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Demographic Vulnerability to Crime Victimization among Urban Residents in Informal Settlements in Nairobi, Kenya

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15 April 2022 The mushroom of the informal settlements in urban spaces has confined the urban poor in deplorable life at the periphery of socio-economic development.

Keywords: The residents in these informal settlements do not just have to grapple with a deprived lifestyle, they are also the key targets of criminality that is rampant in their neighbourhood. This study examined the demographic vulnerability to crime victimization amongst the informal settlement residents. The study focused on four slums in Nairobi, which included Kibera, Mathare, Korogocho, and Mukuru slums. The systematic sampling design was used to determine the 659 respondents. The questionnaires were administered to the respondents, this was quantitatively and qualitatively filled by the respondents to ensure a higher response rate. The study established that most residents were victimized by crime at least once and the common crime included the brewing and consumption of illicit brew. The other commonly experienced crimes included general robbery, burglary, muggings, drugs, assault, murder, robbery with violence, pickpocketing, sexual abuse, arson, kidnapping. Most of the residents lived with the fear of criminal victimization, with nearly a half of them falling victims of crime in the past year. Most of these criminal activities happened early in the evening and early in the morning and were perpetrated on the victims either along the way or in their homes. The crimes were mostly conducted with a weapon and the criminal attacks were often carried out by the youth and middle-aged individuals. The study recommended the establishment of sensitization programs to educate the residents about crime in their neighbourhood and the available ways of seeking justice. The study also recommended the enhancement of community policing in the informal settlement to protect the vulnerable girls who are susceptible to victimization due to the illicit brew that is sold and consumed in their neighbourhood.

Criminal, Victimization, Demographic Victimization, Informal Settlements, Illicit Brew.

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INTRODUCTION

Victimization is defined as the process by which a person becomes a victim or they are rather victimized (Kabirua et al., 2018). Victims of crime are individuals, groups, or entities who have been subjected to injury or loss as a result of illegal activity (Hussin & Majdah, 2012). The harm, in this case, could be physical, financial, or psychological (Turvey & Petherick, 2010).

Hussin & Majdah (2012) observes that criminologists have for a long time focused on the actions of the criminal, thereby ignoring the victims of crime. However, over the years, criminologists have acknowledged that the role of the victim is equally significant since it can directly or indirectly influence the motivation and fate of a criminal. There is no empirical evidence to support the suggestion that some particular behaviour could translate into vulnerability to crime; this, however, does not negate the fact that victimization is hardly random and is therefore noted faced by the victim by mere chance (Hussin & Majdah, 2012).

Kabirua et al. (2018) note that one of the major contributing factors to victimization is naivety and this often makes the victim become collectively responsible for their victimization. Besides, victimologists argue that the relative possibility of an individual becoming a victim can be predicted. Therefore, any measures put in place to contain criminal victimization could work effectively when the potential victim becomes alert of the potential criminals; this makes the potential victim aware of

the criminals and therefore keep away from unsafe places or situations.

Theoretically, anyone could become a victim of criminal activity. However, particular individuals or members of particular groups are more susceptible to criminal victimization as compared to others. For example, women, children, the poor, urbanites, and tourists are more prone to criminal victimization as compared to other groups of people (Hussin & Majdah, 2012). There are also some particular personal attributes that contribute to the vulnerability of some individuals to criminal victimization. For instance, individuals who are mentally weak or are inexperienced such as the less educated, the illiterate, and new immigrants are more appealing targets for criminals through fraud and deception (Hussin & Majdah, 2012). Besides, physically weak individuals such as unsuspecting women, children, and the elderly are also easy targets for physical attacks by criminal offenders.

Kabirua et al. (2018) note that criminals often look for weaker targets to make their work easier so that they can avoid being arrested. Criminals also consider the access to a potential victim and use it to determine whether they should victimize someone or not. They use this to decide whether they have sufficient opportunity to victimize someone. In most cases, criminals live in the same locality with their victims, which helps them to identify or target the victims. The relationship between the victim and the offender is therefore often close. Thus, the offender could be a lover, a family member, an acquaintance, a friend, an enemy, or a rival. Incestuous crimes are for example

committed at the domestic level, while other crimes are committed within and/or outside the family.

There are particular situational factors that are associated with the vulnerability of some individuals which make them more susceptible to certain crimes at particular times as compared to others. For example, robbers made the attack shocked during closing hours; muggers wait for their victims during the end month; pickpockets lie in wait for their victims in crowded places while prostitutes are prone to rapes, robberies, and even murders (Hussin & Majdah, 2012). Besides, some locations are considered by criminals as the best spots for victimizing individuals and these include crowded places in the public such as bus terminals. The current study focused on the demographic vulnerability of the residents in the informal settlement in Nairobi.

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Extant literature has not only provided evidence on the presence of victimization in the informal settlement; it has also revealed its demographic aspects. The exact charge is determined by whether the resident occupies a semi-permanent or permanent house. They also charge businesses between Ksh. 300 - 500 monthly, based on the size of the business. Besides, they charge filmmakers and tourists a flat rate of Ksh. 5000 which is only paid once. These fees are determined by the gangs; they are paid on demand and are also negotiable. The failure to pay the fees leads to constant harassment, which makes it increasingly difficult for one to live in the area or even operate a business. The residents are therefore compelled to comply with the demands by the gangs largely due to the fear that there is still among them, making them unwilling to pay for their 'services'. The gangs have in turn taken advantage of the fear that they have instilled in the residents to arbitrarily extort money from them. The residents, therefore, live in the fear of victimization and have to abide by the criminality that the gangs have imposed upon their lives.

