

Original Article

## The Prevalence of Physical Violence, Drivers of Imprisonment, and Conduct of Prisoners in Mogadishu Central Prison, Somalia

Bashir Ali Ahmed<sup>1</sup>\*, Alfred Owino Odongo<sup>1</sup> & Christopher Gontier<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mount Kenya University, P. O. Box 342-01000, Thika, Kenya.

\* Author for Correspondence ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-2153-6298>; Email: [farahbayle@gmail.com](mailto:farahbayle@gmail.com)

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#### Keywords:

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Prison.

Violence is described as the intentional use of physical force against a person, oneself, or a group of people that causes trauma, psychological harm, or even death. It could take the shape of physical or psychological harm, deprivation, or emotional or sexual assault. Violence of many different kinds is committed in jails globally. However, they are frequently carried out in secrecy, which makes them challenging to establish. The target population for the study were prisoners and staff in Mogadishu Central Prison. A descriptive cross-sectional research design was applied to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Systematic sampling was used to select prisoners, while purposive sampling was used to select key informants (staff). The study used questionnaires and key informant interviews as data collection tools. Quantitative analysis was conducted using SPSS version 27, and both Fisher's exact test and Pearson's Chi-square were used to test for associations and relationships between variables after descriptive analysis had been done. Qualitative analysis was conducted using thematic analysis. The study found that the overall prevalence of physical violence in the prison was 16.3%, with the majority of violence being conducted by convicts against other inmates, but there were also instances of violence committed against and committed by prison staff. The prevalence among inmates was 15%, and prisoners against warden was 1.3%. The most common types of physical violence were fist fights (11.8%), flogging (1.6%), use of weapons or other instruments (1.6%) such as razor blades, throwing shoes at each other, or use of finger rings and slapping (1.3%). The study highlights a concerning high prevalence of physical violence within Mogadishu Central Prison, primarily perpetrated by inmates against each other and occasionally involving prison staff. To address the issue, the study recommends a multifaceted approach, including heightened conflict recognition and resolution training for prison staff, increased investment in resources to alleviate overcrowding, and the establishment of rehabilitation and mental health programs to target the underlying triggers of violence.

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## INTRODUCTION

Clark (2020) cited the World Health Organization's (WHO) definition of violence as the deliberate use of physical force against another person, oneself, a community, or a group, resulting in potential psychological harm, physical injury, deprivation, mal-development, or death. Violence can manifest in four forms: neglect or deprivation, emotional or sexual offences, physical violence, and psychological violence. This study aims to investigate the prevalence of physical violence in a prison in Mogadishu, Somalia, with the objective of providing recommendations to address its shortcomings.

According to Baggio et al. (2020), violence is common in prisons, and institutional factors such as infrastructure and fluctuations in the prisoner population may contribute to its occurrence. Clark (2020) suggests that violence in prisons is often difficult to detect due to the secrecy surrounding its occurrence.

Violence is, however linked to the quality, characteristics, and staff levels. If the prison-staff ratios are high, the personnel may be required to execute stiffer sanctions, which can bring up a formalised confinement that minimises relationships that arise among inmates and staff. (Byrne & Hummer, 2008). For instance, the staff-to-prisoner ratio in the US confinement was 100:1, which is prevalent. Among this population, the features of the prison staff included diversity, gender, and age, while the quality of staff

encompasses competence, training, experience, and education. Scholars emphasised that along with a lower prisoner, more culturally varied and higher quality personnel should be geared to the low levels of prison disorder and violence.

The second kind of control prevalent in confinement areas is erratic coercion. It is manifested by negative and weak social connections, low self-control, and low self-efficacy (Colvin, 2007). The erratic coercion triggers prisoners to behave in a manner that they are hostile and act defiant toward the prison staff, leading to intimidation among other prisoners and coercing of staff.

Colvin (2007) states that this kind of control has a strong relation to the strain theory since differences in prison are routine and violence is prevalent; research is often carried out to establish the influence violence has on inmates. A study conducted by McCorkle (1993) on 300 Tennessee prisoners to determine the extent of fear of being victimised pointed out that the prisoners had a greater extent of fear in confinement than they would have while they were in society. The study documented that the majority of the inmates (55.4%) noted that they had been threatened in the course of their confinement. 45% of the prisoners feel unsafe, and nearly a third of the sample had been hit by an inmate with a fist.

According to Enggist et al. (2014), research that documented a six-month male prevalence rate showed (a) 20 or every 1000 for physical crimes and (b) 246 for every 1000 for staff-on-prisoner

physical violence. This is an implication that 20% of the inmates encountered physical violence from other prisoners, while 25% experienced violence from prison personnel for six months. The study found a six-month male prevalence rate of 205 per 1000 for prisoner-on-prisoner physical violence and 246 per 1000 for staff-on-inmate physical violence. Consequently, the female inmate-on-inmate rate was similar to that of males, while the personnel-on-inmate was 17%, showing an 8% lower than that of male staff.

Globally, more than 10.74 million inmates are in confinement institutions as remand prisoners, convicted or even sentenced inmates. Existing data reveals that the figures for DRC Congo, North Korea, and Somalia are missing, while those from Guinea Bissau and China are incomplete. Other missing data is on the prisoners held in the authorities not internationally recognised, remand prisoners, and those held up in law enforcers' facilities and not included in published national prison population totals. The full total is, therefore, higher than 10.74 million and is likely to be well over 11 million (The Prison World, 2018).

