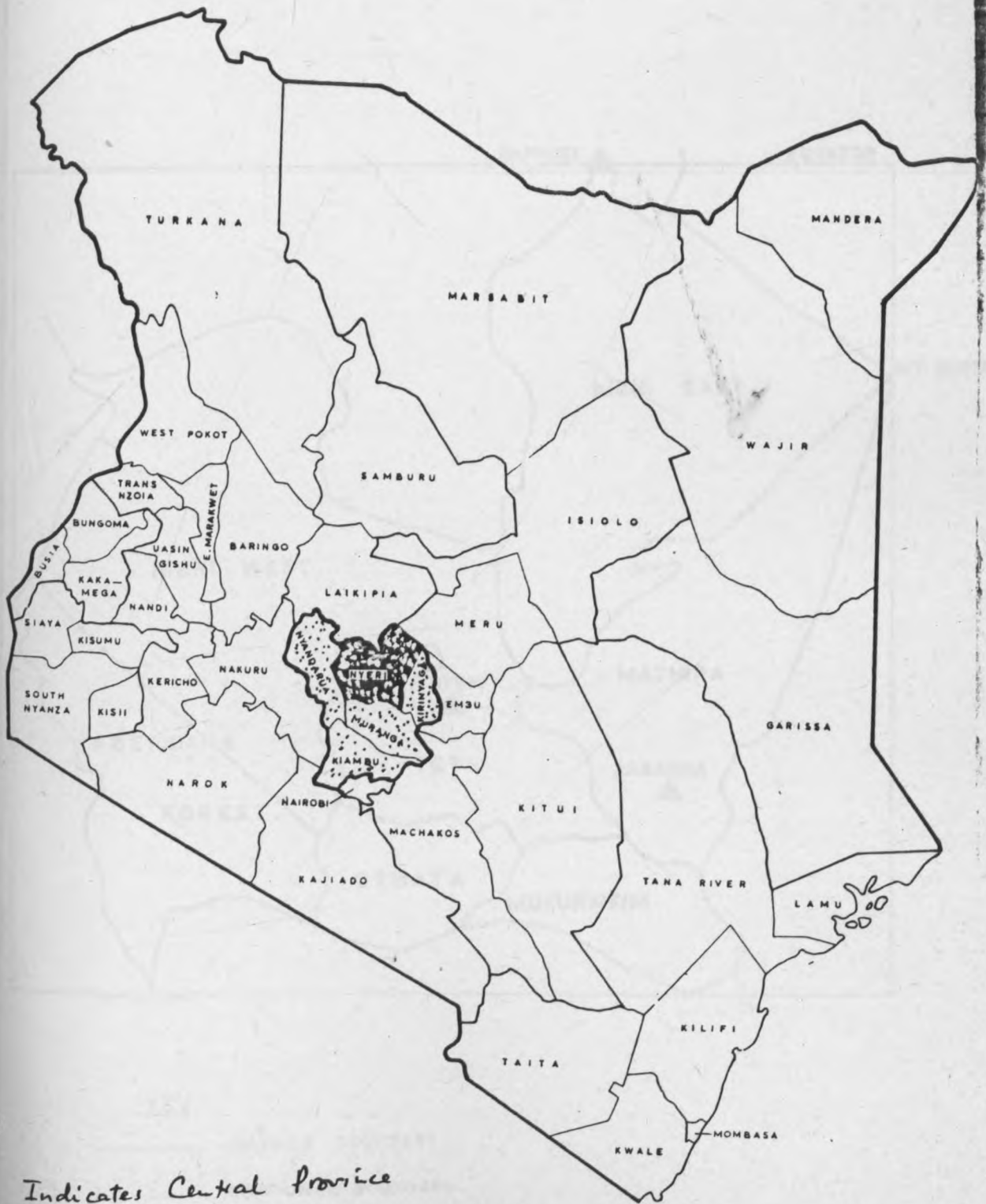
The 1979 census also showed the sex ratio in Nyeri district to be 234,405 males to 252,072 females, a sex ratio of 92, which, in our view, does not significantly introduce much differences in terms <sup>of</sup> numbers of males and females. It may, however, be the result of a higher male out-migration. Nevertheless, the sex ratio is an important factor for planning of social services and institutions affecting both males





**and females.**

For this study, our interest was centred around the four divisions of Othaya, Tetu, Mathira and Mukurweini. The major reasons why these divisions were chosen lay in the nature of our research interest. It was our belief that if we included the marginal divisions of Kieni East and Kieni West, more interviewing variables such as poverty, drought and others would have been introduced. This is because these two divisions experience the worst type of climate, and the lowest forms of agriculture. They also show the least socio economic development. The municipality was excluded on the basis of it's being too advanced in social amenities and other factors.

Figure 1 : Kenya : Districts



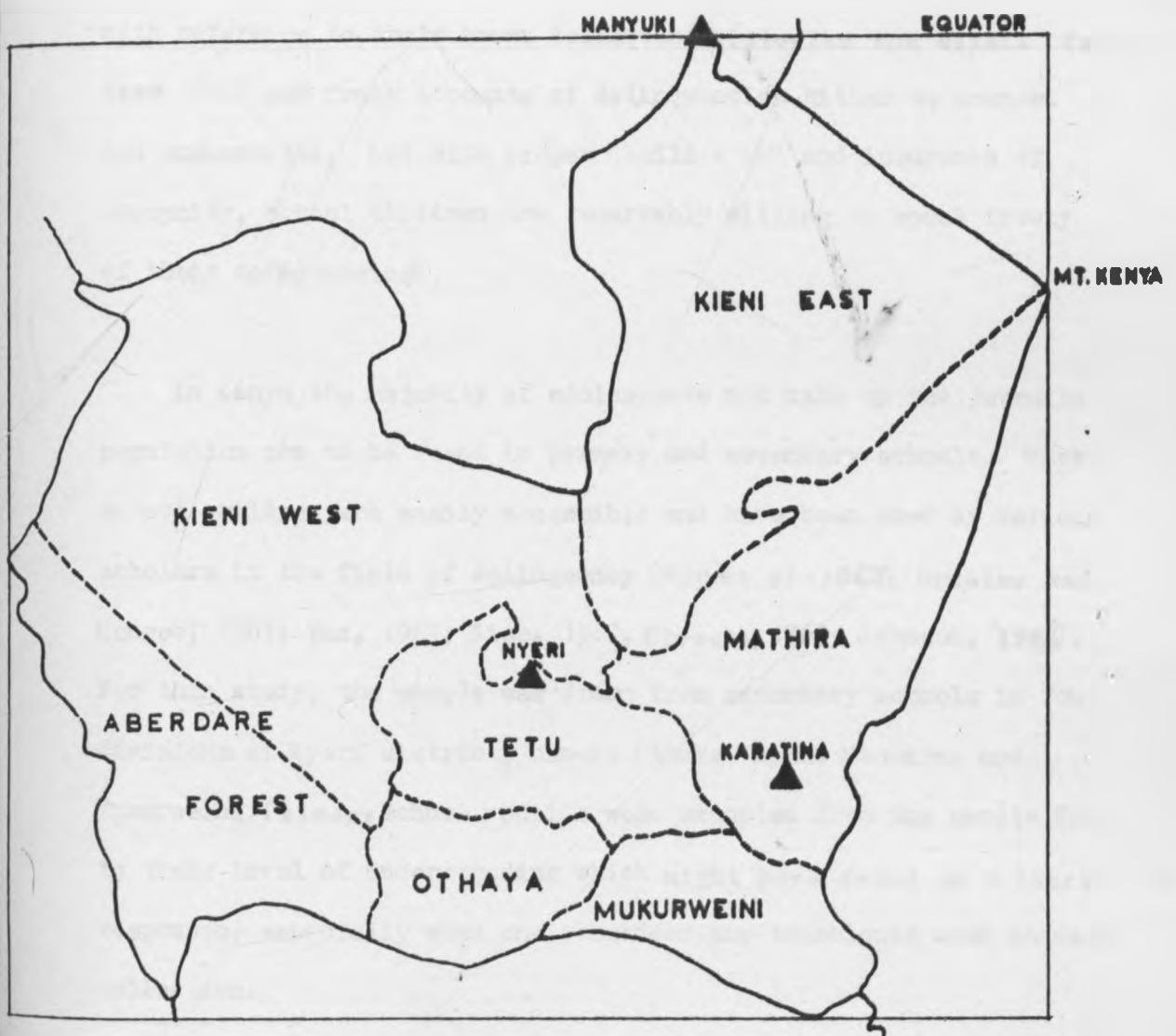
Key:

-  Indicates Central Province
-  Nyeri district.

# NYERI DISTRICT

FIGURE . . . Nº 2

## ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES



### KEY

- DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- - - - - DIVISIONAL BOUNDARY
- TETU... DIVISIONAL NAME

SOURCE: NYERI DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT PLAN 1984-1988

### Research Design

For this study, the sample survey method of research design was utilized. A sample of the juvenile population was selected without regard to their known or probable delinquent behaviour. Cohen (1955:170) made the call for research that would make known the extent of delinquent behaviour in the population not judged delinquent. He observed that although "it has been argued that it is difficult to approach a sample of school-children not selected with reference to their known delinquent histories and elicit from them full and frank accounts of delinquencies hitherto unknown and unsuspected, but with proper "build-up" and insurance of anonymity, school children are remarkably willing to speak freely of their delinquencies".

In Kenya the majority of adolescents who make up the juvenile population are to be found in primary and secondary schools. These school children are easily accessible and have been used by various scholars in the field of delinquency (Nye et al. 1967; Dentler and Monroe, 1961; Vaz, 1967; Wise, 1967; Hirschi, 1969; Johnson, 1986). For this study, the sample was drawn from secondary schools in four divisions of Nyeri district, namely Othaya, Tetu, Mathira, and Mukurweini. Primary school pupils were exempted from the sample due to their level of understanding which might have acted as a barrier to responses, especially when one considers the techniques used in data collection.

There are twenty five government maintained secondary schools in the four divisions of Othaya, Mathira, Tetu, and Mukurweini.

These comprise those for boys and girls respectively. From the twenty five secondary schools for both sexes we selected six using a simple random sampling procedure. Three of these six were for boys and the other three for girls.

From these six randomly selected schools, a particular class was selected. This particular class comprised the sample in each school. To select a particular class, we used the principle of cluster sampling. The reason why cluster sampling was employed was due to the fact that a random sampling procedure would have been made difficult for the population we were dealing with. It would also have made our task more difficult in getting answers from the respondents due to the fact that they would have had the feeling that out of a whole school, they were the ones singled out for the questioning. This would have made them feel as if they are being victimised and therefore, afraid of reprisals. Also, intervening variables such as awareness would have been introduced. At the same time, and more important, a random sampling procedure from a school population would have required more funds and quite a lot of time.

Moser and Kalton, (1971:101) point out that "whether or not a particular aggregate of units should be called a cluster depends on circumstances." In our case, the circumstances allowed us to refer to the selected class as a cluster since it contained a number of students, the individual student being our unit of inquiry.

The particular class that was selected in each of the six schools, was the form one class. To accomplish this, we employed the

principle of purposive sampling. The reason for using the purposive sampling procedure was due to the fact that this is the only class (Form one), that can be relied upon among all secondary school classes. This is because the form one s are fresh from the primary school into another revered atmosphere of the secondary school and new authority. In these circumstances, they usually have a tendency of being truthful in contrast to other classes. At the same time, form ones fell within our age definition of a juvenile, and had the advantage of being the most able academically in answering our questions.

From each school, only one form one class was selected to form the cluster in our sample. To do this, we again used a sample random sampling procedure in schools where there was more than one form one stream, as was normally the case. The reason why only one class was selected was that we could eliminate the effects of an extraneous variable such as awareness of the respondents when two classes were used. Moreover, headteachers were not ready to offer two classes for questioning at the same time.

Each particular class selected for inclusion in the sample had an average of 38 students. In all then, our sample from the six schools comprised a total of 235 students. This comprised 51.2% of all the form ones from the six schools which fell in our sample. We considered this a fair representation of the form one s in these schools.