In another study, Naceurn, (2013) established that the fear of safety is a very prevalent issue within the informal settlements of Bouakal, Algeria. Most residents in these settlements express fear and anxiety about crime and the possibility of getting

victimized by criminals. The perception of safety is closely associated with the fear of crime. In this case, the fear of crime is the negative emotional reaction that results from crime or the symbols that are associated with crime. There are numerous factors that have contributed to the fear of crime and victimization among these informal settlement residents. These include individual factors that have significantly contributed to the fear of crime and victimization. There are also demographic factors such as gender, socioeconomic status, and age. The neighbourhood context has also contributed to the fear of criminal victimization, which is largely a factor of where an individual life. The negative effects of dilapidated or deteriorating neighbourhood conditions invariably increase the concern of the residents regarding their own safety and security, Social degeneration in the neighbourhood also contributes to the sense of insecurity among the residents who end up believing that their level of social control is reducing, and they, therefore, become very concerned about their safety and security. Residents who regard their local surroundings as being physically disordered are highly likely to indicate high levels of fear concerning their safety and security.

The locations within the informal settlements where the residents are highly likely to get victimized are referred to as hotspots. This often includes areas where some particular crime has been reported to have occurred severally. Filippi et al. (2020) observe that the residents of Kibera slum have identified hotspots where crimes such as robbery, rape, mugging, murder, and pickpocketing are reported. Notably, the risk of being victimized in some of these hotspots invariably increases during the night. The hotspots, in this case, are largely the areas where there are more than an average number of disorder events or criminals. The hotspot can also be considered as an area where the residents have a greater than average risk of getting victimized. Kibera slum, the hotspots also represent dangerous locations or areas where more than one criminal activity is conducted or has been reported. The residents have used names such as black spots and dangerous spots to differentiate the magnitude of the possibility of getting victimized. In this case, the black spots are those dangerous places where more than one criminal activity has been reported while

the dangerous spots are potentially unsafe places, determined as such by taking into account their spatial and physical features. Salient demarcation of the unsafe spaces in the informal settlement is reflective of the residents' fear of criminal victimization and is essential for helping them to know where to avoid and at what particular time.

Demographically, criminal victimization of informal settlements residents has incidentally targeted girls and women more significantly as compared to men. The women in the informal settlements face victimization right inside their own homesteads in terms of intimate partner violence. Bhatta et al. (2018) found that more than 60% of women living in informal settlements in Nepal witnessed domestic violence while the rest 40% suffered from it. The prevalence of domestic violence in the informal settlements in Nepal was associated with the low socio-economic status of the women who suffered from it. Some of the major triggers of domestic violence targeting women were alcohol consumption which accounted for about 40% of the violence the women faced: this is in the sense that either the women themselves consumed alcohol or their husbands or partners were alcoholics. The prevalence of victimization of women through intimate partner violence also pointed to the laxity of the existing structures that should punish the aggressor to serve as a deterrent to the crime. However, the very if any that was being done to ensure that the perpetrators of domestic violence who brought to book, a trend that is associated with cultural expectations that such violence is normal in the society.

Other studies have also confirmed that women in slum areas are more susceptible to domestic violence occasioned by their poverty and lack of support by relevant authorities. Sabri & Campbell. (2015) observed that even though domestic violence occurs in all settings in India, victimized women in informal urban settlements face significant barriers when it comes to accessing support services, a factor that endangers their health outcomes. The study also observed that the environment within informal urban settlements is often characterized by low economic status, lack of basic services, and unhealthy living conditions. These factors and the stress levels of families that live in the settlements, thereby increase the possibility of conflict between

people living within households which often manifests in terms of intimate partner violence. The study notes even though intimate partner violence cuts both ways gender-wise, women are the most victimized taking into account the social-economic subservient role that they play in society. The features of informal urban settlements such as poor housing bring about situations of satisfaction, rage, and distress which invariably increases the likelihood of domestic violence. Notably, the social-economic disadvantage of the households in the informal settlements is associated with increased social isolation and limited social control or social ties. These factors also limit the ability of abused women to access resources that may help the constructively address intimate partner violence.

Jungari et al. (2020) concurs that urban slums in India are homes for migrant workers and urban poor who earn their living from meager wages. This is evident in bigger cities such as Mumbai and Delhi which accommodate large numbers of urban poor and immigrants. The women in these informal settlement communities are susceptible to violence by men, which is often triggered by high consumption levels of alcohol. The abuse of alcohol is rampant in these slum communities due to the poor working conditions characterized by long hours of manual labor and the stressful lifestyle of most of the residents. There are also low levels of education among the women in the informal settlement communities, with most of them having migrated from the rural areas to look for jobs in the urban areas. Since the women do not participate in the formal job market and also take into account the surveyor gender discrimination in the Indian society, the women are even more vulnerable to violence by men. This study Recommended the establishment of interventions to empower women so that they can get decent jobs and also sensitize them on ways they can prevent themselves against violence from the men in their lives.

In their study, Orindi et al., (2020) looked at the experiences of violence amongst adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) between 10 - 14 and also 15 - 22, living in Viwandani and Korogocho slums. The study found that these girls and women reported having experienced violence between 6 to 12 months before the study was conducted. The most experienced type of violence among the two

categories of participants was psychological violence, which was followed by physical violence and then sexual violence. The study found that the possibility that the participants had gone to bed hungry the previous month increased their likelihood of experiencing psychological, physical, or sexual violence. The high levels of food insecurity in the informal settlement predisposed their women and girls to physical, psychological, and sexual violence. The marital status of these women was closely related to their experience of psychological and physical violence. By belonging to a marital union was closely associated with reducing the likelihood of experiencing psychological violence. However, instances of separation or divorce increase the chances of the women experiencing both psychological and physical violence. Women who were previously employed who are highly likely to experience psychological violence weed independence and autonomy that is associated with financial freedom emerging as a key predictor of abuse.

In their study, winter, Aguilar et al. (2021) found that the fear of victimization was a major concern among the residents of Mathare informal slum and more particularly among women. These women are susceptible to various forms of violence that have been normalized in the informal settlements which include threats for eviction; demolition of their households; harassment and extortion from fellow residents who operate in gangs; land conflicts and tenure challenges; the absence of police which is accompanied by periodic violent raids by the same police; and violent electoral protest that are masterminded and bankrolled by local politicians. The women are not even safe in their own houses as they are vulnerable to emotional and physical abuse from their spouses or partners and cannot seek help from the police since domestic violence, even when it includes assault, is not considered a crime per se. Police are often bribed by the aggressor to look the other way or dismiss violence reports that the victimized women present to them. The victimization of women in the slum is, therefore, a challenge that they have had to come up with ways to adapt their behaviour so that they could cope and protect their children despite the continued fear of victimization.