Moreover, violence turns out to be hard to work on since it is circumvented by silence and in most situations, under-reported with nearly 25% of prisoners encountering violence annually, where 4 to 5 per cent indicate sexual offences and only 1 to 2 % who had been violated through rape (Enggist et al., 2014). This is prevalent in the majority of confinement centres of African Nations, MCP not being exceptional. Despite the vast acceptance and recognition of the minimum human rights of individuals and the yearly cases of imprisonment and arrests, the incidences of torture and physical offences are still high, and most of the incidences go unreported in Somalia prisons.

According to different media reports, prisoners in Somalia continually face challenges while in the cells; for instance, violations of their minimum rights, such as fair treatment, often go unreported despite the increased human rights associations that advocate for general protection of the

minimum basic rights to every human being (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2021).

Despite the media reports proving the existence of torture in Somalia prisons, Somalia has few empirical studies that specifically examined the prevalence of physical violence among prisoners, especially Mogadishu Central Prison. Different studies have been conducted both locally and internationally on physical violence (Edgar & Martin, 2001; Baggio et al., 2020; Lahm, 2009). Nonetheless, these studies do not specifically address the prevalence of physical violence among prisoners in Mogadishu Central Prison (MCP). This necessitates a study and an assessment of the prevalence of physical violence in prisons, specifically the Mogadishu Central Prison.

## METHODOLOGY

The researcher used a descriptive cross-sectional research design to enable the collection of data among the study variables identified from a large population. The design was preferred since it acted as the representation of the relevant variables at a single point in time from a portion selected from the larger population from different subjects, phenomena, and people. According to Leach et al. (2008), this allows for the collection of adequate data within a short period.

Due to the infrastructural development of central prisons (MCP) that encompassed the rehabilitation and expansion of the prisons, the average population of the prisoners was 1300, while at times, the prison population hit a maximum of nearly 1502 prisoners. This information was obtained from the relevant departments of the prison. The study adopted a 6-month cut-off period to estimate a possible duration that the inmate could show some sort of behavioural change as a result of incarceration.

For sampling, systematic sampling was used to select prisoners for participation. From the prison register, every 3rd inmate was chosen to be part of the study (in this case, a random point was selected, and then every 3rd item was chosen), ensuring that every respondent had an equal

chance of participating in the population. The inclusion criteria for participant selection included inmates who were currently incarcerated in Somalia Central prisons, inmates who were able to understand and communicate in either English or Somali languages, inmates who were willing to participate voluntarily and provide informed consent, and inmates who were available and accessible during the data collection period. For key informants, purposive sampling was used. Key informants were chosen based on their expertise, knowledge, and unique perspectives related to the study topic.

Yamane's (1967) formula was used to determine the sample size of inmates;

$$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$$

Where  $n$  = desired sample size,  $N$  = total population,  $e$  = Margin of error (MoE),  $e = 0.05$

Since the total population was 1502, using the above formula, 315 study subjects that met inclusion criteria were selected from the prison register.

The researcher collected primary data by deploying several techniques, such as questionnaires and key informant interviews. The researcher used a translated copy of the questionnaire as a means of saving time for the researcher and the study participants. Questionnaires were administered to a specific group of participants to collect both qualitative and quantitative data on physical violence from inmates. The research assistants helped in conducting key informant interviews. The KII participant was one prison warden (Prison commissioner), head medical practitioner, three most senior nurses, and three other essential staff.

Data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 27.0. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis. Furthermore, Pearson's Chi-square and Fisher's exact test were used to determine the relationship between the study variables. Descriptive analysis was used for categorical variables such as gender, marital status, and

educational level, which were further presented in the form of frequencies, percentages, pie, and bar charts. Quantitative data was cleaned, organised, and kept on a password-protected computer.

## RESULTS

### Information on Socio-Demographic

After data collection, 306 prisoners gave positive responses, while 9 non-response incidents were encountered during data collection. The overall response rate achieved by this study from the questionnaire is 97.1%, and 2.9% from non-respondents.

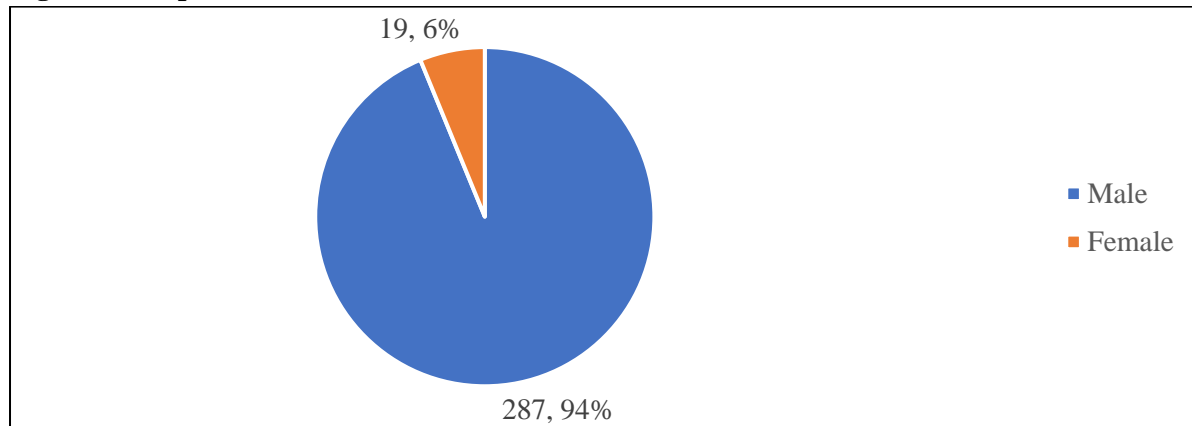
The gender of the respondents who had participated in the study was determined. As shown in *Figure 1*, males were the majority of the respondents (94%), as compared to 6% who were females. This shows that there is a prevalence of males to females in prisons in Somalia, which can be attributed to the prevalence of grief by males more than females.