## Techniques of data Collection

### The Questionnaire

The major technique of data collection which was used extensively in this study was the questionnaire. This questionnaire was designed in such a manner that it contained separate sections dealing with questions on the family environments under study on the one hand, and with those questions dealing with delinquency on the other hand. Since our major respondents were secondary school students, the questionnaire was constructed in a very simple and straight - forward manner in the English language. It was self-administered for the most part, with the researcher acting as a guide where problems of comprehension arose. This was, however, a rare occurrence.

The first section of the questionnaire dealt with the family environments. This section was designed in such a manner that it conformed with our postulated family environments. These were six in number. There were, therefore six major questions, each dealing with a specific family environment. In order to minimise the occurrence of miscomprehension and confusion of the respondents', most of the questions were constructed in the closed-type form. This meant that the respondents were given varied choices to select their appropriate answers. Open-ended type of questions were used when more information was needed from the respondents.

The second section of the questionnaire dealt with delinquent behaviour. This was actually a modified version of the classic Nye and Short, (1958) self-report delinquency measure with additional items (offenses) derived from Vaz, (1967); Wise (1967); Agnew, (1984) and Brown (1984).

The reason why we referred to the delinquent behaviour measure as a modified version of the one used by Nye and Short (1958), was because we did not use all their items, and at the same time, we added some of our own. In all other respects, the delinquent behaviour measures were similar.

Dentler and Monroe, (1961:733) pointed out that "the advantage of self-reports rather than the traditional dichotomy of institutional versus non-institutional subjects, is that delinquency may be treated as a variable rather than an attribute. Socio-economic and cultural biases inherent in official judgements are avoided, as are the effect of socially defining processes such as arrest, conviction, probation and incarceration." This was one observation which we used as a justification for this study, and it has been well expressed in the preceding chapters. We did not, however, overlook the limitations of self-report data, as again expressed in the preceding chapters. (Chapters one and two respectively).

The delinquent behaviour measure used in this study was designed to include a broad area of juvenile misconduct. This broad area, did not, however, include several of the more serious types of delinquent offenses, examples of which include rape, armed robbery and murder. The reasons behind this omission was due to the nature of our population and the measuring instrument employed. The domain of behaviour tapped by the delinquent behaviour measure is not necessarily the same as reflected in official measures of delinquency. It should, therefore, be expected that it largely reflects behaviour that is considered less problematic in official social control processes, but nevertheless represents significant behavioural problems among the youth. At the same time, the measure used was in conformity with our own definition of delinquent behaviour.



The response categories for questions on delinquency were all the same. This was in conformity with the Nye and Short, (1958) version of delinquent behaviour measure. The responses ranged from never, once or twice, several times, and quite often.

Due to the fact that the data were gathered under normal classroom conditions, the researcher had to be introduced to the students first. In five of the schools visited, the introduction of the researcher to the students was done by the headteachers, while in one school it was done by the member of staff who was on duty at that particular time. The essence of carrying out this exercise was to establish rapport between the researcher and the students.

The students were told that the researcher was himself a student from the University of Nairobi carrying out a study on the problems faced by young people. They were requested to feel free and to cooperate with the researcher in answering his questions. Then the headteacher or member of staff left the researcher with the students to carry on from there. The researcher then handed out questionnaires to the students, then gave them five minutes to go through the questions and correct any mistakes which they encountered in the questionnaire with the help of researcher.

The students were then instructed by the researcher to answer as fully and as comprehensively as possible, the questions on the questionnaire using a pencil. They were, however, told to leave out those questions which one felt did not apply to him or her, and to ask where one did not understand. Further the researcher cautioned the students that the answers one gave were confidential. One should not therefore, consult his or her deskmate. They were also asked to take their time so that one understood the question asked fully. This exercise was repeated in all the six schools visited and lasted for slightly more than fifty minutes in all.

### Unstructured Questioning

Interviews were carried out with the headmasters and headmistresses of the schools visited by the researcher. In the first place, the researcher had to introduce himself and seek permission from the head teachers to question the students. Then the researcher asked the headteachers questions concerning the number of streams in form one, and how many students made up a class. Information on number of streams was sought in order to help the researcher to randomly select one class to include in the sample. Information on the number of students in each class was to enable the researcher to estimate his total sample size.

Class teachers and other members of staff who were available were also interviewed. The questions they were asked generally added on the information gained from the headteachers. They were also asked questions which specifically dealt with the behaviour of the students while in school.

All the headteachers and other staff members who the researcher managed to talk to proved very cooperative. Other techniques of data collection employed in the course of this study included the use of available data. This was data gained especially from police records of juvenile delinquents, and also from the schools themselves. The techniques of data collection used in this study proved to be very fruitful since they provided us with adequate data.

## Techniques of data analysis

In this section we will outline the techniques used to analyse the data collected in this study. Since our data was both qualitative and quantitative at the same time, suitable statistical techniques for qualitative and quantitative data were employed in the analysis.

### Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to present and describe the data collected. In using descriptive statistics no attempt whatsoever was made to draw any inferences from what was observed of the data. As such, these statistics involved the computation of measures of central tendency and those of dispersion. Measures of central tendency and dispersion included the computation of the means or averages, modes, maximum, minimum and range, together with percentages. These were used to compare the data collected in this study. No attempts were made to make any inferences from the statistics.

### Inferential statistics

Inferential statistics were also used in the analysis of the data. These were used in the section dealing with testing of hypotheses. These kind of statistics are used to make inferences about the total population on the basis of observed samples of the total population.

In order to test the hypotheses formulated in this study, we employed the use of cross - tabulations. "Cross tabulations simultaneously tabulate the sample on two separate dimensions. They do this in such a way that the reader can see the inter-relationship between a respondent's score on one variable (or dimension) and his score on a second variable. "(Prewitt;1975:110).

Here, we cross-tabulated the independent variable with the dependent variable to seek for association between the two.

The Chi - square statistic ( $X^2$ ) was used to test for statistical independence between the variables. Where statistical independence exists between variables, then there is no relationship between them. The computation of the  $X^2$  statistic involves calculating the difference between no relationship, called the expected result, and the relationship one finds, the observed result." (Prewitt, 1975: 154). The formula used to compute the  $X^2$  was the following:

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where E = expected frequency  
O = observed frequency

To test whether the relationship between an independent variable and a dependent one was statistically significant, we used the  $X^2$  distribution. For each value in the distribution, there is an accompanying level of significance. Statistical significance refers to the likelihood that a particular finding could have happened by chance. We tested our findings by setting a level of statistical significance of 0.05. This meant that the chances were only 5 in 100, or 5% that a given result would occur. In other words, a level of significance of 0.05 means that the finding is 95% certain and only 5% uncertain. Where the level of significance was beyond 0.05, the relationship was rejected as being statistically insignificant.

### Problems encountered

In the course of collecting data for this study, various problems were encountered. One of these major problems arose when it came to sampling - selecting which schools were to be included in the sample. This was because of the fact that there are many secondary schools in Nyeri district. Each division has at least a minimum of six secondary schools - government aided. These are for boys and girls, while some are of the mixed type. One had to know which are exclusively for boys and which for girls and those which comprised both sexes. Most of this information was obtained from the education divisional headquarters, and was not given so readily. Those giving the information were suspicious of the intentions of the researchers, but they eventually gave it with a lot of assurances of good intention.

After obtaining the secondary schools, and selecting randomly those which were needed, another problem arose of convincing the head teachers why their schools were the ones selected. Presumably, they did not think it a wise thing to allow their students to be used as "guinea-pigs". In fact, in one school, the researcher was told to go back to the education divisional offices to obtain a written permit from the education officer. However, the situation was saved by a staff member who happened to know the researcher and what he was engaged in. This staff member managed to convince the headteacher that the researcher had no ill intentions.

Another problem arose when the headteachers insisted that they had no time for the researcher to go around and collect the information himself. In this case, the headteachers insisted that if the researcher could leave them with the questionnaires, the staff could take them around to the students. In such instances, the researcher had to be adamant in a cordial manner and insist that it was only best that he conduct the exercise himself. The reason for this was plain enough to the headteachers. After all the researcher pointed out to the headteachers, he was more conversant with what he required of the students, and furthermore, they would more likely believe him when he told them that the answers given would not be used against them in any way since they were confidential. Only the researcher would know how a student answered his/her questions. This argument convinced the headteachers of the necessity of the researcher carrying out the exercise himself. In most cases, the researcher was then given a specific day on which he was to go and carry out the exercise.

However, even, with these problems and other trivial ones, the researcher managed to collect his data.

#### Limitations of the study

1) This study does not attempt to explain the etiology of delinquent behaviour. It only seeks to establish the existence or non-existence of a relationship between the specified family environments and juvenile delinquent behaviour. However, the findings may have implications for those who might be interested in preventing juvenile delinquency.

- (2) It is recognized that this study did not deal wholly with the entire juvenile population. For example, dropouts, who do not proceed to form one were not represented. However, it was realized that dropouts at that level are generally very few in number to cause any far-reaching effects to the findings.
- (3) The delinquent offences dealt with in this study do not include the more serious ones such as violent robbery, rape, and others. This may be a limitation as far as official definitions of delinquent acts are concerned. However, the delinquent offences included in this study are ones which, nevertheless constitute a problem in adolescent misconduct. They also form a basis on which the causes of delinquent behaviour can be sought.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is devoted to the presentation of data and discussion of this same data. For the most part, the chapter focuses on the description of our data according to the various categories which will be of importance when we move on to the chapter dealing with testing of hypotheses.

#### The Sample Size

As was projected in our sampling techniques, we expected to obtain a total sample size of 200 respondents. This projected sample size turned out not to have been too far-etched. This was because, after collecting our data, we had a total sample of 235 respondents. These comprised both males and females. These respondents were distributed in various ways throughout our family environments. These family environments included family size, family stability, level of education attained by the parents, the occupation of the parents, residence of the parents, and the religious commitment of the families. The respondents were also distributed variously according to the various types of offences they had engaged in. Such types of offences included running away from home, staying away from school without permission, taking things that do not belong to one, and other related offences. The respondents were also distributed according to the level of delinquency of each respective respondent. These levels of delinquency were based on each respondent's score when all the delinquent offences were added together. The levels of delinquency ranged from little or none to high delinquency.



Table 2 below shows how the sample was distributed by sex

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by sex

Sex of Respondent	Cases	% of Total
Males	119	50.6
Females	116	49.4
Total (N)	235	100.0

The table shows that there were more males than females in the total sample. However, the difference in numbers was quite minimal. We therefore, considered it as insignificant in terms of introducing any biases to the overall findings. Infact we attributed this difference to chance because most of our clusters were of equal size. The clusters in our sample were student classes which comprised between 38 and 40 students. In most cases, students are normally equally distributed to a class, whether they are males or females. In any case, the number of males and females in our sample was more or less equal. This may be due to the fact that boys and girls attend school in the same numbers almost in every part of present-day Kenya. This is largely due to the great emphasis laid on the attainment of education. In this regard, Nyeri district is no exception. In terms of age, our respondents ranged

from 14 to 15 years. This is normally the age at which students enter secondary school if other things remain constant.

Having broken down our data in terms of sex and age, we now proceed to present the data in terms of our family environments, and types of delinquent offenses, and level of delinquents. This descriptive chapter will form the background against which the hypotheses will be tested.

### Family Size

As our operational definition indicated, we measured this variable by the number of brothers and sisters a respondent had, then added these to any other children living with that family. In this way, we obtained the total number of children in that particular family. It was from the average calculated from this total that we determined whether a family was small, medium or large.

Out of the total number of respondents, it was only in two families that there was neither a brother nor a sister. All the rest of the respondents had at least one brother or sister. Also, out of the total, 26.4% had other children living in their families apart from their own brothers and sisters.

Table 3 shows the distribution of number of respondents with brothers and sisters, number of respondents with other children living with them apart from their own brothers and sisters, and the absolute number of children in particular families.

From table 3, we note that the maximum number of brothers and sisters was 12, while the minimum was 1. This means that the range was 11. Of the total respondents, 180 had between 4 and 8 brothers and sisters, with an average of 5.9 (brothers and sisters) per family.

The highest number of other children living in a family (apart from the brothers and sisters) was 8. This was a rather high figure considering that this particular family had its own children. By considering the total number of children living in particular families, the average numbers of children per family was 6.6. This was the average which we used to determine whether a family was small, medium or large.