Besides, age is the other demographic category that comes into play in so far as criminal victimization is concerned. More particularly, age is a critical demographic characteristic identifying victims of criminal activities in the informal settlements. According to Swahn, et al., (2012) the youth and more particularly girls are vulnerable to criminal victimization in the slums of Kampala. Specifically, the majority of girls living in this land are exposed to sexual violence, while the male counterparts reported having been injured such as a club, knife or gun are being threatened by potential assailants. The study established that the youth in the slums have adverse childhood experiences which include being beaten or hit by their parents or guardians, and in some cases, their parents had failed to provide for them due to excessive alcohol abuse, a factor that significantly contributes to violent victimization. The findings of the study also indicated that drunkenness, hunger, and drug use among the youth in these slums were specifically associated with both perpetrations of criminal activity and victimization by criminals in the community. The study noted that the exposure of the youth to a broad scope of adverse experiences and maltreatment increased their risk for using drugs and drinking alcohol, both of which exposed them to victimization. Besides, the street children living in the slum were in a more precarious position since they were considered a nuisance, and having no protector they were subjected to various forms of abuse from the police, business owners, and other members of the community.

Similar findings were also established by Swahn et al. (2015) found that violence was commonly reported among young women as compared to girls, which suggested that the potential strategies for preventing violence needed to be implemented earlier in the life of the victims. Besides, the study established that drunkenness and hunger were some of the critical factors that were associated with the multiple forms of violence that these girls and young women were subjected to, and more specifically rape incidences. The girls who reported to have been raped differed from those who are not in the sense that they lacked enough money; were generally more unhappy and had endured bad things happen to them. However, just like the other women they have a positive outlook about their future and acknowledge that they required some interventions

to mitigate the negative effects of the social disadvantages on their lives. In particular, they are acknowledged they needed interventions to help them with their self-esteem, and also improve their sense of safety, as well as bolster their social mobility and economic security.

Consistent results were also demonstrated by Paynter, (2015) who found that both males and females in the informal settlements in Kampala experienced similar intimate partner violence victimization, which was notably different as compared to the adults whereby the females were increasingly likely to self-report victimization as compared to men. The consumption of alcohol is associated with increased risks of victimization. Those youth who reported a low frequency of drunkenness were more susceptible to victimization by their partners who were alcoholics. The study noted that some of the factors that increase the likelihood of victimization included gender whereby females were at a significantly higher risk of victimization as compared to men. Other demographic factors such as low income, low educational level, race, and ethnicity were also associated with an increased possibility of intimate partner violence victimization. For the more, the star identified non-demographic characteristics that were associated with increased risk for victimization which included the history of child abuse, first exposure to violence, persistent conflict in relationships, and whether the victim was pregnant.

Kabirua et al. (2018) acknowledged that violent victimization is a major threat to the well-being of adolescents in urban informal settlements in sub-Saharan Africa. This is because violence victimization has significant negative ramifications on the health behavior and outcomes for the young adolescent. The study found that about a third of the Adolescent girls who are aged between 10 and 15 years had experienced at least one form of gender-based violence. The victimization included actual physical harm such as being pushed, kicked, or punched; that included psychological torture such as being threatened with a weapon such as a knife or threatening to hurt someone close to them. They also included sexual harm such as forced sexual intercourse or being forced to perform some sexual acts that they did not want. The girls who claimed

to have undergone violence victimization had the same aspirations as those who had not; however, their expectation of achieving growth aspirations was significantly lower as compared to those who had not been victimized. The findings of the study highlighted the potential significance of neighborhood safety when it comes to mediating violence victimization, the aspiration of young girls, and their expectation to achieve them.

In another study, Njehu (2015) noted that the reasons for the high prevalence of child abuse amongst the children in the Korogocho slum in Nairobi include the fact that the offenders, who are well known, are hardly punished; there is either not enough evidence gathered to convict them or they bribe their way out. The offenders easily entice the children with goodies and particularly food as they advance their sexual overtures and after the act, they promise better gifts in exchange for silence or they threaten the children. The children are also easily victimized due to the unavailable or poor lighting system in the community, which provides a conducive environment for sexual abuse since the sexual offenders wait in the darkness for unsuspecting children and disappear unnoticed after they have abused them. Most of the children also live in single-roomed households where they are not just highly likely to be exposed to the sexual activities of their parents or guardians. The congestion in their homes breeds insecurity that makes it possible for adults to abuse them sexually. Life in the informal settlements is also characterized by shared facilities such as bathrooms, verandas, latrines, or toilets and as they access these facilities, the children are invariably getting into contact with sex predators who take advantage of them. Furthermore, there are bars and brothels within the residential units, while in some cases, the prostitution and selling of the illicit brew happen in the houses that these children call home. This has exposed the children to sexual predators, with reported cases involving rapes by customers to their parents' illicit businesses.

Orindi, et al., (2020), also found that the propensity for experiencing sexual violence amongst the older women was significantly lower, which indicated that while sexual violence perpetrators are normally changes, most sexual offenses are carried out by friends or family members who take advantage of

young women who are not empowered enough to report such advances or resist the offenders.