On marital status, the study findings indicate that the majority of the inmates were married (51.6%), followed by those who were single (34%), while the divorced inmates formed 14.4% of the responses. Based on this finding, the study conducted a crosstabulation between the gender and marital status of the inmates. As shown in *Table 1*, the majority of males were married ( $n=151$ ), while the majority of females were single ( $n=11$ ) ( $p=0.026$ ). This means that there is a prevalence of married men and single women in prisons in Somalia.

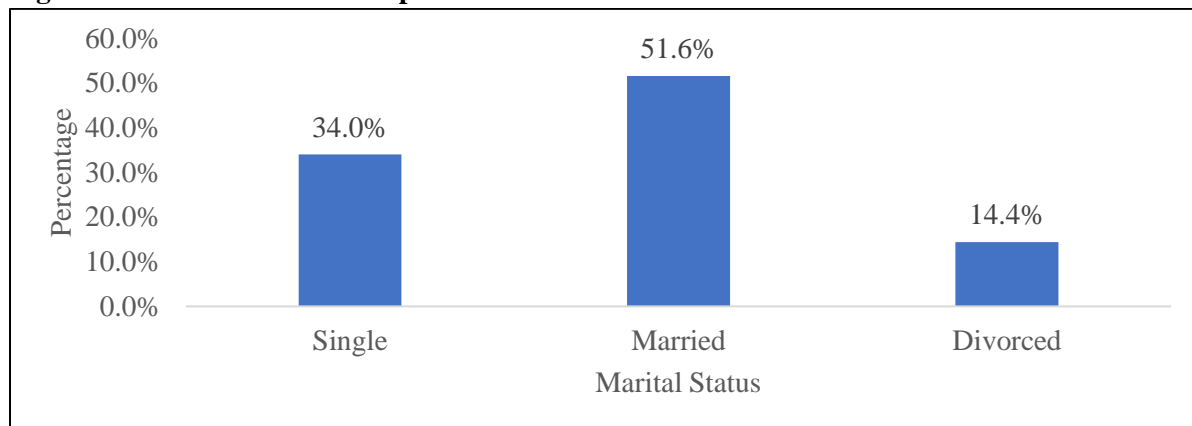
The researcher also sought to find out the age of the inmates in Somalia. As shown in *Figure 3*, the majority of the inmates were aged 18-25 years (46.4%), followed by those aged 26-35 years (39.2%), while those aged more than 36 years were 11.8%. This shows that there was a prevalence of young inmates in Somalia prisons. The researcher additionally conducted a crosstabulation between the age of the respondents and their gender. The findings indicate that the majority of males were aged between 18 and 35 years, which was also true for

females. This shows that the prevalence for inmates for both genders was between 18 and 35 years, as shown in *Table 2*.

**Figure 1: Respondents Gender**



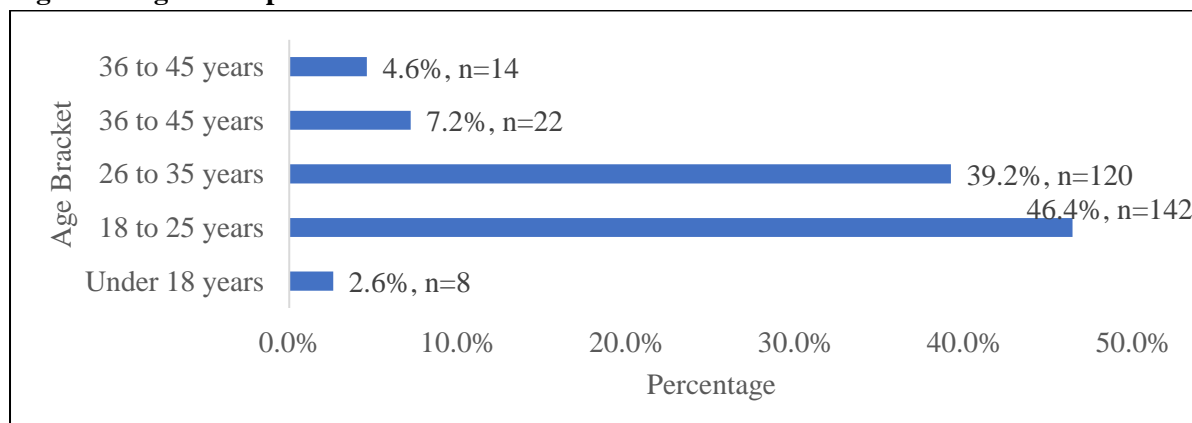
**Figure 2: Marital Status of Respondents**



**Table 1: Gender \* Marital status Crosstabulation**

		Marital status			Total	p-value
		Single	Married	Divorced		
Gender	Male	93	151	43	287	.026
	Female	11	7	1	19	
Total		104	158	44	306	

