

# Relationship Between Income Level and Criminal Behavior Among Youths in Embakasi Central in Nairobi County

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## **Abstract- Background**

*The relationship between crime and socio-economic factors differs across regions and countries. Some research has focused solely on economic factors of crime, without considering deterrent variables. This study aimed to investigate relationship between income level and criminal behavior among youths in Embakasi Central in Nairobi County. Two theories guided this study: Strain Theory of Crime and Behavioral Criminal Theory.*

## **Methodology**

*The study population consisted of residents of Embakasi Central, including youth, women, and men, totaling approximately 350,000 people. A sample of 214 respondents was selected (a response rate of 71.57%) against the planned sample size of 300, determined using a mathematical approach developed by Nassiuma in 2000. Data were collected through structured questionnaires from participants aged 18 years and above. Qualitative data were gathered from area administrators, such as chiefs and assistant chiefs, through in-depth interviews (IDIs). A pilot study was carried out with 10% of the respondents from the neighboring Embakasi East area to pretest the questionnaire. For the subsequent descriptive analysis, the researcher organized, cleaned, coded, and processed the quantitative data using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. The findings were presented in tables, frequencies, and percentages. Inferential statistical analysis was conducted, including Pearson correlation, to examine the relationship between youth involvement in crime (dependent variable) and the independent variables. The results showed significant correlations: income level ( $r=0.912$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).*

## **Findings**

*The analysis demonstrated that the examined variables had a significant impact on youth involvement in criminal activities, though to varying*

*degrees. Regression analysis indicated that fluctuations in youth criminal behavior in Embakasi Central were linked to changes in income level. Qualitative data were analyzed using a thematic approach, incorporating narratives aligned with the study objective. The findings were presented in a structured manner to support the formulation of relevant recommendations.*

## **Conclusion**

*The study recommends that the government, in partnership with employment agencies, work towards creating employment opportunities for youths. This would keep them engaged and reduce their likelihood of involvement in criminal behavior. Employers should consider offering decent wages or salaries to youths in both formal and informal jobs, which would increase their income levels and further decrease their chances of engaging in criminal activities.*

*Indexed Terms- Crime, Socio-economic factors, Income level, Youth, Criminal behavior, Employment*

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1.1 Background of the Study

Youth crime is closely linked to socioeconomic factors, particularly income levels and unemployment. Studies indicate that young individuals from low-income families are more likely to engage in criminal behavior due to financial instability and lack of opportunities. The United Nations reports that 41% of the world's unemployed population comprises young people, with many resorting to crime as a means of survival. In countries such as South Africa, the United States, and the United Kingdom, high unemployment rates, income inequality, and economic deprivation contribute significantly to youth delinquency. Without sustainable income sources, many young individuals

turn to crimes like robbery, theft, and drug-related offenses to meet their financial needs. The absence of well-paying jobs and economic stability further fuels criminal involvement, especially among those in marginalized communities.

Research has consistently shown that poverty alone does not directly cause crime, but when combined with other socioeconomic stressors such as lack of access to education, racial discrimination, and social exclusion, it increases the likelihood of delinquency. In the U.S., studies highlight that individuals who have lived in poverty for more than four years have a 90% chance of engaging in deviant behavior. Similarly, in African cities, rapid urbanization and lack of social services leave young people vulnerable to crime. Many youths in informal settlements struggle with poor living conditions, inadequate schooling, and unemployment, which push them toward illicit activities. In Kenya, for instance, over half of all reported crimes were committed by individuals aged 16 to 25, with financial desperation cited as a primary motivator.

Income disparities also contribute to youth criminality by limiting access to essential services such as healthcare and education. Minority groups in Western countries often earn significantly lower wages than their white counterparts, leading to social instability and increased crime rates in disadvantaged neighborhoods. In the U.K., economic deprivation among minority communities correlates with high rates of knife crimes and gang-related violence. Similarly, in Australia, precarious job markets and wage disparities contribute to youth aggression and violent crimes. Addressing youth crime requires tackling economic inequality through targeted policies that promote job creation, education, and social welfare programs, ultimately reducing the financial desperation that drives many young individuals toward criminal behavior.

#### 1.1.2 Research Objective

To investigate the relationship between income level and criminal behavior among youths in Embakasi Central in Nairobi County.

#### 1.1.3 Statement of the problem

The involvement of youths in criminal activities is a multifaceted issue influenced by various socio-economic factors, particularly pervasive poverty and the inability to meet their basic needs. In Kenya, young people account for over 57% of reported offenses, and the emergence of youth-dominated criminal gangs is a growing concern for the public and security agencies alike. The escalating rates of juvenile crime not only pose immediate threats to community safety but also have profound implications for human well-being, economic stability, and social development. This surge in crime leads to increased government expenditure on healthcare for the injured and law enforcement, while also resulting in significant economic losses due to incarceration, injury, or fatalities.

Recent trends in adolescent criminal behavior indicate a disturbing shift in crime commission methods, particularly in Nairobi County, where police reports highlight a notable rise in the use of weapons by youths in areas such as Kayole, Mukuru Kwa Njenga, Kibra, and Embakasi. The underlying causes of this violence are rooted in resource scarcity and limited access to opportunities, with poverty identified as a primary driver influencing Nairobi's youth toward criminal conduct, exacerbated by high unemployment rates (Muiya, 2014).