Criminal vulnerability in the informal settlement is also associated with the ethnicity of the residents and in Kenya, this is often amplified during the electioneering periods. According to Wamalwa et al. (2016), politicians have leveraged negative ethnicity to cause violence in Kibera and Mathare slums. The ethnically instigated violence often targets residents from other ethnic communities who are perceived as political or power rivals during an electoral season. There is also a strong sense of historical marginalization among some ethnic groups that live in these informal settlements. These sentiments are fed by perceived iniquities that manifest in terms of allocation of land and other resources including access to public goods and services. Politicians have capitalized on these sentiments to articulate grievances regarding historical injustices since they resonate with a subsection of the informal settlement residents. This has subsequently resulted in a climate of head and tension, generating the potential for violence that normally erupts during election periods. Therefore, the nature of conflict among ethnic groups living in the informal settlements is often political, and results in physical assault, which is premised on political diversity plays a major role in fuelling the ensuing conflict which ends up being misconstrued as ethnic because it often ends up pitting one ethnic group's group against the other. Therefore, these political dynamics that are characterized by an ethnic mix of politics and tribal loyalties have significantly contributed to our terms of violence among the informal settlement residents, which end up victimizing ethnic groups targeted by the violence.

Elfversson & Höglund (2019) note that armed groups have been mobilized along ethnic lines within the informal settlements in Nairobi and then hired by the opposition and incumbent politicians for 'security' purposes. The recruitment of members into these armed groups such as *Mungiki* [goons] is associated with the growth in the number of unemployed youths in the informal settlements. Election-related conflicts are closely associated with the pre-existing conflicts regarding local control between the armed groups in the informal settlements, which goes beyond the criminal

political divide. There are various youth groups within the settlements whose activation depends on the time and circumstances, and they also engage in activities that range from political to criminal violence. They also engage in local governance and service provision to the informal settlement residents.

Elfversson & Höglund, (2019) further noted that the mobilization of youth into ethnic armed groups within the informal settlement implies that some ethnic groups become automatic targets of the armed youth when they are activated by their leaders or paid by politicians. An example of this was the Kariobangi North massacre, which was carried out by *Mungiki* targeting the Luos living in the area in 2002. This violence is considered as representing a larger pattern of victimization between rival groups that often clash over the control of various areas within the informal settlements. The groups often negotiate the relationship with political patrons during electoral seasons and trade their violent agency for money and also the promise for monopoly over the households and local business in the area in case their patron wins the election. After elections the armed groups assume a life of their own, particularly if their patron loses; they may resort to providing the residents with security or unleashing violence to the residents so that they can make a point of being recognized.

There are also instances where the police are victimized by the residents in the informal settlements. Kilatya & Kavivya (2021) established that the killing of police officers by residents and fellow policemen was prevalent in the Mathare slum. Some of the factors leading to the killing of police officers included domestic challenges, occupational stress, and the poor administration of justice by the police officers. The victimization of police officers in the Mathare slum resulted in injuries of the officers. In most cases, the victimization is carried out by criminal gangs in the informal settlement and in some cases hurt them physically. The police are also susceptible to victimization in the informal settlement due to their propensity to demand bribes which in most instances resulted in a travesty of justice, thereby sparing offenders, and further victimizing the victims of criminal activities.

Kilatya & Kavivya (2021) further note, made the police officers to be perceived as enemies of the communities in the informal settlement, since their inaction perpetuates rather than stops or prevents the offenders from victimizing the residents of the slum. The police have also been targeted for victimization due to their involvement in human rights violations which include the arbitrary arrest of the residents without indicating to them why they are being arrested, end up detaining the arrested individuals for long without presenting them to court to answer to any charges, which reflects that the arrests are not justified in the first place. There is also the proliferation of illegal firearms in the informal settlement which the criminals used to fight the police, which has in some cases resulted in the deaths of police officers. The study concluded that the victimization of police officers in the Mathare slum invariably undermined the state of security in the informal settlement. With increased cases of assault and intimidation of police officers, the insecurity levels in the Mathare slum also increased.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The victim precipitation theory argues that some victims initiate or rather instigate a particular confrontation that may lead to victimization by injury or death. Precipitation in this case could either be passive or active: passive precipitation happens when the victim bears characteristics that unknowingly threaten or incite the offenders or aggressor (Hussin & Majdah, 2012). Passive precipitation occurs due to personal conflicts such as love triangles, business rivalry, or any other desirable personal interests (Lokhande, 2020). For instance, a woman operating a successful business may be victimized domestically by the husband due to jealousy. Women can also be targeted for domestic violence if they increase in their job status and therefore experience backlash from their partner or spouse (Turvey & Petherick, 2010). Passive precipitation may also be a function of belonging to a particular group that threatens or offends others' economic status, wellbeing, or reputation. Notably, passive precipitation is quite elusive as compared to active precipitation since its underlying premise is that the victim could unknowingly trigger victimization by encroaching or threatening the

powers of individuals or groups of people (Lokhande, 2020).

In the informal settlement context, passive precipitation is evident in the quest of women who are generally disadvantaged economically seek to attain some sense of financial freedom, thereby exposing themselves to backlash from their spouses or partners who seek to use their economic deprivation as a power control tool. As Bhatta et al. (2018) note of Nepalese informal settlement, domestic violence that largely victimizes women is significantly caused by the low socio-economic status of the women. The same case applies to women in informal settlements in India where Sabri & Campbell, (2015) found that they are exposed to increased social isolation and limited social control as a result of their disadvantaged socio-economic status.

Active precipitation occurs in cases where the victim acts in deliberately provocative ways or uses threats or abusive words or even attacks first. Whenever an innocent person is victimized by a crime, some members of the general public question the role that the victim played in the criminal episode (Anderson, 2014). Some of the typical questions that are asked in this case include why the victim was at the location of the crime; and what they were doing there in the first place. An example of active precipitation may be using a road at night, yet that is a known hotspot for crime at such hours, thereby disregarding the warning. Besides, women may be victimized if they pursue a relationship with a known abuser (Turvey & Petherick, 2010). In the informal settlement context active precipitation may be associated with involvement in activities such prostitution and the selling of illicit brew, which Njehu (2015) found that it does not only happen within the neighbourhood but exposes women and children to sexual predators. There are, for instance, incidents where drunken customers turn their children into commercial sex worker to the client and molest them sexually. The exposure of children to such commercial activities as prostitution and commercial sex work tantamount to active precipitation.