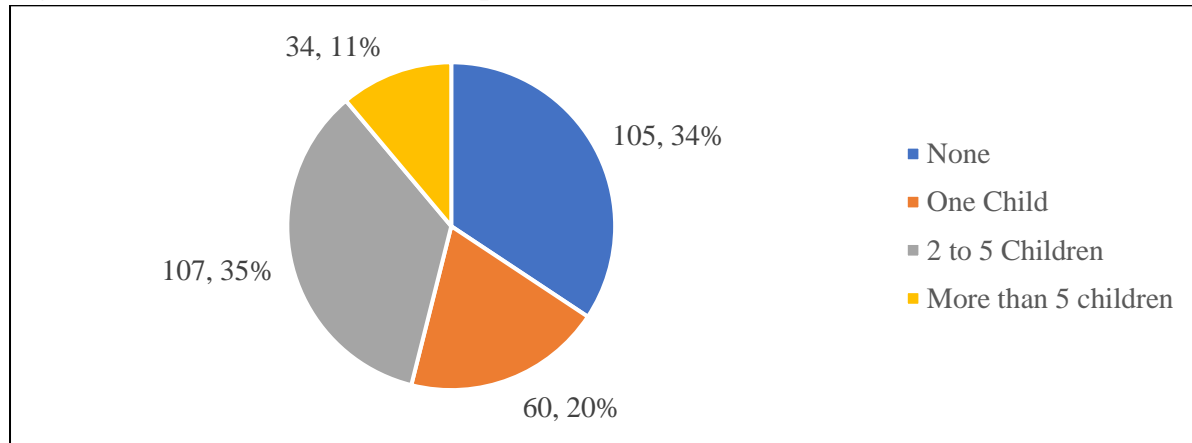
**Figure 3: Age of Respondents**



**Table 2: Age \* Gender Crosstabulation**

		Gender			p-value
		Male	Female	Total	
Age	Under 18 years	7	1	8	.475
	18 to 25 years	136	6	142	
	26 to 35 years	111	9	120	
	36 to 45 years	21	1	22	
	36 to 45 years	12	2	14	
	Total	287	19	306	

**Figure 4: Number of Children by Respondents**



The study sought to examine the number of children the inmates had, and the findings were presented in *Figure 4*. From the figure, it was determined that the majority of the respondents had 2 to 5 children (35%), followed by those with no child (34%); 20% of the respondents had one child, while 11% had more than 5 children. Based

on this finding, a crosstabulation was carried out between the gender and number of children possessed by the inmates, and the findings are presented in *Table 3*. From the table, the findings indicate that most men had between 1 and 5 children, with the females having a prevalence of one child or no children ( $p=0.019$ ).

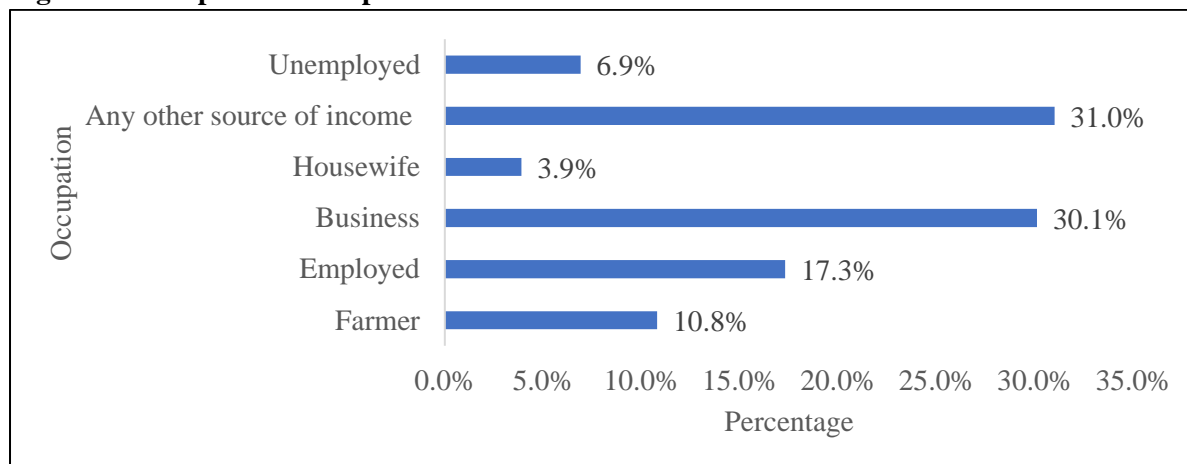
**Table 3: Number of Children \* Gender Crosstabulation**

Number of children		Gender			p-value
		Male	Female	Total	
Number of children	None	99	6	105	.019
	One Child	60	9	69	
	2 to 5 Children	98	4	102	
	More than 5 children	30	0	30	
	Total	287	19	306	

The study sought to determine the occupation of the inmates in prison. The findings shown in *Figure 5* indicate that most inmates were dependent on another source of income, e.g., mechanics, drivers, teachers, soldiers, carpenters, animal slaughters, politicians, or students (31%), while 30.1% were dependent on businesses, 17.3% were employed while 10.8% and 6.9% were farmers and unemployed respectively. A minority of 3.9% were housewives. The findings

obtained indicate that unemployment was not a major determinant of imprisonment in Somalia for most respondents. However, when the occupation of the inmates was cross-tabulated with the gender, the researcher found that unemployment was a significant cause of crime for females, as all of the female inmates were either unemployed or working as housewives ( $p=.000/<0.001$ ). The findings are shown in *Table 4*.