If a family had 4 children, it was considered to be small. If one had between 5 and 6 children living in it, it was considered medium, while one with 7 and more children was considered large. These family sizes were to a large extent determined by the average number of children calculated for the families in our sample. At the same time, the family planning campaign in Kenya is emphasizing small sized families. The small family, according to the Family Planning Association of Kenya should not exceed 4 children.

**TABLE 3: Respondents with brothers and sisters; with other children**  
living with them and absolute number of children in families

Absolute No. of Children in the Families	Mo. of Respondents with brothers and sisters	% of Total	No. of Respondents with other children	% of Total
1	3	1.3	26	41.99
2	10	4.3	20	32.3
3	14	6.0	7	11.3
4	27	11.6	4	6.5
5	44	18.9	3	4.8
6	45	19.3	-	-
7	33	14.2	1	1.6
8	31	13.3	1	1.6
9	14	6.0	-	-
10	5	2.1	-	-
11	5	2.1	-	-
12	2	0.9	-	-
13	-	-	-	-
14	-	-	-	-
N/A	2	missing	175	missing
		100.0		100.0
<b>Total(N)</b>	<b>235</b>		<b>235</b>	

In this study, we considered the average size of the family in Kenya as too general a measure of family size. This is due to the fact that there are too many variations in the family structure in Kenya.

These differ from one community to the other, such that an overall average size of the family would be misleading.

Hirschi (1969), used the total number of children in the family, as the measure of family size. He did not bother to break them into either small or large by calculating the average for his sample. The measure used by Hirschi shows that there are variations in the way family size has been measured by researchers. This means there is no set procedure.

TABLE 4: Respondents Family Size

Family Size	No. of Families	% of Total (adjusted)
Small	83	35.6
Medium	68	29.2
Large	82	35.2
N/A	2	missing
		100.0
Total (N)	235	

Our evaluation of family size shows that there was very little difference between the number of families which were small and those that were large. This may be explained by the fact already observed that most of our respondents came from families of between 4 and 8 children. This means that the majority of them were clustered around the mean (average was 6.6). This may also explain why there were a substantial number of medium sized families.

### Family Stability

As a family environment factor, family stability was measured by whether a child was living with both parents. If this was not the case, the reason's for the absence of one or both parents were also sought.

TABLE 5: Who the Children were living with

Who they were living with	No. of Respondents	% of Total
Both parents	188	80.0
Mother	38	16.2
Father	4	1.7
Relatives	2	0.9
Other	3	1.3
		100.0
Total (N)	235	

Practically all the respondents lived in some kind of family set-up. The majority indicated living with both the parents. This may be a reflection of the area in which the study was carried out. Children are not abandoned and left on their own in the rural areas without some form of guardianship being set-up. This may be an extension of the Kikuyu tradition which viewed children as belonging to, whole Community. This meant that if the parents of a child were not present, there was always someone to look after that child.

By having the majority of our respondents living with both their parents, we in effect had a majority of what we refer to as "intact" families. These were the one's which had both parents living together with their children. The remaining 47 families, we may refer to as "broken" or unstable families since both parents are not present. This absence of one or both parents was what the Gluecks, (1934); Wootton, (1959); and Hirschi (1969); referred to as the "broken home". In such cases, the children lived with a step-mother or father, with foster parents, or with grand-parents.

The reasons which may lead to the absence of either one or both parents are numerous. They include death, divorce, desertion, separation, abandoning of the children, or a mother remaining unmarried, while at the same time being a parent. This leads to the single-parent family. In all the above instances, the result was the broken family since both parents are not present.

Out of our total sample, there were 20% of such cases as table 6 shows.

Death accounted for 26 of the parents who were absent, thus being the highest contributor of the absence of the parents. The majority of those parents who were absent as a result of death were fathers. These were 25 in number, while mothers were only 3. The large majority of fathers being absent due to death may be explained by the shorter life expectancy of males as age increases. Demographic research has shown that males are more prone to death than females due to the fact that they lead a more demanding life style. Males are adventurous than females in terms of life pursuits. This fact shows its effects in the decreasing number of males as they grow older.

**TABLE 6: Absent parents and reasons for absente**

Reasons for Absence	Those Absent				
	Mother	Father	Both	Total	% of Total
Death	1	23	2	26	55.3
Separation	3	8	-	11	23.4
Desertion	-	2	-	2	4.3
Divorce	-	-	1	1	2.1
Never married	-	5	-	5	10.6
Abandoned Child	-	-	1	1	2.1
Other	-	-	1	1	2.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Separation accounted for the second greatest number of absent parents, while remaining single (never marrying) was the third largest contributor. Both separation and remaining single may be explained by the many social changes which are taking place in Kenya. While remaining single is a factor which has to do with females, social changes have their effects on couples after marriage. After a certain period, couples realize that they are incompatible as life-partners.

This realization of incompatibility consequently leads to separation, with divorce occurring as a last result. This may also explain why some women opt to remain unmarried even after they become parents. Rather than engage in a union which cannot last, they find it more logical to learn to depend on themselves



from the beginning. The result is that the children born in such circumstances never come to know a real father.

Of his 1171 children Muga (1972), found 691 of the parents did not live together as man and wife with their children. The majority of them were divorced, with the rest being single-parents, or with one parent dead. These findings seem to confirm our own as concerns reasons for the absence of the parents.

Level of education attained by parent(s)

Education of the parents, as a family environmental factor is important in many respects. In our case, we were interested in the level of education attained by both the father and mother respectively. The level attained by the parent or parents was bound to have some effects on the children especially in terms of motivation, supervision, and guidance.

Table 7 shows level of education attained by the parents of our respondents ranging from none to the highest level.

TABLE 7: Level of education attained by the Father and Mother

Level of education attained	Father	%	Mother	%
No formal Schooling	30	14.0	39	16.9
Primary School	63	29.8	110	47.6
Secondary School	59	27.4	45	19.5
College education	48	22.3	35	15.2
University education	15	7.0	2	0.9
N/A	20	missing	4	missing
		100.0		100.0
N =	235		235	

More fathers had attained a higher level of education than the mothers. A total of 122 fathers had attained a level of secondary school and above, while only 82 mothers had attained this same level. The majority of the mothers were concentrated in the primary school category. These figures are in conformity with our own expectations. They may be explained by the fact that traditionally, women were viewed as assets. Not in terms of what level of education they had attained, but in terms of how much dowry they would fetch at marriage. Consequently, more men were sent to schools in the early years while women remained at home. Those who attended school never went beyond the primary school level. They dropped-out and awaited marriage by the more educated men.

With the advent of the harambee secondary schools, and the recognition that education is a valuable asset, more women have gone beyond the primary school level. A substantial number have today attended teacher training colleges and universities, which institutions were previously dominated by men. In rural areas there are more women teachers in the primary schools than there are men. The emphasis placed on the acquisition of education in Kenya today is paramount. Males and females are competing for places in the colleges and the national universities on a par.

Incidentally, only 2 of the mothers of the respondents in our sample had attained a university level of education. This was rather surprising since the parents of our respondents could not have been so old as not to have realised the importance of education. On the other hand, they may not have qualified to enter the university and could only attend teacher training and other professional colleges. The figures for the father's and mothers' who had attained a college education did not differ very much. This may be an indicator of the value of education to both males and females.

Muga (1972) found that of his total subjects, 348 of their parents were illiterate, while 717 had achieved an education of between standard two and form three. This happened to be the case with either one or both parents. None of the parents had attained a level of education beyond secondary school. These figures were rather dismal in comparison to our own, but the time interval of 14 years elapsed between the two studies may account for the large discrepancy in the findings. Furthermore, Muga only dealt with the children in the approved schools and remand homes in Kenya. Our sample showed a varied range of educational attainment by the parents from no formal schooling to the highest level attainable.

Other researchers such as Getzels and Jackson (1961), had dichotomized the level of education attained by the parents of their subjects into two categories. There were those who had attained college graduate training, and those who had not. This category (those who had not) were simply referred to as others. These dichotomies were found to be too broad to be used in a country like Kenya where the majority have attained no graduate training. These would definitely fall in the "others" category, thus making it too large. Our own measure of education enabled us to place the parents of our respondents in a wide range of categories. This facilitated the placement of the parents in the various levels of education attained than would have been made possible by the dichotomy used by Getzels and Jackson.

#### Occupation of the Parents

Our fourth major family variable had to do with the occupation of the parent or parents. Under our operational definitions, of this family variable, we considered first the occupation of the father, and then that of the mother, where both parents were present.

Further as a crude measure of socio-economic status we considered the occupation of the father and mother in combination. We therefore, had low, middle, and high socio-economic status categories. Table 8 shows the occupational categories under which each parent fell.

TABLE 8: Occupation of the Father and Mother

Occupation of Parent	Father	%	Mother	%
Peasant farmer of Small Trader	104	50.2	174	75.7
General Worker	17	8.2	9	3.9
Professional	68	32.9	43	18.7
Senior Administrator	18	8.7	4	1.7
N/A	28	missing	5	missing
		100.0		100.0
N =	235		235	

From Table 8, we note that the majority of the parents were concentrated in the peasant farmer/small trader and general worker categories, with the former having the larger majority of both parents. This phenomenon may be explained by the fact that the study was done in a rural area, and therefore, as expected, most of the people are rural peasants earning a living from their small farms. Such farms can only produce enough for subsistence with the little surplus being sold in the rural market. Consequently, the income is quite meagre.

Table 8 also shows that more of the mothers fell in the peasant farmer category than the fathers. This may be due to the fact that more male heads of households go to the urban areas to seek wage employment to subsidize the proceeds from peasant farming.

The general worker category accounted for very few of the parents, while the professional category accounted for quite a substantial number.

General worker was defined as either hotel maid, cleaner, driver, etc. and such types of employment are found more in the urban areas. A reasonable explanation why the professional category had more parents is the prevalence of teachers (who fall in the professional category) in the rural areas. This is supported by the fact that these people like to be posted in their home areas so that they can carry on with other businesses while still pursuing the teaching profession. The senior administrative category accounted for very few of the parents. This may be explained by the fact that most of the positions falling in this category are to be found more in the urban areas than in the rural areas. Those who fall into this category usually have the means to reside with their families in the urban areas and to send their children to schools in these same areas.

When we treated the occupation of each particular father and mother of a respondent in combination, we were able to obtain an index of the socio-economic status of a particular family. Table 9 below shows our findings on this variable.

TABLE 9: Socio-economic status of the Families of our Respondents

Socio-Economic status of the Families	No. of Families	% of Total
Low	141	61.0
Middle	48	20.8
High	42	18.2
N/A	4	missing
		100.0
Total (N)	235	

The majority of the families of our respondents fell in the low socio-economic status category. This was as expected since most of the parents of our respondents (both father and mother) were peasant farmers or small traders. The middle and high socio-economic status categories contributed almost an equal number of families. This may be explained by the fact that a significant number of the parents were professionals. This happened to be the case with mostly the fathers. These helped a lot to raise the socio-economic status of the family.

Muga (1972) had found that most of the parents of his respondents were peasants. 33.3% were employed (meaning they received salaries, no matter what the amount). 10.7% were prostitutes who charged a fee for services rendered, while 14% had no occupation at all. Muga's sample cannot be easily categorized in terms of socio-economic status. The only ones who could be categorized are the peasants and those who had no occupation. The employed could have been categorized arbitrarily as being of middle level status since they were known to be earning, while the prostitutes remained uncategorized due to the variations in what they received for their service.

#### Residence of the Parents

At first glance, this might appear to be a contradictory variable in view of the fact that the study was carried out in the rural area. However, on closer examination, it becomes evident that not all of the parents who come from the rural area reside there permanently. Some of the parents leave the rural area and go to the towns in search of employment. In most cases, it is the father who goes to the urban area while the mother remains in the rural area with the children. These parents who leave the children sometimes visit them now and then.

In view of this, we were interested in where the parent or parents resided with the children, and also in the frequency with which the absent parents visited the children. Table 10 below shows where and with whom the children (respondents) resided.

TABLE 10: Where and with whom the Children resided

Place of Residence	With whom the children resided						% of Total
	Both Parents	Mother only	Father only	Relatives	N/A	Total	
Rural	139	65	3	5	-	212	90.6
Urban	18	3	1	-	-	22	9.4
N/A	-	-	-	-	1	1	missing
Total (N)	157	68	4	5	1	235	
% of Total	67.0	29.0	1.7	2.1	missing		100.0

Table 10 shows that 90.6% of the parents of our respondents resided with their children in the rural areas, while a minority of 9.4% were urban based. The majority of our respondents resided with both parents in the rural area. Those who resided with the mother only in the rural area contributed the second largest majority, while those who were urban based were very few in number. In ordinary circumstances, if a father is present or living, society expects him to visit his children in the rural area. If he is a responsible father, he has this obligation to fulfil.