Research studies have also indicated that male and female victims could have impulsive personalities that may make them obnoxious or aggressive,

thereby inciting victimization (Turvey & Petherick, 2010). There is the possibility that impulsive people are not only antagonistic and therefore more prone to be targeted for victimization, but they are also risk-takers who fail to take precautions or engage in dangerous situations (Anderson, 2014). Active precipitation does not imply that the victim got what they deserved; however, it suggests that the behaviour exhibited by the victim could have determined their victimization irrespective of whether they were responsible for the outcome (Turvey & Petherick, 2010).

The lifestyle theory of victimization argues that there are people whose lifestyle increases their exposure to criminals, thereby making them highly likely to get victimized. Such lifestyle includes behaviour such as living in crowded areas in towns and cities and going out late at night. To reduce the chances of getting victimized, one, therefore, has to move to suburban areas or stop going out later tonight (Hussin & Majdah, 2012). The premise of the lifestyle theory of victimization is that crying is hardly random; instead, it is a product of the chosen lifestyle of an individual. They also individuals who choose to leave high-risk lifestyles such as drinking, taking drugs, and engaging in criminal activities, and in this way the first are at even higher risk of becoming victims of crime (Anderson, 2014).

This implies that the longer someone is exposed to street life the greater chance they have to become victims of crime. This includes people who live extremely risky life such as drug users, runaways, and the homeless who are more often exposed to street life. In particular, young men are highly likely to become victims of crime, and teenagers who go out at night to parties habitually are at an increased risk of getting victimized as compared to those who desist from such a high-risk lifestyle (Anderson, 2014). The chance of a person being victimized by crime increases when they are unmarried or single and have friends within the same social status (Turvey & Petherick, 2010). This is premised on the belief that single people have a lifestyle that inspired them to be out of their homes during peak hours of crime. Besides, single people could have friends who have criminal elements and who can also and intentionally expose them to criminal victimization (Lokhande, 2020).

The deviant place theory of victimization argues that victims do not necessarily motivate criminals to target them; however, they are likely to be victimized because of the social area where they live which are characterized by disorganization and high crime rates and this predisposes them to criminals irrespective of their behaviour or lifestyle (Hussin & Majdah, 2012). The more often a potential victim visits a dangerous place the higher likelihood they will be victimized by an offender (Turvey & Petherick, 2010). The theory argues that victims do not necessarily encourage or rather trigger victimization but they are susceptible to criminal victimization due to the socially disorganized areas they live in which have high incidences of criminal activity. This way their chances of coming across as criminal offenders are increasingly high regardless of their lifestyle or behaviour (Lokhande, 2020).

The routine activity theory of victimization argues that the rate and distribution of predatory crime are closely associated with three key interacting variables that reflect a typical routine activity (Hussin & Majdah, 2012). The variables include the availability of a suitable target such as an unsuspecting pedestrian or an unlocked house; the lack of security guardians such as homeowners, neighbours, guards, or the police; and the presence of potential offenders such as unemployed youth and drug addicts (Vito & Maahs, 2011). This implies that crime may be higher in locations where there is ineffective police protection where the police are reactive rather than proactive when it comes to the policing strategies they use to prevent or contain crime (Anderson, 2014). Arguably, the routine activity theory is the most referenced and the most tested of the theories of victimization and has received wide-scale support from criminologists (Turvey & Petherick, 2010).

The theory, therefore, posits that the intersection of the three key variables increases the likelihood of crime occurring in a particular location. The theory argues that the three components do not necessarily guarantee that a crime will definitely be committed; they however increase the possibility of the crime happening (Turvey & Petherick, 2010). The theory rather argues that property and economic crime are highly likely to occur in homes that have goods that are easy to sell such as electronics including

computers, stereos, and televisions (Lokhande, 2020).

The key focus of this particular theory involves eliminating the opportunity for crime to be committed. Proponents of the theory argue that situational crime prevention strategies could be used to address criminal activities that are motivated by the routine activities of the victims (Anderson, 2014). In this case, some strategies may involve the installation of surveillance cameras, hardening of targets such as putting burglar bars on the door and windows; establishing a neighbourhood watch program, or installing an alarm system (Turvey & Petherick, 2010). These measures are not just effective when it comes to preventing crime, they may also contribute to the reduction of the potential gain from the successful occurrence of crime. This is especially practical in cases where people have installed tracking systems in their electronics or have engraved their names or initials on their goods (Turvey & Petherick, 2010).

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research design was adopted for this study. The study in this case, aimed at describing demographic victimization of the residents in four informal settlements within Nairobi County, including Kibera, Korogocho, Mathare, and Mukuru. The study targeted informal settlement residents aged from 18 years and above. Besides, the study adopted the systematic random sampling to determine the participants of the study. The systematic random sampling is suitable for studies with large population sizes, whereby the

participants are selected based on a random starting point but with a fixed specified interval (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003), the study therefore considered every fifth person after the previously interview until a sample size of 659 participants was determined. The questionnaires were administered to the participants, this was done quantitatively and qualitatively filled by the respondents to ensure a higher response rate. The anonymity and confidentiality of the research participant was assured by not indicating their personal identifiers on the questionnaires that they helped complete. The participants also signed on the informed consent forms after the researcher explained to them the purpose, and procedure of the research study and their rights and privileges as participants. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data that was input into the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS). The results were subsequently presented using tables as frequencies and percentages.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The findings showed that 53% of the respondents were male whereas 47% were female. Notably, the proportion of male respondents in three slums included in the study was higher as compared to females: Kibera (52%), Mathare (57%), and Mukuru (54%) (See *Table 1*). However, the proportion of women (54%) in Korogocho was higher as compared to men respondents. This demonstrated that the results and findings of the study were based an almost equal proportion of the perspectives from both genders.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondent

Demographic Factor	Total	Slum settlement			
		Kibera	Mathare	Mukuru	Korogocho
Total	N=659	N=223	N=152	N=169	N=115
Gender					
Male	53%	52%	57%	54%	46%
Female	47%	48%	43%	46%	54%
Age					
18-24 years	33%	38%	24%	30%	42%
25-34 years	43%	42%	44%	47%	37%
35-44 years	15%	11%	20%	17%	12%
45-54 years	5%	4%	6%	2%	8%
55-64 years	3%	2%	5%	2%	0%

Demographic Factor	Total	Slum settlement			
		Kibera	Mathare	Mukuru	Korogocho
65 years+	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%
Highest level of Education					
Never gone to School	3%	2%	6%	2%	4%
Some primary school	9%	5%	13%	4%	17%
Primary completed	23%	22%	32%	15%	23%
Some secondary	19%	24%	19%	14%	19%
Secondary completed	30%	31%	16%	46%	20%
Tertiary College	15%	13%	13%	18%	15%
University and above	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Refused	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Marital					
Single	43%	44%	34%	51%	41%
Married	49%	50%	53%	43%	50%
Divorced/Separated/Widowed	8%	5%	13%	7%	10%
Length of stay in the slum					
Less than 1 year	6%	3%	3%	10%	9%
Between 1 and 3 years	27%	21%	28%	40%	18%
Between 4 and 6 years	20%	15%	25%	22%	18%
Over 6 years	47%	61%	43%	27%	55%
Refused/Missing	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%

The findings showed that many respondents (43%) were aged between 24 – 34 years. Besides, 33% of the respondents were aged between 18 - 24 years; 15% were aged between 35 - 44 years; 5% were aged between 45 - 54 years; 3% were aged between 55 - 64 years; and 1% were aged between 65 years and above (see *Table 1*). The findings revealed that the majority of the informal settlement residents were aged from 44 years and below; while a significantly small proportion of the residents were aged from 65 years and above.

The findings of the study showed that the majority of the respondents (30%) had completed secondary education; 23% had completed primary school education; 19% had some secondary school education; 15% had tertiary college education; while 9% had some primary school education. Besides, 1% of the respondents had university education and above; 3% had never gone to school and 1% declined to divulge their education level (see *Table 1*). Cumulatively, the proportion of the respondents who had education ranging from primary to secondary school and were therefore literate was higher as compared to that of those who

have never gone to The findings showed that most of the residents (49%) in the informal settlement were married; 43% were single, while 8% were either divorced, separated, or widowed (see *Table 1*).

The findings showed that most of the respondents (47%) had stayed in the informal settlements for more than six years. 27% of the respondents had lived in the informal settlements between 1- 3 years; 20% had stayed there for a period ranging between 4 - 6 years; 6% had stayed there for less than a year while 1% refused to indicate how long they had lived there (see *Table 1*).

The findings showed that many of the respondents (31%) were employed as casual labourers; 25% were unemployed; 23% were self-employed; and 8% were employed part-time. However, while 1% of the respondents were retired, 2% did not reveal their employment status (see *Table 2*). This demonstrated that the number of informal settlement residents working as casual labourers was higher; closely followed by those who are unemployed.

Table 2: Economic Status of the Informal Settlement Residents

Economic Status	Total	Slum settlement			
		Kibera	Mathare	Mukuru	Korogocho
Total	N=659	N=223	N=152	N=169	N=115
Employment Status					
Unemployed	25%	32%	20%	22%	20%
Employed casual labourer	31%	26%	38%	30%	32%
Employed part-time	8%	10%	9%	9%	4%
Employed full-time	10%	9%	9%	11%	9%
Self employed	23%	19%	22%	26%	30%
Retired	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Refused	2%	2%	3%	2%	4%
Income Levels					
Less than 1000.00	7%	4%	10%	2%	20%
1000.00 to 3000.00	16%	7%	36%	8%	18%
3001.00 to 5000.00	22%	18%	27%	23%	18%
5001.00 to 7000.00	14%	14%	12%	21%	5%
7001.00 to 9000.00	5%	7%	1%	7%	2%
Over 9000.00	5%	4%	2%	8%	3%
Do not know/Refused	32%	46%	13%	31%	33%
Perception towards the Economy					
A big problem	81%	88%	73%	86%	71%
A moderate problem	14%	8%	22%	12%	18%
A small problem	3%	3%	3%	1%	6%
No problem at all	1%	1%	0%	1%	3%
Refused/Missing	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Perception about Unemployment					
A big problem	89%	84%	94%	93%	89%
A moderate problem	7%	9%	4%	6%	9%
A small problem	2%	4%	2%	1%	1%
No problem at all	2%	4%	0%	0%	1%
Refused/Missing	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Perception towards Poverty					
A big problem	83%	81%	86%	82%	86%
A moderate problem	13%	13%	12%	14%	11%
A small problem	3%	5%	1%	4%	3%
No problem at all	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Refused/Missing	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

The findings of the study showed that the majority of the respondents (32%) refused to reveal their monthly incomes. However, 22% of the respondents earned between Kshs. 3001 - 5000; 16% had a monthly income of Kshs. 1000 - 3000; 14% made about Kshs. 5001 - 7000 per month; 7% earned less than Kshs. 1000; 5% earned between 7001 and 9000 while another 5% earned more than 9000 per month (see *Table 2*).

The findings indicated that for the majority of the respondents (81%) the economy was a big problem, with only 14% considering it a moderate problem and 3% claiming it was a small problem. However, while 1% of the respondents considered the economy as being no problem at all another 1% refused to give their opinion about it (see *Table 2*).

The findings demonstrated that the majority of the respondents (89%) considered that unemployment

in the informal settlement was a big problem; and while 7% found it to be a moderate problem, 2% said it was a small problem and another 2% claimed it was not a problem at all. The findings show that most of the respondents (83%) considered poverty as a big problem; 13% considered it a moderate problem and only 3% said that it was a small problem (see *Table 2*).

Most of the houses (33%) in the informal settlement were built with iron sheets; 31% were built with mud; 20% were built with bricks or stones; 5% were built with timber while 11% were built with other material (see *Table 3*). The findings showed that 22% of the respondents shared their houses with two people; 22% shared the houses among three people; 20% shared their houses among four people; while 37% had other alternative living arrangements (see *Table 3*).