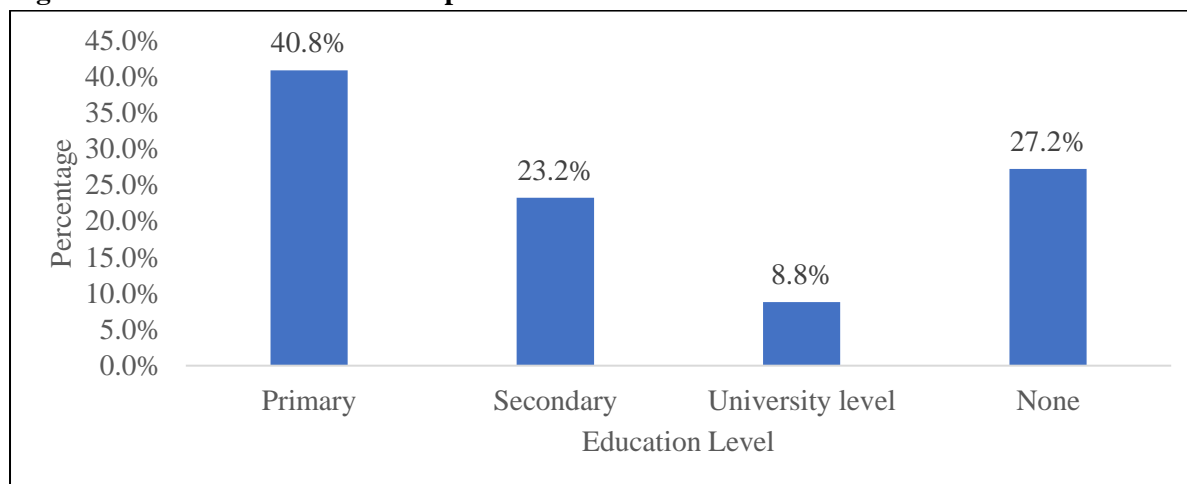
**Figure 5: Occupation of Respondents**



**Table 4: Occupation \* Gender Crosstabulation**

Occupation		Gender			p-value
		Male	Female	Total	
Farmer		33	0	33	.000
Employed		53	0	53	
Business		86	6	92	
Housewife/girls' house		0	11	11	
Any other source of income		93	0	95	
Unemployed		22	2	22	
Total		287	19	306	

**Figure 6: Educational Level of Respondents**



The study findings on the education level of the respondents indicate that 40.8% of the inmates had attained primary level education, followed by those who had not attained any level of education (27.2%), while those who had attained secondary and university level education were 23.2% and 8.8% respectively (Figure 6). When education level was cross-tabulated with the gender of the

inmates, it was found that there was a significant prevalence of lower education levels in females as compared to males ( $p=.008$ ). The male inmates were distributed across all education levels, though the majority had attained a primary level of education. Most of the female inmates had no education at all, followed by those who attained primary-level education (Table 5).

**Table 5: Educational Level \* Gender Crosstabulation**

		Gender			p-value
		Male	Female	Total	
Educational level	Primary	123	6	129	.008
	Secondary	65	2	67	
	University level	25	0	25	
	None	74	11	85	
	Total	287	19	306	

The study findings obtained on the district of birth by the respondents indicate that there was a prevalence of inmates in districts nearer to Mogadishu town as compared to those far from the city. Most respondents of this study were from the following five districts: Wardhigley (12.7%), Hodan (4.9%), Marka (4.9%), Wadajir (6.5%),

Huriwa (2.6%), Dharkinley (3.9%) and Jawhar (2.0%). These districts accounted for a total of 37.5% of the respondents. The remaining districts, referred to as “others”, constituted the remaining 62.5% of the responses. These findings imply the prevalence of crime in rural areas in Somalia, as opposed to urban areas of the country (*Table 6*).

**Table 6: Area of birth of respondents**

District	Per cent
Wardhigley	12.7
Hodan	4.9
Marka	4.9
Wadajir	6.5
Jawhar	2.0
Dharkinley	3.9
Huriwa	2.6
Others	62.5
Total	100.0

**Relationship between Socio-Demographic Information and Involvement in Physical Violence**

The study conducted cross tabulations between the demographic information of the respondents with physical violence and findings presented in *Table 7*. From the table, the study found that men

were more prone to physical violence than women ( $p=.047$ ), with marital status and occupation having an insignificant relationship with physical violence. Age, education level, and the number of children had a significant relationship with physical violence, with prevalence being in young age groups and those with lower age groups ( $p=.046$ ,  $0.08$ ,  $6$ , and  $p=.045$ ), respectively.

**Table 7: Cross tabulations between Demographic Data and Physical Violence**

		Involved in physical violence			p-value
		Yes (n=50)	No (n=256)	Total (n=306)	
Gender	Male	50	237	287	.047
	Female	0	19	19	
Marital status	Single	15	89	104	.241
	Married	24	134	158	
	Divorced	11	33	44	
Age	Under 18 years	1	7	8	.046
	18 to 25 years	24	118	142	
	26 to 35 years	24	96	120	
	36 to 45 years	1	21	22	
	36 to 45 years	0	14	14	



		Involved in physical violence			p-value
		Yes (n=50)	No (n=256)	Total (n=306)	
Number of children	None	16	89	105	.086
	One Child	16	44	60	
	2 to 5 Children	15	92	107	
	More than 5 children	3	31	34	
Occupation	Farmer	6	27	33	.219
	Employed	7	46	53	
	Business	13	79	92	
	Housewife	0	11	11	
	Any other source of income	22	73	95	
	Unemployed	2	20	22	
Educational level	Primary	24	101	125	.045
	Secondary	15	56	71	
	University level	3	24	27	
	None	8	75	83	