Muga (1972), found 58.5% of the parents of his respondents were rural based, while 41.5% were urban based. Muga did not, however, break down the parents in terms of who was rural or urban based; whether it was the mother, the father, or both parents. In our case the large majority of mothers residing

in the rural area maybe explained by the fact that fathers usually leave the home area to look for employment. Their destinations in most cases are the urban areas where they receive salaries to subsidize what little is earned from peasant farming. This is the most common form of occupation among rural people.

Ordinarily, salaries to workers are normally paid at the end of the month. It is, therefore, at this time when most of the absent parents visit their families in the rural areas. Table II shows how often some of the absent parents visited their families.

TABLE 11: Frequency of visits by absent parent

Frequency	No. of parents: mother or father	% of Total
Weekly	12	29.3
Monthly	14	34.1
Yearly	6	14.6
Rarely	9	22.0
Not Applicable	194	Missig
N=	235	100.0

As expected, 34.1% of the absent parents visited their children on a monthly basis. Although no attempt was made in this study to know which parent visited the children, the frequency of visits by an absent parent is still an important factor in this study.



This is because it helped us to gauge how often the children saw their absent parent, and how often they came into contact with him/her. This is important in that it is an indicator of parent - child relationship or attachment, and consequently it is vital for socialization of the child.

#### Religious commitment of family

Religion is important to children as a guide to moral conduct in the process of socialization. In this study, we were interested in knowing, whether members of the respondents family belonged to the same religion, the frequency of church attendance, and whether members of the family attended church with the respondents. Out of a total of our 235 respondents, 99.6% belonged to the christian religion, while 0.4% belonged to another religion. This was as we expected, because even though there are so many denominations in Nyeri district, all of them belong to the christian faith. This is not to say that there are no other religions in the district. These, are, however, restricted to the urban areas and include Islam and Hinduism.

In his study Muga (1972), found that all of his respondents were affiliated to some religion. These were, however, distributed in terms of christianity, Islam, and traditionalism. . The reason for this may have been that the subjects in his study had been drawn from all provinces of Kenya in contrast to our own who came from one single district.

95.7% of the parents belonged to the same religion as their children (respondents), while 94.8% of other members of the family (brothers and sisters of our respondents and any other children

who lived with them) belonged to the same. Only a very small minority of the parents of our respondents did not belong to the same religion as their children. This was also the case with other members of the family. Again, this was as expected because it is rare to find a family divided in terms of religious affiliations. This is because such a division is tantamount to a division of loyalties. When a child is born, he/she is indoctrinated and brought up in the religion of the parents with such rituals as baptisms taking place when the children are still young. In later life, the children may (and sometimes do), break away from the religious beliefs of their parents to join another religion of their choice.

The religious affiliations of our respondents together with their families is made more explicit when one looks at how they attended church services. 77% of the parents attended church with their children, while only 23% did not. 76.8% of the other members of the family also attended church with our respondents while again only 23.2% did not. These figures reflect the manner in which members of the same family adhere to religious belief. Table 12 shows how regularly our respondents attended church. The majority attended regularly while very few never attended. The regularity of church attendance could be an indicator of family cohesion in that the respondents attended regularly with their parents and other family members. In rural areas such as the one this study was carried out in, the majority of people attend church services with an unbroken regularity.

**TABLE 12: Frequency of Church Attendance**

Frequency of Attendance	No. of Respondents	% of Total
Every Sunday	82	34.9
Often	101	43.0
Rarely	46	19.6
Never	6	2.6
		100.0
N	235	

When we considered the religious affiliation of the respondents together with the affiliations of other family members, plus the frequency of attendance, all in combination, we were able to come up with a crude measure of the religious commitment of a particular family - which is shown in Table 13.

**TABLE 13: Religious Commitment of Family**

Level of Religious Commitment	No. of Families	% of Total
Little or none	36	14.0
Some Commitment	56	23.8
High Commitment	146	62.1
		100.0
N	235	

Even though the measure used to obtain Table 13 was rather crude, it nevertheless affords us an insight into how religiously committed the families of our respondents were. The majority of

our respondents (62.1%) appear to have come from families with a high regard for religion. However, even with their high regard for religion, the question of how deep their belief goes can only be left to conjecture.

#### The Delinquent Offences

In order to portray how the respondents in our sample had engaged in the various offences, and the frequency with which they had committed these offences, it was necessary to show each offence singly. By showing each offence on its own, it will be possible to also portray how many of the respondents engaged in a particular offence. The responses of the respondents will also be shown. These will provide us with a background on which to build on and make it possible to display the level of delinquency of the respondents.

There were 24 offences in all. Each of these had four types of responses ranging from never having committed the offence, to having committed it quite often. Table 14 shows the responses for each offence and the number of respondents who fall into each response category.

Tables 15 and 16 show the frequency of offences committed by the males and females respectively, and the number who fall into each response category.

**TABLE 14: Frequency of Offences Committed by the Respondents**

OFFENCES	RESPONSES TO THE OFFENCES				Total
	Never	Once or Twice	Several Times	Quite Often	
1 Disobeyed Parents	6	58	33	139	
2 Ran away from home	95	62	35	43	
3 Truancy	63	40	63	69	
4 Sent out of class for misbehaviour	72	111	36	16	
5 suspended or Expelled from School	211	19	3	2	
6 Cheated on any class test	100	83	39	13	
7 Smoked while in School or at home	167	19	32	17	
8 Drank beer, bought or even tried to	170	49	13	3	
9 Taken, used or sold drugs	233	2	-	-	
10 Picked up by Police or put on Probation	233	1	1	-	
11 Gone to parties/dances without permission	87	59	64	25	
12 Driven a car without a licence	221	7	3	4	
13 Taken little things not belong to you	14	71	35	115	
14 Taken valuable things not belong to you	148	60	22	5	
15 Damaged, destroyed private/public property	133	61	39	2	
16 Engaged in Trespass	30	44	43	112	
17 Broken into/tried to, building, to steal	227	5	3	-	
18 Set fires in places they should not be	200	29	5	1	
19 Been in a fist-fight	90	83	28	34	
20 Taken part in gang-fight	219	11	2	3	
21 Beaten up children done, nothing to you	85	79	44	29	
22 Hit your mother or father	231	3	1	-	
23 Used force or threats to get something	122	39	45	29	
24 Concealed weapon on your person	171	41	16	7	
Totals	3328	1036	624	671	
N =					235

Out of the 24 offences shown in table 14, each had been committed, if not quite often, then at least once or twice. In fact, it was only offences number 9 and 10 (taken, used or sold drugs, and being picked up by police or put on probation), which had not been committed with such frequency as the other offences. Only 2 of the respondents had once or twice either used, or sold drugs, while another 2 reported having been picked up by the police or put on probation. One of these 2 respondents had come in contact with the police once or twice, while the other had done so several times.

With the exception of the above two offences, the respondents indicated having committed the offences with a significant frequency. This was similar to the finding reported by Nye et al (1967), Vax, (1967); Brown, (1984).

Even though these figures are quite useful, they are not so meaningful in terms of analysis. In the first place, they would have posed problems of interpretation if each offence was considered on its own. Presented as they were in table 14, they nevertheless offered us a general overview of the frequency with which our respondents had engaged in the offences.

When these figures were broken down by sex, it became clear which gender had engaged in what offence and with what frequency. The results are shown in tables, 15 and 16 for males and females respectively.

TABLE 15: Frequency of Offences Committed by Males

OFFENCES	RESPONSE CATEGORY (Frequency)				Total
	Never	Once or Twice	Several Times	Quite Often	
1 Disobeyed your parents	3	27	18	71	
2 Ran away from home/stayed out all night	45	37	20	17	
3 Stayed away from school without permission	27	30	33	29	
4 Sent out of class for misbehaving	40	62	12	5	
5 Suspended from (or expelled) school	104	14	-	1	
6 Cheated on any class test	58	41	15	5	
7 Smoked while in school or at home	54	16	32	17	
8 Drank, tried to buy, or bought beer	65	39	12	3	
9 Taken, used or sold drugs	117	2	-	-	
10 Picked up by police or put on probation	117	1	1	-	
11 Gone to parties or dances without permission	38	35	36	10	
12 Driven without a licence	106	7	3	3	
13 Taken little things not belonging to you	4	36	22	57	
14 Taken things of value not belonging to you	68	41	28	2	
15 Damaged, destroyed public/private property	55	35	27	2	
16 Engaged in trespass	13	21	23	62	
17 Broken into/tried to, building to steal	113	14	2	-	
18 Set fires in places they should not be	91	23	4	1	
19 Been in a fist-fight	27	44	18	30	
20 Taken part in gang-fights	104	11	1	3	
21 Beaten up children done nothing to you	42	42	19	16	
22 Hit your mother or father	116	2	1	-	
23 Used force or threats to get something	72	20	20	7	
24 Concealed a weapon on your person	84	20	11	4	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1563</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>345</b>	
	N =				119

TABLE 16: Frequency of Offences Committed by Females

OFFENCES	RESPONSE CATEGORY (Frequency)				Total
	Never	Once or Twice	Several Times	Quite Often	
1 Disobeyed your parents	3	31	15	67	
2 Ran away from home/stayed out all night	50	25	15	26	
3 Stayed away from school without permission	36	10	30	40	
4 Sent out of class for misbehaving	32	49	24	11	
5 Suspended from (or expelled) school	107	5	3	1	
6 Cheated on any class test	42	42	24	8	
7 Smoked while in school or at home	113	3	-	-	
8 Drank, tried to buy, or bought beer	105	10	1	-	
9 Taken, used or sold drugs	116	-	-	-	
10 Picked up by police or put on probation	116	-	-	-	
11 Gone to parties or dances without permission	49	24	28	15	
12 Driven a car without a licence	115	-	-	1	
13 Taken little things not belonging to you	10	35	13	58	
14 Taken things of value not belonging to you	80	19	14	3	
15 Damaged, destroyed public/private property	78	26	12	-	
16 Engaged in trespass	17	23	20	56	
17 Broken into/tried to, building to steal	114	1	1	-	
18 Set fires to places they should not be	109	6	1	-	
19 Been in a fist-fight	63	39	10	4	
20 Taken part in gang-fights	114	1	1	-	
21 Beaten up children done nothing to you	43	37	25	11	
22 Hit your mother or father	116	-	-	-	
23 Used force or threats to get something	51	19	24	22	
24 Concealed a weapon on your person	87	21	5	3	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1786</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>326</b>	
	<b>N =</b>				<b>116</b>



Tables 15 and 16 show that with few exceptions, males and females had committed the various offences with almost equal frequency. However, official sources indicate that the level of female delinquency is very low.

The figures in table 16 show that it is only in three of the more serious offences that the females had never engaged.

These three were: taking, using or selling drugs; being picked up by police or put on probation; and having ever hit your mother or father. The males had engaged in all these three offences though with a very low frequency. Apart from the above three, a comparison of the two tables shows that the frequency of committing offences did not differ very much between the sexes, which is contrary to popular belief that female delinquency is negligible. This was similar to the finding reported by Wise (1967), in her study on delinquency among middle-class girls.

Although the frequencies for engaging in offences differed, our findings indicated the difference in ratio between males and females was not as great as official sources seem to indicate. The males in our sample reported having committed the offences more often than the females. This may explain why even official sources show more males than females. Due to their higher frequency in committing the offences, the males are more prone to apprehension.

#### Types or Nature of Offence

The type or nature of offence will be portrayed in terms of how many of our respondents engaged in what type of offence. These will then be shown according to type of offence and sex of respondent. In this case we will have either status, property, or persons offences, or a combination of all types of offence, or two of them such as status-property, status-persons,

or persons-property. In all, we will have 7 different categories for types of offences the respondents could have engaged in. By treating these types of offences in this way, we will be utilizing a variation of the Brown (1984) subscale of offences which had four types of offences or subscales. Table 17 shows the types of offences in general, while Table 18 shows the types of offences by sex.