Table 3: Living Conditions of the respondents

Living Conditions	Total	Slum settlement			
		Kibera	Mathare	Mukuru	Korogocho
Total	N=659	N=223	N=152	N=169	N=115
Household type					
Mud	31%	63%	13%	1%	39%
Timber	5%	2%	3%	12%	3%
Brick/Stone	20%	2%	30%	24%	35%
Iron Sheets	33%	4%	52%	63%	21%
Other	11%	30%	2%	1%	2%
Number of people sharing the house					
2 people	22%	23%	22%	23%	18%
3 people	22%	16%	26%	31%	15%
4 people	20%	24%	22%	12%	18%
Other	37%	37%	30%	34%	49%
Size of the Living Space in the House Holds					
Strongly Agree	6%	12%	1%	3%	8%
Agree	10%	8%	7%	17%	9%
Neither /nor	7%	8%	10%	4%	8%
Disagree	35%	12%	51%	51%	35%
Strongly Disagree	40%	59%	31%	25%	38%
Refused/Missing	1%	1%	0%	0%	3%
Type of toilet					
Pit Latrine	85%	98%	77%	78%	81%
Water Closet with Cess tank	14%	1%	22%	21%	19%
Others	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Not mentioned	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Toilet facility shared by more than one household					
Yes	97%	99%	92%	98%	98%
No	3%	1%	8%	2%	2%
Threat of Eviction from the Informal Settlements					
Strongly Agree	5%	5%	3%	3%	9%
Agree	6%	8%	5%	7%	3%
Neither /nor	12%	6%	4%	24%	18%
Disagree	28%	13%	39%	43%	20%
Strongly Disagree	48%	66%	49%	23%	50%
Refused/Missing	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

The findings showed that the majority of the respondents (40%) strongly disagreed that the space in the house that they lived in was adequate for their daily activities; 35% also disagreed that the space was adequate while 7% were not sure. However, 10% agreed that the space was adequate while 6% strongly agreed (see *Table 3*). The findings showed that the majority of the toilets in the informal settlement (85%) were pit latrines; while 14% were water closet with cess tanks and 1% involved the use of other unspecified means of disposal (see *Table 3*).

The findings showed that the majority of the toilets in the informal settlement (85%) were pit latrines; while 14% were water closet with cess tanks and 1% involved the use of other unspecified means of disposal (see *Table 3*). The findings showed that 97% of the respondents indicated to be sharing their toilets with more than one household, while only 3% did not share their toilets (see *Table 3*).

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The findings showed that the majority of the respondents (48%) strongly disagreed that they do not fear eviction from where they live; 28% also disagreed while 12% were not certain. However, only 6% agreed and 5% strongly agreed that they did not fear that they could one day be evicted from their current residence (see *Table 3*).

Criminal Victimization

The findings showed that the majority of the respondents (47%) had a big problem with crime and safety in the informal settlements; 35% considered crime and safety a moderate problem; 15% said it was a small problem while 2% claimed that it was not a problem at all. The residents had a problem with crime and safety in the informal settlements.

Table 4: Criminal Victimization in Informal settlements

Criminal Victimization	Total	Slum settlement			
		Kibera	Mathare	Mukuru	Korogocho
Total	N=659	N=223	N=152	N=169	N=115
Crime and safety					
A big problem	47%	54%	37%	50%	44%
A moderate problem	35%	28%	38%	38%	43%
A small problem	15%	16%	24%	10%	10%
No problem at all	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Refused/Missing	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Extent of fear of crime					
A great deal	57%	67%	47%	51%	56%
A fair amount	25%	17%	38%	26%	24%
Not very much	14%	13%	12%	17%	14%
Not at all	4%	3%	3%	4%	6%
Do not know	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%
Crime victimization in the past year					
Yes	44%	34%	45%	48%	58%
No	56%	66%	55%	52%	42%
Number of times affected by crime					
Total	N=292	N=76	N=68	N=81	N=67
One time	49%	68%	34%	52%	37%
Two times	24%	20%	18%	28%	30%
Three times	11%	7%	19%	7%	12%
More than three times	15%	5%	26%	11%	21%
Do not Know/Refused	1%	0%	3%	1%	0%

The findings indicated that the majority of the respondents (57%) feared crime to a great extent; 25% feared crime to a fair amount; 14% feared crime but not very much; 4% did not fear crime at all and 1% did not know (see *Table 4*). The findings showed that most of the respondents (56%) had not been victimized by criminals in the past year; while 44% had fallen victims to crime in that same year (see *Table 4*). The findings showed that many of the respondents (49%) were affected by crime only once; 24% were affected at least twice; 11% were affected at least thrice, and 15% were affected more than thrice. Only 1% of the respondents did not indicate how often they were affected by criminal activity in the informal settlements (see *Table 4*).

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Table 5: Crime faced in the same areas

Crime	Total	Slum settlement				Slums near resident	Near industrial areas
		Kibera	Mathare	Mukuru	Korogocho		
Total	N=659	N=223	N=152	N=169	N=115	N=375	N=284
Assault	79%	78%	95%	61%	89%	85%	72%
Pick-pocketing	54%	37%	65%	56%	70%	49%	61%
Mugging	84%	82%	84%	83%	89%	82%	85%
Sexual abuse	37%	30%	29%	33%	70%	30%	48%
Burglary	85%	86%	80%	83%	91%	83%	87%
Robbery with violence	62%	50%	53%	69%	86%	51%	76%
General robbery	90%	84%	94%	93%	91%	88%	93%
Arson	26%	6%	47%	32%	27%	23%	30%
Murder	65%	69%	70%	54%	70%	69%	61%
Car-jacking	9%	3%	11%	8%	20%	6%	13%
Kidnapping	11%	4%	18%	6%	24%	10%	13%
Illicit brew	97%	96%	100%	96%	97%	97%	97%
Drugs	82%	83%	85%	76%	85%	83%	80%
Other	7%	10%	6%	2%	6%	9%	4%
Refused/Missing	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%

The findings showed that there are many types of crimes that were experienced by the residents within the informal settlements. They included illicit brew (97%); general robbery (90%); burglary (85%); mugging (84%); drugs (82%); assault (79%);

murder (65%); robbery with violence (62%); pickpocketing (54%); sexual abuse (37%); arson (26%); kidnapping (11%); and carjacking (9%) (See *Table 5*).