### Prevalence of Physical Violence among Prisoners in Mogadishu Central Prison

The objective of the study was to establish the prevalence of physical violence among prisoners in Mogadishu Central Prison. From *Table 8*, the study found that the prevalence of physical violence in Mogadishu Central Prison was 16.3%. The prevalence of one-time violence was 8.5%, while the prevalence of repeated physical violence was 7.8%. The most prevalent form of physical violence is fist fighting (11.8%), followed by flogging (1.6%), use of weapons/instruments (1.6%), and slapping (1.3%). The most common form of physical violence is prisoner-to-prisoners (15% among all inmates), while prisoner-to-prison warden is 1.3% prevalent. This means that prisoner-to-prisoner physical violence is 92% more common compared to prisoner-to-prison warden physical violence.

The key informants and open-ended questions from the questionnaire also indicated that assaults, use of weapons, gang violence and rioting were most common among prisoners. The following response was given by one of the key interviewees:

*Prisoners may physically attack other prisoners or staff, resulting in injuries such as*

*bruises, fractures, or head injuries. Prisoners may also use weapons such as knives or homemade weapons to attack other prisoners or staff. Additionally, violence between gangs or groups of prisoners is a common problem in prisons. This results in riots, which can result in injuries to prisoners and staff and damage to the prison facility.*

The open-ended questions from the questionnaire and key informants also indicated that overcrowding was a major issue for MCP that led to the assaults, use of weapons, gang violence, and rioting in prison. This required that when the prison is overcrowded, prisoners are referred to other facilities to alleviate the overcrowding and ensure that they receive adequate care and attention; however, this was never done. As shown from the response below, overcrowding resulted in various effects:

*Overcrowding is a major problem we are experiencing. This leads to cramped and unsanitary living conditions, which can negatively impact the prisoner's mental and physical health. Overcrowding also creates a high-stress environment that can lead to increased tension and violence among prisoners.*

**Table 8: Prevalence of Physical Violence**

		f	%	Cumulative per cent
Have you ever been involved in physical violence in the prison?	Yes	50	16.3	16.3
	No	256	83.7	100.0
	Total	306	100.0	
How many times have you been engaged in physical violence in the course of your imprisonment?	One-time	26	8.5	52.0
	Two times	11	3.6	74.0
	More than two times	13	4.2	100.0
	None	256	83.7	
Kindly tick the kind of physical violence you engaged in.	Flogging	5	1.6	10.0
	Fistfight	36	11.8	82.0
	Slapping	4	1.3	90.0
	Use of weapon/instrument	5	1.6	100.0
	None	256	83.7	
Whom did you afflict?	Prisoner	46	15.0	92.0
	Prison Warden	4	1.3	100.0
	None	256	83.7	

The findings also indicated that mental problems were usually an effect of physical violence in prisons and contributed to anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress, among other conditions. The following is one of the responses obtained:

*Depression is a common problem that results from physical violence in the prison. Prisoners may experience feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and lack of motivation, which can lead to a lack of interest in activities and social isolation. Prisoners may also experience feelings of worry, nervousness, and fear, which can lead to difficulty sleeping, difficulty concentrating, and physical symptoms such as sweating, trembling, and rapid heartbeat.*

*Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) has been reported due to physical violence, and prisoners who are experiencing or have experienced traumatic events such as violent abuse may experience symptoms such as flashbacks, nightmares, and avoidance of certain people or places.*

Physical violence was also reported to result in a change in behaviour among inmates, as shown by the following response:

*Prisoners who experience physical violence may suffer from trauma, which can lead to*

*changes in their behaviour, such as increased anxiety, aggression, or depression. Prisoners who experience physical violence develop a fear of further violence, which may cause changes in their behaviour, for instance, increased compliance or withdrawal. Anger can also be a result, which leads to changes in their behaviours like increased aggression or retaliation. Self-protection is an important consideration for prisoners, and they may develop behaviours that are intended to protect themselves from further violence, such as avoiding certain areas or individuals in prison.*

The findings from the prison commissioner, head medical practitioner, and senior nurses also confirmed the extent of injuries and reported that some injuries were severe and necessitated medical attention. One respondent reported the following:

*A range of injuries resulted from violence, such as cuts and minor bruises, leading to severe injuries like head trauma, broken bones, and internal organ damage. In some cases, violence can also result in death. The severity of injuries caused by violence can vary depending on the type of violence, the weapon used, and the physical condition of the victim. For example, a physical*

*altercation between two people may result in minor injuries, while a violent attack with a weapon such as a gun or a knife can result in severe injuries or death. Injuries caused by violence can also have long-term physical, emotional, and psychological effects on the survivor.*

The findings from the open-ended questions in the questionnaire and key informants indicated that head injuries, facial injuries, arm injuries, leg and foot injuries, back injuries, and psychological injuries were prevalent. The informants argue that these injuries mainly occurred as a result of physical altercations with other prisoners or staff; however, other instances that supported them were self-harm and substandard living conditions. The following are some of the responses obtained:

*The prisoners may be at risk of head injuries, hand and arm injuries, facial injuries, leg and foot injuries, back injuries, and psychological injuries from physical altercations, falls, or being struck by objects. Sometimes, homicide*

*occurs, where prisoners may be killed by other prisoners or staff.*

*Prisoners who experience severe trauma such as burns, fractures, or head injuries may require specialised treatment or ongoing management that is not available in the prison. In addition, prisoners with severe or complex mental health abnormalities like bipolar, schizophrenia, disorder, or severe depression may require specialised treatment or ongoing management that is also not available in prison.*

The study also sought to determine if the inmates did any voluntary activities in the prison. 83.7% of the respondents from the findings obtained show that they did voluntary activities in prison, while 16.3% did not. Of the voluntary activities done, sports, daily work activities, educational activities, spiritual activities, and others such as Henna and garbage collection were cited. The findings are shown in *Table 9*.