TABLE 17: Types of Offences Engaged in

Type of Offence Engaged in	No. of Respondents	% of Total
All types	45	32.1
Status-Property	47	33.6
Status-Persons	2	1.4
Persons-Property	8	5.7
Status	19	13.6
Property	18	12.9
Persons	1	0.7
N/A	95	missing
		100.0
N =		235

Table 17 shows that the majority of our respondents had engaged in status and property offences. These comprised 33.6% of the respondents. Almost a similar percentage of the respondents had engaged in all the types of offences (status, property and persons). The reason which may account for this occurrence is that status and property offences are easier to

engage in, compared to persons offences which accounted for only 0.7%. This is because persons offences are more serious than either status or property offences.

When we broke down the types of offences in terms of which sex engaged in what type of offence, the picture became more clear.

TABLE 18: Type of Offence by Sex of Respondents

Type of Offence	SEX OF RESPONDENTS				
	Male	%	Female	%	Total
All Types	30	40	15	23.1	45
Status and Property	22	29.3	25	38.5	47
Status and Persons	1	1.3	1	1.5	2
Persons and Property	6	8.0	2	3.1	8
Status	6	8.0	13	20.0	19
Property	9	12.0	9	13.8	18
Persons	1	1.3	-	-	1
N/A	44	missing	51	missing	95
		100.0		100.0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>		<b>116</b>		
N -					235

Table 18 shows that the absolute total for males was more than for females but the difference was very small. As expected, more males had engaged in all types of offences than the females. This is a reflection of the analysis of each offence separately as shown in tables 15 and 16 in which more males reported engaging in the offences more frequently than the females.

However, when we look at status and property offences, 38.5% of females had engaged in these offences, in comparison to only 29.3% males. This finding may be explained by the fact that, even though females do not engage in the more serious offences, as do males, they nevertheless engage in the less serious ones, and especially offences which deal with status and property. This is made more explicit when one looks at status offences alone in which there are more females than males. Also, the numbers of males and females who had engaged in property offences are equal. The seriousness of persons' offences is underlined by the very low percentage (1.3%), and this is for males only.

These findings were as expected and support the findings of Wise (1967) that girls engage in delinquent offences in the same way as boys with very few exceptions.

#### Level of Delinquency

As our operational definitions indicate, we treated delinquent behaviour in the form of a scale ranging from none or little delinquency, to high delinquency. This scale was constructed by scoring the responses of each respondent using a score ranging from 0.- 3 for each type of response (from never to quite often).

The scores of each respondent were then added together and the respondent placed on the scale according to his/her total score. The usefulness of this scale lies in the fact that it shows in a summary manner how our respondents had engaged in delinquent behaviour. The scale was used because we would not have been able to treat each offence separately for each respondent.

TABLE 19: Respondents by Level of delinquency

Level of Delinquency	No. of Respondents	% of Total
Little or None	95	40.4
Mild	113	48.1
High	27	11.5
		100.0
<b>Total (N)</b>	<b>235</b>	

Table 19 reveals that the greater majority of our respondents had, engaged in delinquent behaviour. This is indicated by the fact that almost 60% of them had engaged in either mild or high level delinquency. The 40.4% of the respondents who fell in the category of those who had engaged in little or no delinquency at all had scored very low on our delinquency scale.

The figures in the table also help to prove our assumption correct in that there are those adolescents in the secondary schools who engage in delinquent behaviour but remain unapprehended. It also shows that adolescents will reveal their delinquent activities if approached in a tactical manner.

A breakdown of level of delinquency by sex shows how, the males and females were distributed according to level of delinquency. The results are shown in table 20 below.

TABLE 20: Level of delinquency by Sex

Level of Delinquency	Sex of Respondent				
	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Little or None	44	37.0	51	44.0	95
Mild	56	47.1	57	49.1	113
High	19	15.9	8	6.9	27
Total	119	100.0	116	100.0	
N =					235

The table shows that more males had engaged in a high level of delinquency than the females. Overall, more of the males had engaged in delinquent behaviour than the females. At the same time, more females had engaged in little or no delinquency than the males.

The findings in the table may be explained by the fact that more males had engaged in the various offences with a higher frequency than had the females. Moreover, more of the males had engaged in more serious offences, which the females had not. The higher (in the frequency of committing the offences, the higher the level of delinquency as shown in tables 15 and 16 which deal with the offences and the frequency of committing them by each sex. With the exception of high level delinquency, there were no significant differences in the other levels of delinquency between both sexes.

The above presentation of respondents and how they were distributed throughout the various categories has so far been descriptive in nature. This has helped to form a basis on which to build the succeeding chapter on testing of hypotheses.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FAMILY ENVIRONMENTS AND DELINQUENCY

In this chapter we try to see the nature of the relationship between our various independent variables and the dependent ones. As discussed in the previous chapter, the independent variables consist of the family environments, while the dependent variable is delinquent behaviour. The chi-square ( $X^2$ ) has been used as a test of independence between the independent and dependent variables and to test for the level of significance of the relationship between variables.

To compute the  $X^2$ , we used the Formula:

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where O denotes the observed frequency, and E, the expected frequency.

To obtain the degrees of freedom (df) for each table, we used:

$$df = (C - 1) \times (R - 1)$$

where C denotes the number of columns, and R, the number of row categories in each table.

The level of significance of association (P) between variables, was obtained by using the  $X^2$  distribution tables.

All the hypotheses in this study were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. In all the tables appearing in this chapter, the total number of respondents was 235 (N = 235), unless otherwise stated.

### Relationship between Family size and Delinquency

Virtually all the studies carried out on juvenile delinquency have had something to do with size of the delinquents family. Hirschi (1969: 239) has observed that "size of family has been and still is an empiricists dream."

Studies which have used official delinquents as respondents have consistently found that delinquents come from large families. The Gluecks (1934 and 1950) found that most of their delinquent boys came from families slightly larger than the average size of the family in England.

This study also attempted to see if a relationship existed between family size and level of delinquency. The findings are shown in table 21.

TABLE 21: Family size by Level of Delinquency

Level of delinquency	Family Size			
	Small	Medium	Large	Total
None (%)	43 (18.3)	32 (13.6)	20 (8.5)	95 (40.4)
Mild (%)	33 (14.0)	30 (12.8)	50 (21.3)	113 (48.1)
High (%)	9 (3.8)	6 (2.6)	12 (5.1)	27 (11.5)
Total Valid (%)	85 (36.1)	68 (29.0)	82 (34.9)	235 (100.0)

Calculated  $X^2$  - 13.88

df - 4



Table  $X^2$  = 13.28

Level of significance = 0.01

HYPOTHESIS 1: The larger the family size, the higher the level of delinquent behaviour.

Table 21 indicates that the largest number of high level delinquency scorers came from large families. This is also the case with those children who had engaged in mild delinquency. On the other hand, the largest number of none delinquents came from small families, while very few of the none delinquents came from the large families. The findings shown in the table seem to support our hypothesis, thus leading us to accept it.

One major reason given for why more delinquents come from large families is that in such families, there is no atmosphere conducive for learning through the process of socialization. Due to the large number of children, there exists a lot of competition for parental attention among the many children. In the process some of the children may feel a sense of parental neglect. In some cases, this neglect, may infact be actual rather than perceived. The result may be a lack of interaction within the family unit. Some of the children end up not being properly integrated to become 'normal' functioning members of society. The acquisition of societal roles, norms, values and mores is inadequate, thus leading some of the children to become delinquents, since the parents have not been able to perform their duty as agents of socialization. In this way, the basis assumption of the theory of culture (that adequate socialization through acquisition of societal norms, values, roles etc) is greatly undermined. In this regard, the likelihood of engaging in delinquent acts becomes very high indeed as children attempt to cope with the reality of the situation

at hand. This is almost similar to the argument advanced by Hirschi (1969 : 240) in his social control theory when he says "that the likelihood of delinquent behaviour increases as an individual's bond to society weakens; one critical element of the bond is the attachment between the parent and the child". The perceived or actual neglect of the child by the parents means that the bond between them has already began to weaken, thus increasing the chances of the child's engaging in delinquent behaviour.

When we tested for the association between family size and level of delinquency of the respondent in our sample, we found the level of significance of association (P) to be very high. It was far above the accepted one of 0.05, since it meant a 99% level of confidence of the association. We, therefore, concluded that a relationship does exist between family size and level of delinquency.

Studies which have used official delinquents as respondents have also found a relationship to exist between family size and delinquent behaviour (Gluecks 1934, and 1950). When self-reports have been used however, the findings on this relationship have been varied. Nye et al (1967), using a version of the delinquent behaviour measure used in this study, found a relationship to exist between sizes of families and delinquent behaviour. His findings were supported by Hirschi (1969) when he tested for the relationship between size of family and frequency of commission of delinquent acts. His finding indicated that children from large families are more likely than children from small families to have committed delinquent acts.

Dentler and Monroe (1961), failed to find a relationship between the size of family of their respondents and reported delinquent acts. The hypotheses tested by Dentler and Monroe had been derived from the researches of Nye (1958);

McCord and McCord (1959), and the Gluecks (1950). All these studies had found a relationship to exist between family size and delinquent behaviour. Consequently, we consider our own finding as regards the relationship between family size and delinquent behaviour to be consistent with the findings of other researchers. This is without regard to whether the studies were concerned with the level of delinquency or with delinquent behaviour per se.

#### Relationship between family Stability and Delinquency

The "broken home" as a factor related to juvenile delinquency has enjoyed wide popularity with the belief that delinquents tend to come from "broken homes" as opposed to "intact" homes ( Gluecks 1934; Wootton 1959). The intact home variable in our study has been referred to as stability of the family. This means that we had what we termed unstable or broken families on the one hand, and the intact or stable families on the other hand.

As discussed previously, the factors which lead to unstable or broken families are death, divorce, separation, desertion, or cases where the mother never marries, whereby the family remains as a single parent family. The effects of death, divorce separation, or desertion are that the children from such families are left with either a single-parent, with foster parents, a step mother or father, or with no sort of guardian at all.

When we tested for the association between the type of family (home) and level of delinquency, the findings are as shown in table 22 below.

TABLE 2: Family (Home) type by Level of Delinquency

Level of delinquency	Family or Home type		
	Intact	Broken	Total
None (%)	86 (36.6)	9 (3.8)	95 (40.4)
Mild (%)	84 (35.7)	29 (12.3)	113 (48.1)
High (%)	17 (7.2)	10 (4.3)	27 (11.5)
Total Valid (%)	187 (79.5)	48 (20.4)	235 (100.0)

Calculated  $X^2 = 13.54$

df = 2

Table  $X^2 = 10.60$

Level of Significance = 0.006

HYPOTHESIS 2: The less the intactness of the family, the higher the level of delinquency.

Our findings indicate that most of our respondents came from intact families while very few came from broken ones. Further, more of those who had engaged in a mild level of delinquency came from intact families in larger numbers than from broken families. In fact, there were more respondents who had engaged in delinquency from intact homes than (those who came) from broken homes.

Hirschi (1964: 243) found that "the difference in behaviour between children from broken homes and unbroken ones did not justify the great emphasis placed on the broken home factor in

common-sense explanations of delinquency. There were no dearth of boys from broken homes in the present sample".

These findings by Hirschi are consistent with our own as shown in table 22. This leads us to reject our hypothesis about the relationship between the two variables. A major reason which could explain these findings is that in the total population, there are more intact families than broken ones. Yet, children from these intact families do engage in delinquent behaviour. This is no exception as far as the present sample is concerned. There are more intact families than there are broken ones.

Self report studies have found little or no overall relationship between the broken home and delinquent behaviour. The present study used the same tool for measuring delinquent behaviour and found a relationship to exist between home-type and delinquent behaviour. Dentler and Monroe (1961), found a level of significance of 0.3 when they tested for the association between broken homes and theft. Hirschi (1969) also failed to find an overall relationship between the two variables. He, however, maintained that there is a relationship between the broken home and delinquency, only that the relation is very weak.

The absence of one parent is certainly bound to have its effects on the children especially where the socialization process is concerned. To symbolic interactionists, the absence of a parent, for example the father, deprives the children of a relevant symbol in the form of a father image and its related habits. The ensuing result is that this deprivation facilitates the likelihood of delinquent behaviour since the relevant symbol is absent to reinforce the learning process of the child.