Table 6: Criminal Victimization

Criminal Victimization	Total	Slum settlement			
		Kibera	Mathare	Mukuru	Korogocho
Time of crime					
Total	N=292	N=76	N=68	N=81	N=67
Early in the morning	13%	9%	9%	16%	16%
Mid-Morning	7%	3%	7%	15%	1%
Mid-Day	7%	11%	3%	9%	3%
Early Afternoon	3%	1%	4%	0%	7%
Late Afternoon	7%	1%	9%	11%	6%
Evening	19%	18%	28%	6%	27%
Early night Mid	29%	34%	25%	30%	27%
Night Late at night	13%	22%	9%	11%	10%
No idea when crime was committed	2%	0%	6%	2%	1%
Location of crime					
Total	N=292	N=76	N=68	N=81	N=67
In the house	31%	28%	26%	42%	25%
Outside the house but nearby	19%	16%	28%	14%	21%
At a public place	8%	4%	12%	7%	9%
On the way	39%	51%	29%	33%	42%
Other	3%	1%	4%	4%	3%
Weaponry Use in Conducting Attack					
Total	N=268	N=71	N=65	N=70	N=62
Yes	65%	59%	68%	56%	77%
No	35%	41%	32%	44%	23%
Identity of Attackers					
Total	N=289	N=76	N=67	N=77	N=68
Yes	36%	47%	15%	42%	37%
No	64%	53%	85%	58%	63%
Age of attackers					
Total	N=103	N=36	N=10	N=32	N=25
Young	52%	81%	0%	44%	44%
Middle Age	42%	17%	90%	53%	44%
A mixture	4%	3%	0%	3%	8%
Do not Know	2%	0%	10%	0%	4%
Gender of attackers					
Total	N=103	N=36	N=10	N=32	N=25
Male(s)	86%	92%	80%	75%	96%
Female(s)	4%	6%	10%	3%	0%
A mixture	4%	0%	10%	9%	0%
Do not Know	6%	3%	0%	13%	4%

The findings indicated that most of the crime (29%) happened early at night; 19% happened in the evening; 13% happened late at night; another 13% happened early in the morning and 7% happened in mid-morning. Besides, another 7% of the crime happened at midday and did so late in the afternoon respectively, and 3% happened early afternoon (see *Table 6*). The findings of the study showed that most of the criminal activity (39%) happened to the respondents along the way; 31% of the crime happened in the house; 19% happened outside the house but nearby; 8% happened in public places while 3% happened elsewhere (see *Table 6*).

The findings demonstrated that most of the criminal activity (65%) was perpetrated using a weapon as compared to 35% of the times when weapons were used (see *Table 6*). The findings show that the majority (52%) of the criminal attackers were young; 42% were middle-aged; 4% were mixed while 2% could not be identified by their age (see *Table 6*). The findings showed that the majority (86%) of the attackers were male; 4% were female attackers; 4% were a mixture of both genders, and 6% had disguised their gender (see *Table 6*).

CONCLUSIONS

A significant proportion of the informal settlement population consist of a younger generation that aged from 44 years and below. Most of these residents are literate since they have acquired either primary or secondary level education. However, their education level is still low to enable them to acquire well-paying job in a labour market that is increasingly competitive. Most of the residents were in a marital relationship and almost half had stayed in the informal settlement for more than 6 years. New residents were increasingly joining the informal settlements considering the higher proportion of those who have lived in there for less than 3 years, which indicated the absorption of the urban poor in the slums exacerbated by increased rural-urban migration.

Most of the informal settlement residents were underemployed as casual labourers and almost an equal proportion of the residents were unemployed. The economy is a big problem for the residents and with the highest monthly income being Kshs. 9000 per month. The majority of the informal settlement

residents lived for less than \$1 a day. The high rates of unemployment and poverty in the informal settlement is also a big problem to the residents.

The temporary shelters in the informal settlements were predominantly built with iron sheets and mud. Most of the houses in the slums were shared between 2 - 4 people and the space within these houses was not adequate for the daily activities of the residents. The pit latrine was the predominantly used toilet in the informal settlements, which were shared by more than one household. Besides, most residents feared the possibility of getting evicted from the informal settlement.

Almost all residents in the informal settlements have been affected by criminal activity either once, twice, thrice, or more than thrice. The most common type of crime experienced by residents in all four slums was illicit brew. The other commonly experienced crimes included general robbery, burglary, muggings, drugs, assault, murder, robbery with violence, pickpocketing, sexual abuse, arson, kidnapping. Most of the residents lived with the fear of criminal victimization, with nearly a half of them falling victims of crime in the past year. Most of these criminal activities happened early in the evening and early in the morning and were perpetrated on the victims either along the way or in their homes. The crimes were mostly conducted with a weapon and the criminal attacks were often carried out by the youth and middle-aged individuals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There a need for carrying out crime sensitization programs to empower the informal settlement residents with the knowledge on how to avoid victimization. The sensitization programs should also provide the residents with information on how they can access justice in case of victimization. This will be imperative with regard to ensuring that the same criminals do not re-victimize the residents or victimize many other before requisite actions are taken.

The community policing programs in the informal settlements should be enhanced to contain victimization from the most common illegal activities in the slum, which is the selling and consumption of illicit brews. This illegality goes

hand in hand with prostitution and seen to the victimization of women through sexual assault and the girls living around the neighbourhoods where the illicit brew and prostitution is practiced as an economic activity. The community policing program should device modalities for protecting these vulnerable children apart from flashing out the illegality.

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