**Table 9: Participation in Voluntary Activities**

		f	%	Cumulative Percent
Do you do any voluntary activities in the prison	Yes	256	83.7	83.7
	No	50	16.3	100.0
	Total	306	100.0	
If yes, kindly indicate the kind of activities	Sports	46	18.0	18.0
	Daily work activities	39	15.2	33.2
	Educational activities	9	3.5	36.7
	Spiritual activities	74	28.9	65.6
	Others	88	34.4	100.0
Total		256	100.0	

The study also sought to determine drug abuse habits among the inmates. From the results obtained, 37.6% of the inmates had some form of drug abuse habit, while 62.4% did not have one. Of all the respondents, cigarette was the major

drug abused (26.5% of all inmates), followed by tobacco (3.6%), a combination of cigarette and miraa (3.6%), while other drugs abused included diazepam, hashish, and miraa. The results are shown in *Table 10*.

**Table 10: Drug abuse habits**

		f	%	Cumulative per cent
Do you have any drug abuse habits	Yes	115	37.6	37.6
	No	191	62.4	100.0
	Total	306	100.0	
If yes, kindly specify the type of drug abuse you have had	No drug abused	191	62.4	62.4
	Beer	1	.3	62.7
	Cigarette	81	26.5	89.2
	Cigarette and Miraa	11	3.6	92.8
	Diazepam, Hashish	1	.3	93.1
	Miraa	2	.7	93.8
	Secret	6	2.0	95.8
	Tobacco	11	3.6	99.3
	Tobacco/ cigarette	2	.7	100.0
	Total	306	100.0	

The study sought to determine the facts around the arrest of inmates. The findings are shown in *Table 11* below.

**Table 11: Factors Surrounding Arrests**

		Variable	f	%
Where were you arrested		Within Mogadishu	229	74.8
		Outside Mogadishu	77	25.2
Which month were you arrested		January	31	10.1
		February	15	4.9
		March	43	14.1
		April	16	5.2
		May	17	5.6
		June	25	8.2
		July	15	4.9
		August	31	10.1
		September	45	14.7
		October	26	8.5
		November	27	8.8
		December	15	4.9
For how long have you been in prison		Less than 6 months	0	0.0
		More than 6 months	306	100.0
For what reason were you arrested? Kindly explain		Accident and causing injury	25	8.2
		Accused of spying on the government	1	.3
		Al-Shabaab	165	53.9
		Conflict between two tribes	3	1.0
		Domestic violence and/or rape	7	2.3
		Drug selling and use	8	2.6
		Family issues	16	5.2
		Murder	33	10.8
		Robbery	48	15.7
		Total	306	100.0

The findings obtained indicate that most respondents were arrested within Mogadishu city (74.8%), while 25.2% of the inmates were arrested outside Mogadishu city. In the month of arrest most inmates were arrested in the month of September (14.7%), with the minimum arrests

done in April and December (4.9% of the inmates). On the length of the inmates had been in prison, all inmates sampled had been imprisoned for more than 6 months. On the reason of imprisonment, the majority were linked to the terror group Al Shabab (53.9%), followed by robbery (15.7%), murder (10.8%), accident and causing injury (8.2%), and family issues (5.2%).

In addition, the researcher sought to determine whether the inmates had been arrested before for the same reason they were imprisoned. From the findings, it was determined that 94.4% had not been arrested for the same reason, while 5.6% had been arrested before for a similar reason. Further, of the 17 respondents who had been arrested before, nearly half had been arrested once, while the rest had been arrested more than once (*Table 12*).

**Table 12: Previous Arrests for Similar Reasons**

Variable		f	%	Cumulative per cent
Have you ever been arrested before for the same reason?	Yes	17	5.6	5.6
	No	289	94.4	100.0
	Total	306	100.0	
If yes, how many times have you been arrested?	One-time	8	2.6	47.1
	Two times	6	2.0	82.4
	More than two times	3	1.0	100.0
	Total	17	5.6	
	None	289	94.4	
	Total	306	100.0	

**DISCUSSIONS**

The study found that the overall prevalence of physical violence in Mogadishu Central Prison was 16.3%. These findings align with those of Enggist et al. (2014), who found that the overall prevalence of physical violence in a prison setting was quite high. According to the study, over six months, 205 out of every 1000 male inmates experienced physical violence from other prisoners, and 246 out of every 1000 experienced violence from prison staff. This suggests that 20% of male inmates were subject to violence from other inmates, and 25% experienced violence from staff members.