This perspective would be applicable in explaining the delinquent behaviour of children from broken homes. However, the findings in this study do not seem to support the interactionist view. This may be explained by the fact that the socialization process in the rural areas is not the duty of the parents alone. It is viewed as the responsibility of the community, and especially so, in cases where there are extended families. If a nuclear family breaks up, the extended family takes up the duties previously carried out by the nuclear family. These include the socialization of the children.

One major reason which may explain the findings in this study (the very high level of significance of the relationship between type of family and delinquency), is that we did not deal with one type of family alone. We treated the type of family as a dichotomy (intact and broken) while other scholars have dealt mainly with the relationship between the broken home and delinquency (Nye 1958; Dentler and Monroe, 1961; Hirschi, 1969).

Johnson (1986), treated the home type in terms of which parent was present. He tested for the association between home type and self-reported delinquent behavior and failed to find a significant relationship. He however, found that home type is moderately, but significantly related to self-reported official trouble.

These findings by Johnson led him to observe that "the typical conclusion is that the quality of the parent-child relationship (often termed the parent-child attachment) rather than the intactness of the family, matters most in determining the actual behavior of the children" (Johnson, 1986:65).

This implies that we should be more interested in the parent-child relationship rather than the intactness or stability of a family in order to determine the behavior of the children. This is because, intact families do not necessarily mean that there is emotional stability for the children especially if the parents are not getting along. This is exemplified by the fact that children from intact families engage in delinquent behaviour as do those from broken families. The absence of emotional stability for the children in intact families may lead to a weaker parent-child attachment. This in turn leads to the weakening of the bond between the child and the parent. The result is that the child does not internalize the values, norms, roles etc which are imparted to it by the parents. This, of course, means that the child receives inadequate socialization, which may lead to delinquency.

Relationship between level of education attained  
by parents and delinquency

The education attained by the parent or parents of a child is an important factor, not only in its relation to the behaviour of a child, but also in its relation to other social phenomena, such as the occupation of the parents. However, the question of whether the educational level attained by the parents is related to delinquency of the children, has remained unconfirmed.

Muga (1972), found that most of the parents of the delinquent children studied had attained a low level of education. Muga did not, however, indicate whether it was the Mother or the Father who had attained the low level of education. He also did not test for a relationship between his variables.

Tables 23 and 24 show the level of education attained by the fathers and mothers of the respondents by level of delinquency of the respondents.

Table 23: Fathers education by level of delinquency

Level of delinquency	Level of education attained by father			
	No formal Schooling	Secondary and below	College and above	Total
None (%)	10 (4.7)	48 (22.3)	33 (15.3)	91 (42.3)
Mild (%)	13 (6.0)	63 (29.2)	25 (11.6)	101 (46.9)
High (%)	6 (2.8)	12 (5.6)	5 (2.3)	23 (10.7)
Total Valid (%)	29 (13.5)	123 (57.2)	63 (29.2)	215 (100.0)



NOTE: There are 20 missing observations

Calculated  $X^2$  = 6.68

df = 4

Table  $X^2$  = 5.39

Level of Significance = 0.25

TABLE 24: Mother's education by level of delinquency

Level of delinquency	Level of education attained by Mother			
	No formal Schooling	Secondary and below	College and over	Total
None (%)	14 (6.1)	58 (25.1)	23 (9.9)	95 (41.1)
Mild (%)	19 (8.2)	80 (34.6)	12 (5.2)	111 (47.2)
High (%)	6 (2.6)	17 (7.4)	2 (0.9)	25 (10.8)
Total Valid (%)	39 (16.9)	155 (67.1)	39 (16.0)	231 (100.0)

Note: There are 4 missing observations

calculated  $X^2$  = 8.82

df = 4

Table  $X^2$  = 7.78

Level of Significance = 0.10

Hypothesis 3: The lower the level of education attained by the parents, the higher the level of delinquent behaviour.

As both tables 23 and 24 show, as the level of education attained by the parents (father and mother) increases, the level

of delinquency of the children decreases. More of our respondents whose parents had attained a level of education of secondary and below had engaged in a higher level of delinquency. Overall, the number of children who had engaged in delinquent behaviour had parents who either had had no formal schooling or had had a level of secondary and below. These findings thus confirm our hypothesis that as education of the parents increases, the level of delinquency decreases,

This does not however, confirm that education of parents and delinquency of the children are related in a significant manner. In both cases for father and mother respectively, the level of significance of the relationship was far below the conventional 0.05. We, therefore, concluded We therefore, concluded that a significant relationship does not exist between the education of the parents and the delinquent behaviour of the children.

Dentler and Monroe (1961) had found a lack of association between father's education and self-reported delinquency. Their test for association showed a level of significance of 0.5. Their measure for level of education attained by the father was no different from our own since they ranged from college education through high school graduate, to less than high school graduate. The near similarity in the measures used for both education and delinquent behaviour by Dentler and Monroe and in our study, may have contributed to obtaining the same findings. However, Hirschi (1969: 70) using a different measure for father's education, obtained the same result. He concluded that fathers education by self-reported delinquency "suggests at best a trend in the direction of a negative relation."

Research on delinquency has had little to do with mother's education especially as a factor related to the delinquency of the children. Where mother's education has been mentioned, it has been used as an index of some other variable such as socio-economic status of the family (Dentler and Monroe, 1961).

Even though an overall relationship does not seem to exist between the level of education attained by the parents and delinquent behaviour of the children, this does not diminish the importance of the education of the parents and the behaviour of the children. The findings in this study, and the confirmation of the hypothesis bear this fact. Children whose parents have attained a low level of education seem to engage more in delinquent behaviour than those whose parents have attained a high level of education.

Children whose parents have attained a low level of education receive no motivation at all. This is especially so since the children lack a relevant symbol to identify with. Neither the mother nor the father act as relevant identification symbols for the children. This absence of motivation to the children, may consequently lead to the absence of any guidance. In such circumstances, the children are left on their own to familiarize themselves with the reality. Due to the absence of relevant symbols for the children to emulate, the likelihood of engaging in delinquent behaviour becomes very high.

On another level, Merton's theory of differential opportunity may be used to explain why children of parents of low education engage in delinquent behaviour more. Since education in our society is directly related to occupation, and consequently

income level, parents with low education may in most cases have low incomes. This may have a direct effect on the children who want various amenities of life, yet they cannot acquire them since their parents do not have the means. In order to acquire such items as money and other socially required items, the children may very likely engage in delinquent behaviour. After all, their parents are unable to provide them with such items which societal members value. The simplest and cheapest way of achieving them is by obtaining them through means which are not socially accepted.

#### Relationship between occupation of Parents and Delinquency

The occupation of parents, and more notably, that of the father has been used often as an indicator of the socio-economic status of the family. In some instances, father's education has been included to come up with a refined index of socio-economic status.

In delinquency research, mother's occupation has rarely been included as a socio-economic status index. Only in few studies has mother's occupation been used to refine the measure of socio-economic status of the family.

In this study we were interested in both the occupation of the father and that of the mother. These two were used as indexes of socio-economic status of the family. This is in view of the traditional belief that delinquents come from families of low socio-economic status. Studies which have used official delinquents as respondents have found with unvarying consistency that delinquents come from homes in which incomes are low and the quality of family life poor (Gluecks, 1950 and 1962; Muga, 1972).

Our findings on father's and Mother's occupations by level of delinquency of our respondents are shown in tables 25 and 26 respectively.

TABLE 25: Father's Occupation by level of delinquency

Level of Delinquency	Father's Occupation		
	Peasant or General work	Professional or Senior Administrator	Total
None (%)	45 (21.7)	44 (21.3)	89 (43.0)
Mild (%)	61 (29.5)	36 (17.4)	97 (46.9)
High (%)	15 (7.2)	6 (2.9)	21 (10.1)
Total Valid (%)	121 (58.4)	86 (41.5)	207 (100.0)

Note: There are 28 missing observations

Calculated  $X^2$  = 4.53

df = 2

Table  $X^2$  = 2.77

Level of Significance = 0.25

Table 25 shows that the majority of our respondents who had engaged in high level delinquency had father's who fell in the peasant farmer or general worker category. These totalled 7.2% of the total. Only 2.9% of the high delinquency scorers had fathers who fell in the professional and senior administrator category of occupation.

Studies which have used the self-report as the measure of delinquent behaviour have persistently found no relationship to exist between father's occupation and delinquent behaviour. (Nye, 1958; Dentler and Monroe, 1961; Hirschi, 1969). This was the same finding which we came up<sup>Δ</sup> when we tested for the association between the two variables. The level of significance of the relationship between father's occupation and delinquency was too low. This led us to conclude the absence of a significant relationship between the two variables.

However, when the relationship between mothers occupation and level of delinquency was tested, the finding was a significant one, as table 26 shows.

TABLE 26: Mother's occupation by level of delinquency

Level of Delinquency	Mother's Occupation		
	Peasant or General Worker	Professional or Senior Administrator	Total
None (%)	65 (28.3)	30 (13.0)	95 (41.3)
Mild (%)	94 (40.9)	16 (6.9)	110 (47.8)
High (%)	22 (9.6)	3 (1.3)	25 (10.9)
Total Valid (%)	181 (78.8)	49 (21.2)	230 (100.0)

Note: there are 5 missing observations

Calculated	$X^2$	-	10.26
	df	-	2
Table	$X^2$	-	9.21
Level of Significance		-	0.01

As with the relationship between father's occupation and delinquency, more of our respondents who had engaged in high level delinquency had mother's who fell in the peasant farmer or general worker category of occupation. These totalled 9.6% of the total of our respondents. Only 1.3% of our respondents who had engaged in high level delinquency had mothers in the professional and senior administrative category of occupation.

The relationship between mother's occupation and level of delinquency was found to be highly significant at the 0.01 level. Even though previous studies have not directly tested for this relationship, tests similar to our own have been done. Dentler and Monroe (1961), for example, tested for association between working mothers and theft by juveniles, and found a level of significance of 0.9. Most of their respondents were, however concentrated in the category of mother s who were unemployed.

Hirschi (1969) tested for the association between mother's employment and self-reported delinquency and came to the conclusion that the relation between the two was not particularly strong even when other antecedent variables such as family status, mother's supervision, and number of siblings were controlled for. The strength of the association was found to be a correlation coefficient of 0.4.

When we looked at the occupation of the parents of our respondents (both mother and father or as the case may have been),

we were able to come up with an index of the socio-economic status of the family. Table 27 shows our findings when the association between socio-economic status of the family and level of delinquency was tested.

TABLE 27: Socio-economic status of family by level of delinquency

Level of delinquency	Socio-economic status of family			
	Low	Middle	High	Total
None (%)	48 (20.8)	22 (9.5)	25 (10.8)	95 (41.1)
Mild (%)	74 (32.0)	23 (9.9)	14 (6.1)	111 (48.1)
High (%)	19 (8.2)	3 (1.3)	3 (1.3)	25 (10.8)
Total Valid (%)	141 (61.0)	48 (20.7)	42 (18.2)	231 (100.0)

Note; There are 4 missing observations

Calculated	$X^2$	=	10.13
	df	=	4
Table	$X^2$	=	9.49
Level of significance		=	0.05

Hypothesis 4: The lower the socio-economic status of the parents, the higher the level of delinquency.

The findings in table 27 indicate that 8.2% of our respondents who had engaged in high level delinquency came from low socio-economic status families, while only 1.3% came from high status families. Even these children who had engaged in



mild level delinquency were concentrated in the low socio-economic status category. The level of significance of the relationship was quite high since it stood at 0.05. These findings confirm our hypothesis, thus leading us to accept it.

However, research has shown that the relation between socio-economic status and the commission of delinquent acts is very small (Nye et al 1967; Dentler and Monroe, 1961; Reiss and Rhodes, 1961). And yet, official sources indicate that the juvenile courts and institutions are "overflowing with the socio-economic dregs of society" (Hirschi, 1969:66) This may be a reflection of the biased manner in which the methods of apprehension and sentencing of juvenile delinquents is carried out.

When Dentler and Monroe (1961) tested for the association between socio-economic status and delinquency, they found that the relation was not a significant one. Even when they devised a new index to measure socio-economic status by including father's occupation and education, together with mother's education, they found that the likelihood of association was reduced even further to a level of 0.5.

Nye (1958) found a relationship to exist between socio-economic status and delinquent behaviour, but the correlations were too low.

One major reason which may explain the prevalence of children from low socio-economic status families being found in large numbers in juvenile delinquent institutions is the biased manner of apprehension and sentencing. The entire juvenile justice system adopts a biased viewpoint toward children from low socio-economic strata who engage in delinquent behaviour. Children

from high socio-economic status families hardly ever reach the juvenile courts since "things are arranged" with the relevant authorities for their release. However, children from low socio-economic strata do not have the means nor the access to the relevant authorities. They, therefore, are apprehended, charged, and may in most instances end up being sentenced. This means that every time official statistics are used, a relation will always be found to exist between socio-economic status and delinquency. One can interpret this from the Marxist point of view. The agents of social control in society are seen as serving the "owner class", that is, the high socio-economic status groups who own and control the means of production. Delinquency is therefore, seen as central to capitalistic societies, and its prevention, only possible through social reorganization along Marxist-socialist lines.

The findings in our study show that a large number of delinquent children come from the low socio-economic strata. This can perhaps be explained from Merton's standpoint about the existence of differential opportunities for people in society. Merton identified the cultural and social structures of society. The cultural structure consists of defined goals, purposes and interests which are accepted as legitimate for all members of society. The social structure, on the other hand, defines, regulates and controls the acceptable means of achieving these goals through norms, mores, and other institutions. Essentially, therefore, there exists the defined goals, but no emphasis upon the institutional procedures for achieving these goals. Such goals include for example, success through achievement of education. Success in this case may be in terms of occupation

and higher monetary gains. Individuals in society find it hard to achieve these goals through the legitimate and acceptable means. Therefore, as Merton put it, "which of the available procedures is most efficient in netting the culturally approved value? The technically most effective procedure becomes typically preferred to institutionally prescribed conduct." (Merton R. K., 1968: 189). This may explain why people from lower socio-economic strata revert more to deviant behaviour in the attempt to secure the success goals in society. They do not have the ability to secure the goals through the legitimate means. This may also explain why children from low socio-economic status families engage more in delinquent behaviour than those from high socio-economic status families. To them, it may be an attempt to conform to the socially accepted behaviours in order to achieve what their parents cannot obtain for them.

#### Relationship between Residence of parents and delinquency

As is generally the case, rural people migrate to the urban areas to look for paid employment to supplement the meagre earnings obtained from the farms. In most instances, it is the men who migrate, while the women are left behind to look after the children. These absent parents are "normally" expected to visit their families at certain times. For most families, such times occur at the end of every month since this is the time when most salaries are paid. While some of these absent parents visit their families on a regular basis which could be weekly or monthly, others rarely or never visit their families.

The frequency of these visits by the absent parent is an important factor in contributing to the growth and socialization

of the children. A prolonged absence may result in the lack of parent-child relationship (attachment), and consequently in indented socialisation. This is because the absent parent is not playing his/her role in the socialisation process of the children. His role as a father and source of authority is quickly eroded due to his prolonged absence.

Our sample showed that 67.2% of our respondents were residing with both their parents, 15.3% had no parents, while 17.4% were residing with one parent. This means that the other parent had migrated. It was this 17.4% of absent parents whom we tested our hypothesis on.

TABLE 28: Frequency of visits by level of delinquency

Level of delinquency	Frequency of visits		
	A month and Less	More than a Month and above	Total
None (%)	6 (14.6)	2 (4.9)	8 (19.5)
Mild (%)	19 (46.3)	8 (19.5)	27 (65.8)
High (%)	1 (2.4)	5 (12.2)	6 (14.6)
Total Valid (%)	26 (63.3)	15 (36.6)	41 (100.0)

Calculated  $X^2$  = 6.63, df = 2

Table  $X^2$  = 5.99

Level of significance = 0.05

Hypothesis 5: The lower the frequency of visits by an absent parent, the higher the level of delinquent behaviour.

As table 26 shows, the number of absent parents who visited their families was quite small. Even then, it provided us with some insight into the relationship between frequency of visits by an absent parent and level of delinquency.

Those children whose parents visited them within a duration of a month or less had engaged in large numbers in mild level delinquency. Only 2.4% of those whose parents visited them with the same frequency (a month and less) had engaged in high level delinquency.

On the other hand, children whose parents visited them within a period lasting more than a month and above, had engaged in high level delinquency at the rate of 12.2%. In fact, only 4.9% of the children whose parents visited them with the same frequency (more than a month and above) were non delinquents.

Even though these percentages of absent parents are quite small due to the overall numbers of absent parents, the findings shown in table 28 lead us to accept our hypothesis.

Furthermore, the level of significance of the relationship was highly significant at the 0.05 level. We, therefore, conclude that a significant relationship does exist between frequency of visits by an absent parent and level of delinquency.

The findings shown in table 28 and the equally significant finding of the relationship lends credence to our observation that prolonged absence of the parent creates a void in the socialization process of the children. The lack of a suitable setting for the creation of a parent - child relationship may contribute to the likelihood of the child developing antisocial tendencies. This is because the absent parent does not play his/her role in the child's

socialization. This may be especially so in cases where the father never visits the children, or in cases where the family is a single parent one. In this case, the mother has to leave the children with substitute parents. In either of the above cases, there exists the chances of inadequate socialization, which may lead the children to develop antisocial tendencies.

From the point of view of symbolic interactionism, there is an absence of relevant symbols. In the case of a father who never visits his children, the image of the father as a symbol is lacking for the children to give meaning to it. Since symbolic interactionism suggests that socialization is never ending, such relevant images as the father or mother become vital to the children. Their very absence raises the likelihood of delinquency of the children who have to create their own symbols and interpret them in their own way.

#### Relationship between the religious commitment of the family and delinquency.

The existing literature shows that religion has had little to do with delinquency, whether in theory or in empirical research. Scholars in the field of delinquency have been more interested in only whether the subjects in their samples were affiliated to a religious denomination, and if so, how often they attended church services (Wootton, 1959; Dentler and Monroe, 1961; Muga, 1972).

In order to test our hypothesis on religion in this study, we went further than only inquiring into the religious affiliations of our respondents. This is because almost every<sup>A</sup> claims to be affiliated <sup>(one)</sup> to one or the other religious denomination. This was no exception as far as the respondents in our sample were concerned. All belonged to the christian religion. We, therefore, went further and inquired into the frequency of church attendance with other family members. This is the index which we used to gauge the level of religious commitment of the families of the respondents in our sample. In doing this,

we were guided by the belief that the family is larger than the individual, and consequently more influential on individual action.

Wootton (1959), had found that the majority of the delinquents in her collection of studies were non-church attenders, while those in the control group were regular church attenders. Muga (1972), also found that all of the delinquent children studied were affiliated to some religion. It could have been the case that even though the children in Muga's study were affiliated to some religion, they did not attend church services, nor did the other members of their families. Religion is imparted to children as a form of moral guidance in the socialization process. We should, therefore, expect to find differences in behaviour between those children who come from families which are deeply committed to religion, and those who are not.

Tables 29 and 30 show our findings when we tested for the relationship between religious commitment and delinquency.

**TABLE 29: Frequency of Respondents Church attendance by Level of Delinquency**

Level of delinquency	Frequency of Church attendance			
	Rarely or Never	Often	Every time	Total
None (%)	12 (5.1)	43 (18.3)	40 (17.0)	95 (40.4)
Mild (%)	24 (10.2)	50 (21.3)	39 (16.6)	113 (48.1)
High (%)	16 (6.8)	8 (3.4)	3 (1.3)	27 (11.5)
Total Valid (%)	52 (22.1)	101 (43.0)	82 (34.9)	235 (100.0)

Calculated  $X^2 = 27.65$ ,  $df = 4$ , Table  $X^2 \leq 14.86$

Level of Significance = 0.005

As table 29 shows the largest contribution of high delinquency scorers was among those who rarely or never attended church services. Among those who attended quite often and every time, was to be found the largest contribution of none delinquents. This shows that as the frequency of attendance increases, the likelihood of engaging in delinquent behaviour decreases. In fact, the relationship between frequency of church attendance and delinquency was found to be highly significant at the 0.005 level. This led us to conclude that a significant relationship exists between church attendance and delinquency.

The relationship between religious commitment of the family and level of delinquency is shown in table 30.

TABLE 30: Religious commitment of family by level of delinquency

Level of delinquency	Religious commitment of family			
	Little or None	Some Commitment	High Commitment	Total
None (%)	3 (1.3)	21 (8.9)	71 (30.2)	95 (40.4)
Mild (%)	16 (6.8)	28 (11.)	69 (29.4)	113 (48.1)
High (%)	14 (6.0)	7 (2.9)	6 (2.6)	27 (11.5)
Total Valid (%)	33 (14.1)	56 (23.7)	146 (62.2)	235 (100.0)

Calculated  $X^2$  - 19.22  
df - 4  
Table  $X^2$  - 14.86  
Level of Significance - 0.005



Hypothesis 6: The less the religious commitment of the family, the higher the level of delinquency.

Table 30 shows that of the total number of high delinquency scorers, 6% came from families of little or no religious commitment, while only 2.6% came from families of a high religious commitment. On the other hand, only 1.3% of the none delinquents came from the families with little or no religious commitment, while 30.2% of the none delinquents came from families with a high religious commitment.

The level of significance of the relationship between religious commitment and level of delinquency was very high. (0.005). The percentages shown in table 30 and the equally high level of significance of the relationship lead us to conclude that a significant relationship exists between the two variables. These findings support our hypothesis and lead us to accept it.

Religion in Kenya, as is generally the case, is imparted to children from a very early age. These children are taught to avoid everything and every action that is not viewed as acceptable in the eyes of God.

These would include acts such as truancy, stealing, fighting and various others.

These same acts are all included and considered as juvenile delinquent offences in this study. By teaching children to follow the doctrines of their religion, and by practising these doctrines themselves so that the children may emulate them, the parents are in actuality putting the socialization process into force. In this case, the theory of culture becomes very applicable in interpreting the findings on this hypothesis. Since religion in Kenya is

imparted to children from an early age, in the process of imparting religion to children, cultural values, norms, mores and goals are in effect transmitted to the children. In this regard, the children who fail to internalize the teachings imparted through religious teaching, may fail to become adequately socialized. They are, therefore, not fully integrated in society and this may easily lead to delinquent behaviour tendencies.

In the preceeding chapter, we have so far tested the relationship between the various independent variables and dependent ones, using the chi-square test. The findings discussed in this chapter will be presented in summary form in the next chapter in which we will also present our conclusions based on these findings.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

#### Summary of the Findings

In this study, the relationship between certain specified family environments and delinquent behaviour was tested. These specified family environments were:

- (1) Family size
- (2) Family stability
- (3) Level of education attained by the parents
- (4) Occupation of the parents
- (5) Residence of the parents
- (6) Religious commitment of the family.

Delinquent behaviour was measured using a modified version of the Nye (1958) delinquent behaviour scale. There were in all, 24 delinquent behaviour items. These had the same responses ranging from never committed the act, to having committed the act quite often. These were scored 0 to 3 on the scale.

Six hypotheses were formulated in this study, and tested using the chi-square test for independence and for significance of association. The level of significance of the relationship between the variables was measured at the 0.05 level. That is, at the 95% confidence level. Out of these six hypotheses, five were accepted while one was rejected. The rejected one was hypothesis 2 which concerned family stability.

Out of the six hypotheses tested, five of them were found to contain relationships which were significant at or above the 0.05 level of significance. Hypothesis 3, which concerned the level of education attained by the parents, though accepted on the basis of percentages, was found to contain a relationship which was not significant.

To interpret the findings, three theoretical approaches were used. These were not confined to any one of the findings. They were employed on the basis of their adequacy in interpreting the findings such that one, two or more would be used to interpret one hypothesis. These three theoretical approaches were, however, found to be closely related to the process of socialization which is central to interpretations of delinquent behaviour.

### Conclusion

This study was exceptional in that it was the first of its kind to be carried out in Kenya. By this, we allude to the methodology used in this study; that is:

- (1) The questionnaire which was in the form of a self report, and was completed by the respondents themselves.
- (2) The sample selected also differed significantly in that it did not focus on convicted or apprehended juvenile delinquents.

However, other studies concerning juvenile delinquency have been carried out; for example, Muga, 1972.

The data gathered in the course of the present study was found to be useful both on the side of theory and also on the empirical side.