The outcome of the current study shows that violence against prisoners among all the study subjects was more common at 92% compared to prisoner warden or vice versa. This finding corroborates the report by Rolfe and Tewksbury (2018), which indicates a prevalence of violence among inmates at 15%, with incidents of violence involving prisoners against wardens at 1.3%. Trammell (2012) noted that violence in jails is primarily conducted by convicts against fellow

inmates, while instances of violence involving prison employees also occur. Enggist et al. (2014) similarly found that the rate of female-on-female physical violence in prison was comparable to that among males, whereas the rate of staff-on-female physical violence was 17%, lower by 8% than the rate for males. These findings are consistent with those documented by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2021), highlighting that the most prevalent types of violence in U.S. prisons encompass inmate-on-inmate assault and staff-on-inmate assault.

Generally, the most common type of violence in prisons is physical, followed by sexual violence (Lahm, 2009). Although prison violence is considered prevalent in both male and female inmates, our study at MCP suggests that males are more prone to physical violence than females, and specifically, married men are significantly involved ( $p = 0.026$ ). Violent females are single or married with either no child or few children, suggesting that they probably believe that they do not have anything to lose in case of injuries.

When considering employment status leading to incarceration, the study found that housewives and unemployed women were more likely to engage in physical violence compared to men. However, our findings show that unemployed or full-time housewives are significantly more violent ( $p < 0.001$ ), leading to arrest and imprisonment. These findings were attributed to various reasons, such as the socioeconomic status of the population, especially where women do not have equal employment opportunities as men and access to resources and support systems (Teh, 2016). The findings also align with the economic marginalisation theory put forward by Steffensmeier and Streifel (1992), which suggests that women turn to crime due to poverty and financial difficulties. These findings, however, disagree with those of Uggen and Wakefield (2008), who found that unemployment is associated with higher rates of criminal offending among men. The study also found that the relationship between unemployment and crime was stronger for men who had a lower level of education.

In addition, the kinds of physical violence encountered were fist fights, which had 11.8%, flogging at 1.6%, and use of weapons or other instruments, which had 1.6%. Examples are razor blades, throwing shoes at each other, or use of finger rings to blow one another (sometimes the rings are armed with sharp gadgets, and slapping 1.3%. These findings align with those documented by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2021) that physical violence was usually a result of fist fights and the use of weaponry. In 2011-12, there were an estimated 80,600 nonfatal inmate-on-inmate victimisations in state and federal prisons and 3,200 nonfatal staff-on-inmate victimisations, mostly caused by fist fights.

The study's findings reveal a significant gender difference in the involvement of physical violence among prisoners. Men were found to be more prevalent in engaging in physical violence compared to women ( $p = .047$ ). This finding aligns with established literature, which posits that male inmates are generally more prone to violence in

prison settings. This assertion is supported by studies conducted by researchers such as Smith and Kaminski (2011), Byrne and Hummer (2008), and Johnson et al. (2020), who observed similar gender patterns of violence in various correctional facilities.

Regarding marital status, the study's findings indicated that there was no significant relationship between marital status and physical violence among prisoners. This finding is in line with the findings of a study conducted by Edgar and Martin (2001), which similarly did not find a significant association between marital status and violent behaviour among inmates. However, the study's results contradict the findings of a study conducted by The Prison World (2018), which reported a significant link between certain marital status categories and higher instances of physical violence within the prison context. This discrepancy suggests that the relationship between marital status and violence in prisons may vary depending on specific contextual factors and populations.

The study's findings also shed light on the relationship between age and involvement in physical violence among inmates. Notably, the results reveal that age significantly influences the prevalence of violence, with higher rates observed among younger age groups ( $p = .046$ ). This correlation between youth and violence aligns with existing literature that suggests younger inmates are more prone to violent behaviours. This perspective is corroborated by research conducted by Byrne and Hummer (2008), which highlights the heightened aggression among young offenders within correctional facilities.

The study's findings indicate that the number of children an inmate had was not significantly related to their involvement in physical violence ( $p = .086$ ). This finding aligns with the results of a study conducted by the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (2022), which also found no significant association between the number of children an inmate had and their likelihood of engaging in violent behaviour within the prison environment. This suggests that the presence of

children or the responsibilities associated with parenthood may not play a significant role in influencing an inmate's propensity for physical violence.

The study's findings suggest that there is no significant relationship between an inmate's occupation and their involvement in physical violence. This observation is in accordance with the findings of a study conducted by Johnson et al. (2020), which also failed to establish a statistically significant association between an inmate's occupation and their likelihood of engaging in physical violence within the prison context. These consistent results imply that occupation may not be a major contributing factor to violent behaviour among prisoners, indicating that other factors, such as personal traits, environmental conditions, and interpersonal dynamics, might play a more significant role in influencing violent tendencies.

On the other hand, the study's findings highlight a significant relationship between educational level and involvement in physical violence ( $p=.045$ ). This finding is in line with the findings of a study conducted by Byrne and Hummer (2008), which found a significant correlation between inmates' educational attainment and their propensity for physical violence in prison. The current study's results suggest that inmates with lower levels of education may be more prone to engaging in violent behaviour within the prison environment. This finding underscores the importance of addressing educational opportunities and rehabilitation programs within correctional facilities to potentially mitigate the risk of violence among inmates with lower educational backgrounds.

## CONCLUSIONS

From the findings obtained in the study, the study concludes that the prevalence of physical violence in MCP was high. The majority of violence in the prison was conducted by convicts against other inmates, but there were also instances of violence committed against and committed by prison staff. The most common types of physical violence were fist fights and the use of weapons or other

instruments. To address these, the study recommends comprehensive measures to enhance conflict resolution, improve staff training, establish rehabilitation programs, and ensure stricter adherence to prison regulations.

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