Various researchers have tested for the relationship between different social factors and juvenile delinquency. The methods used to do this have been varying from one researcher to the other. Some have used official delinquents (those who have come into contact with the institutions of juvenile delinquency prevention such as the police, juvenile courts, approved schools and remand homes), while others have used samples drawn from the juvenile population without regard to their known or unknown delinquent behaviours.

The findings from these studies have been also varying depending mostly on the type of respondents used. Scholars who have used official delinquents as their respondents have invariably found a relationship to exist between the social factors and delinquent behaviour. (The Gluecks, 1934, 1950, 1962; Healy 1915; Wootton, 1959; and Muga, 1972). These studies have found that more delinquents come from large families, from broken families, from families in which the parents have a low education, and also from low socio-economic strata. When tested for significance, the relationships have been found to be significant.

On the other hand, those who have used samples drawn from the juvenile population without regard to their known delinquencies have failed to find an overall relationship to exist between various family environments and delinquent behaviour (Nye, 1958; Johnson, 1986). Some family factors such as family size have been found to be significantly related to delinquent behaviour, while others such as the broken home have uncovered no relationship. However, in most instances, the numbers of delinquent children from the various family environments are more than non-delinquents. These are the same findings which were uncovered by this study. We failed to find an overall relationship between all the family environments and the delinquent behaviour of the respondents.

Out of the six hypotheses which were tested in this study five were found to contain significant relationship to exist between the independent variables and the dependent ones. Tests of statistical significance showed that the relationships between family size and delinquent behaviour, between socio-economic status and delinquent behaviour, between frequency of visits by absent parents and delinquent behaviour, between type

of family and delinquent behaviour, and also between the religious commitment of the family and delinquent behaviour, were all significant at or below the 0.05 level of significance. This shows that, even though the relationship between the level of education attained by the parents was not found to be significant, a relationship still does exist between certain family factors and delinquent behaviour.

In every instance, there were more children who reported delinquent behaviour who came from large families, from families in which the parents have attained a low level of education, from low socio-economic status families, from families in which the absent parents rarely visit their children, and from families with little or no religious commitment. The rejection of the hypothesis which dealt with type of family contradicts the firm belief that more delinquents come from broken homes than from intact ones. This means that, in order to understand this relationship, one should look further than only the type of family into the parent-child relationships which may have more explanatory power.

Overall, the findings of this study are an indication that there are more adolescents who engage in delinquent behaviour than is generally portrayed in official statistics. This would seem to confirm the observation that the entire Juvenile Justice system operates on a selective basis. In this way, so many adolescents who engage in delinquent behaviour are left unapprehended. Consequently, this needs some attention in order to attempt to remove the selective nature of apprehension and sentencing by the agents of juvenile justice.

By uncovering a relationship to exist between the various family environments and the delinquent behaviour of the children from these families and by the attempt to explain the findings using the three theoretical approaches, namely, the theory of culture, symbolic interactionism, and Merton's differential opportunity perspective, this study has underscored the view that in most cases where adolescents engage in delinquent behaviour, it is the result of inadequate socialization. The family, as the immediate agent of socialization, has in this instance failed to perform a most vital duty. It has failed to transmit the social values to the children so that they become 'normal' and functioning members of society. Consequently, in the efforts made to prevent juvenile delinquency, the family should play a central role. This is in view of the fact that it plays the most important part in moulding the behaviour of the children during the process of socialization.

This study, by uncovering the existence of adolescents who engage in delinquent behaviour and who reside in the rural areas, has helped to show that juvenile delinquency is not restricted to the urban areas alone. The existence of juvenile delinquency in the rural areas may be a reflection of social changes which are taking place in Kenya. This may also be an indication that as a country experiences social and economic changes in terms of development, its level of crime-rate rise proportionately. (MAY)

The findings and the conclusions made in this study have two major implications which may contribute towards, the efforts being made to prevent juvenile delinquency in Kenya.

### Implications for delinquency prevention efforts

This study has uncovered two major implications which may be used towards the efforts to prevent adolescents <sup>from</sup> engaging in delinquent behaviour.

(1) That juvenile delinquency needs to be looked at from a wider perspective, than has been normally the case. This is to say that in order to seek to understand why an adolescent becomes delinquent or engages in delinquent behaviour, one should not only study the individual adolescent. One should go further and study the family of origin of the adolescent. This will provide a general background on why the adolescent reverts to delinquent behaviour.

Further, in offering "treatment" to the juvenile delinquents the treatment should not be restricted to the adolescent alone. It should be extended to the family of the delinquent child, and especially to the parents. This is in view of the fact that the family acts as the first agent of socialization. Delinquent behaviour is related to inadequate socialization. In order to, at least, prevent children from reverting to delinquent behaviour, comprehensive family life education should be offered to families in the form of guidance and counselling. This is in view of the fact observed by Gottfredson (1986:106) that "delinquency prevention programs have not been implemented in ways that allow a careful assesment of the manner in which they are carried out or allow one to make strong references about their effects."



A family based prevention program would allow room for evaluation of their success or failure. In later stages such a program can then be extended to the school - setting to involve both the students and the teachers, together with other members of the community since they are also important agents of socialization.

(2) That the study of delinquency should not confine itself to dealing with officially termed delinquents. Samples should be drawn from the entire juvenile population, and from juvenile delinquent institutions. Data can then be obtained from the two samples in order to know the home experiences of the two samples. As the present study has demonstrated, adolescents are ready to report on their hitherto unknown delinquent tendencies. Comparisons of the information gained from the two samples may prove useful towards the search for causes of delinquency, and consequently towards its prevention.

#### Further Research

One of the major shortcomings in delinquency related research is that it is usually short-term. In a developing country like Kenya, long-term oriented research becomes very necessary. Longitudinal research should be designed and carried out in various parts of the country. Such research should deal with children born at specific periods, (birth cohorts) who should be selected as the research subjects. These should be followed with reports on their behaviour being taken at certain specified times using questionnaires and interview schedules. These should be administered to the research subjects, and others to the parents of these subjects. Data should also be obtained from school records, and from police and court records. Such an approach may be a step towards uncovering what are the major

causes of delinquency which have so far remained obscure. This would be similar to the study carried out by West and Farrington (1977) which involved the school, the parents, the police and the courts. The study was carried out over a period of 20 years.

At the same time a fund should be set aside dealing with this kind of research. This is because, the funding needed for this type of longitudinal research is quite enormous. However, in the face of the changing times, this should not be so difficult since it will have its results in the future.

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This is part of a study... people in this area... they are not... your... about you.

To see... will... your... they... are... in your... the... to help... your...

...

...

A P P E N D I X

...



Questionnaire number \_\_\_\_\_ Respondent Sex \_\_\_\_\_

This is part of a study intended to find ways to make life better for young people in this area. As such, so that we can offer you adequate guidance, we need to know a few things about you; Specifically, we need to know something about your family, your experiences and problems if any. The questions below are meant for you to answer so that we can learn the above things about you.

No one in this School will know how you answer your questions. That is why you are not required to give in your name on the questionnaire. The number at the top of this questionnaire is intended to help us know how many you are. Please answer the questions frankly, even if you think there are people who might disagree with you. Try and answer all the questions. If you do not understand any of the questions, you are free to ask or enquire.

### SECTION A

1. Most children have brothers and sisters in their family.
  - (i) How many brothers and sisters do you have? \_\_\_\_\_
  - (ii) How many of them live with you at home? \_\_\_\_\_
  - (iii) Are there other children apart from your brothers and ~~sisters~~ who live with you at home? Yes, No.
  - (iv) If Yes, how many are they? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Most children live with both their parents.
  - (i) Do you live with both your parents? Yes No
  - (ii) If you do not live with both of them, who do you live with?  
(a) Mother, (b) Father, (c) Relatives (d) Other.
  - (iii) If you live with your mother what has happened to your father?  
(a) death, (b) separation (c) divorce (d) desertion or (e) never married.
  - (iv) If you live with your father, what has happened to your mother?  
(a) death, (b) separation, (c) divorce, (d) desertion.
  - (v) If you do not live with any one of your parents, what has happened to them? (a) death, (b) divorced (c) left you (d) Other.
3. Below are educational levels which a person may have attained.
  - (a) No formal Schooling
  - (b) Primary School
  - (c) Secondary School
  - (d) College education
  - (e) University education
  - (i) Which of the above has your father reached? \_\_\_\_\_
  - (ii) Which of the above has your mother reached? \_\_\_\_\_
4. The following are occupational classes which many of us in Kenya belong.
  - (a) Peasant farmer or small trader
  - (b) General worker eg. hotel waiter, cleaner, driver
  - (c) Professional eg. doctor, lawyer, teacher

(d) Senior administrator eg. Minister, diplomat, permanent secretary, big-business owners and big farmers.

(i) which of the above does your father fall under? \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) which of them does your mother belong to? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Today most children live with their parents either in the rural or urban areas. However, some parents, and especially the father live in the urban area.

(i) Do you live with both your parents in

(a) the rural area or (b) urban area

(ii) If you do not live with them together in the same place, who do you stay with?

(a) Mother (b) Father

(iii) If you stay with mother, where do you stay?

(a) rural area (b) urban area

(iv) If you stay with father, where?

(a) rural area (b) urban area

(v) If you stay with relatives, indicate where also

(a) rural area (b) urban area

(vi) How often does the parent who you do not stay with visit you?

(a) Once a week

(b) Once a month

(c) Once a year

(d) Rarely

6. Most people belong to this or the other religion.

(i) Which religion do you belong to?

(a) Christianity (b) Islam (c) Traditional (d) other

(e) None

(ii) Do your parents belong to the same religion as you? Yes No.

(iii) Do your brothers and sisters also belong to the same religion as you? Yes, No.

(iv) How often do you attend Church (Mosque) services?

(a) Never, (b) Rarely (c) quite often (d) every time.

(v) Do your parents attend Church services with you (if they are of the same religion as you are? Yes, No.

(vi) Do other members of the family attend with you? Yes, No.

SECTION B

For this section, you are required to indicate the choice which applies to you from the ones given in the boxes, (just as you answer multiple choice questions). Indicate the letter beside the question after choosing your answer from those in the box.

1. Before they have finished secondary school, most people have done one or all the following. Have you ever;

- (i) Disobeyed your parents \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) Ran away from home or stayed out all night without your parents permission \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) Stayed away from school without a legitimate excuse or permission from your teachers \_\_\_\_\_
- (iv) Sent out of any class for misbehaving \_\_\_\_\_
- (v) Been suspended or expelled from school \_\_\_\_\_
- (vi) Cheated on any class test \_\_\_\_\_
- (vii) Smoked while in school or even at home \_\_\_\_\_
- (viii) Drank beer or even bought or tried to buy it \_\_\_\_\_
- (ix) Taken or used drugs (eg. Bhang) or even sold them \_\_\_\_\_
- (x) Been pick up by the police or put on police probation \_\_\_\_\_
- (xi) Gone to parties or dances where others would drink beer without permission \_\_\_\_\_
- (xii) Driven a Car without a licence \_\_\_\_\_

(use these choices)

- A. Never  
B. Once or twice  
C. Several times  
D. Quite Often

2. As we grow up, we usually commit various offences which are not approved of by other people in ~~society~~. Have you ever;

- (i) Taken little things (worth less than Shs.5) that did not belong to you \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) Taken things of some value (between Shs.20 and over) that did not belong to you \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) Damaged or destroyed public or private property on purpose \_\_\_\_\_
- (iv) Gone on to someone else's property without permission \_\_\_\_\_
- (v) Broken into or tried to break and enter a building with intention to steal \_\_\_\_\_
- (vi) Set fires in woods, building, or other places where they should not be \_\_\_\_\_

(use these choices)

- A. Never  
B. Once or twice  
C. Several times  
D. Quite Often

3. Young people engage in various activities which we all know are not sanctioned by people in society. Have you ever;

- (i) Been in, a fist-fight) \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) Taken part in gang-fights \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) Beaten up children who had done nothing to you \_\_\_\_\_
- (iv) Hit your mother or father \_\_\_\_\_
- (v) Used force or threats to get money or something else from somebody \_\_\_\_\_
- (vi) Concealed a weapon on your person \_\_\_\_\_

(use these Choices)

- A. Never  
B. Once or twice  
C. Several times  
D. Quite Often