Despite the evident correlation between crime and socio-economic variables, there is a scarcity of research in Kenya that comprehensively examines these dynamics. Many studies have focused solely on economic indicators of crime, neglecting the broader deterrent factors at play. This gap in the literature underscores the need for a thorough investigation into the socio-economic consequences of criminal behavior among urban youth. Therefore, this study aims to explore these factors in depth, with a particular focus on Embakasi Central in Nairobi County, to better understand the complex interplay between socio-economic conditions and youth crime.

#### 1.1.4 Literature Review: Consequences of Income Level On Criminal Behavior among Youths

According to Nadimpalli et al. (2020), urban areas, particularly informal settlements, are often characterized by pervasive poverty, as evidenced by

the proliferation of makeshift housing and inadequate social amenities. The socioeconomic status (SES) of residents in these informal urban areas is generally low. Research revealed a significant relationship between parental income and youth offending (Nadimpalli *et al.*, 2020). Higher socioeconomic status is often associated with a reduced likelihood of negative life outcomes, but the relationship between SES and crime is a complex and understudied area. The social and economic capital available within a family can significantly influence a child's future trajectory, as these resources can serve as either an advantage or a constraint (Nadimpalli *et al.*, 2020).

Manhica *et al.*, (2021) conducted a study and established that low socioeconomic status during childhood is a significant predictor of criminal behavior and substance abuse later in life. This underscores the importance of addressing the socioeconomic disparities that exist within urban communities, particularly in informal settlements, as they can have far-reaching consequences on the well-being and trajectories of young people. The study concluded that to effectively address the issue of youth crime, it is crucial to consider the broader socioeconomic context in which these behaviors arise. Interventions that target the underlying drivers of poverty, such as access to education, employment opportunities, and social support, may be more effective in reducing youth involvement in criminal activities and promoting long-term positive outcomes (Nadimpalli *et al.*, 2020).

Adeyemi *et al.*, (2021) conducted a study in Nigeria that aimed to understand the relationship between young people's income levels and their involvement in criminal activities. This research is valuable as it provides insights into the age patterns and distributions of crime, offering important policy implications regarding investments in labor-market initiatives that can yield substantial social benefits, such as reduced insecurity. The study findings suggest that the level of labor-market opportunities is inversely related to the level of crime in many countries. Most researchers have relied on aggregated estimates of crime and unemployment due to data limitations (Juárez, *et al.*, 2022). However, this approach runs the risk of obscuring the widely observed association between teenage unemployment and criminality, as

some communities with high unemployment may have fewer means for theft and fewer people on the streets who could be targeted for robbery or other crimes.

Adeyemi *et al.*, (2021) conducted a study on the nuances of criminal activity by youths. The authors emphasized the importance of understanding the age patterns and distributions of crime, as this can inform the development of targeted interventions and policies that address the underlying socioeconomic factors driving youth involvement in criminal activities. The findings suggest that investments in labor-market initiatives, such as job training programs, apprenticeships, and entrepreneurship support, can create substantial social benefits by providing young people with viable economic opportunities and reducing their likelihood of engaging in criminal behavior. This approach aligns with the broader understanding that addressing the root causes of crime, rather than solely focusing on punitive measures, can lead to more sustainable and effective outcomes in terms of community safety and overall social well-being.

In Kenya, areas with higher crime rates are also areas with higher poverty rates (Schuberth, 2018). These authors discovered that poverty in these areas is caused by high unemployment rates. They also stated that poverty has a direct impact on the level of crime because it causes stress, which attracts people to engage in criminal activities. According to Berger and Van Helvoirt (2018), poverty can limit access to quality education, employment, and better opportunities. The scholar also observed that people living in less privileged areas spend more time on the streets and interact with criminal gangs. Because they lack legal options, these people see illegal behavior as the only way to earn a living as well as meet their basic needs.

Trucco, (2020) points out that in Kenya, juvenile crime is strongly linked to drug abuse. Research has shown that drug dependence, particularly on opiates, can diminish an individual's moral character and lead to negative thought patterns that facilitate criminal behavior (Henneberger, *et al.*, 2021). Studies have also suggested that the appeal and rewards associated with illegal activities play a key role in crime involvement. Crime rates appear to correlate with social dynamics,

economic factors, and human willingness to engage in unlawful acts (Hawke *et al.*, 2020). However, further in-depth investigation is still needed to fully understand the complex relationship between socioeconomic indicators and youth criminality in the Kenyan context. Addressing this issue will require a multifaceted approach targeting the social, economic, and psychological drivers of criminal behavior.

1.1.5 Theoretical Framework: Strain Theory of Crime. The strain theory holds that certain stresses or strains, such as a lack of income, raise the possibility of crime. These tensions give rise to negative feelings like anger and irritation. People are driven to action, and breaking the law is one way to do it. The strain of anomalies, which is characterized by a stark contrast between societal expectations and institutionalized means, is what leads to crime and deviance, claims the strain theory, first advanced by Robert Merton in 1938 (Merton, 1938).

According to Bishopp *et al.* (2020), the strain theory is a sociological theory that believes that pressure-derived social anomalies, such as a lack of money or a low education, encourage people to commit crimes. In the 1930s, American sociologist Robert K. developed the assumptions that underpin strain theory. These strains elicit unpleasant emotions such as anger and fury. Crime is one possible reaction to these emotions, which put pressure on people to take corrective action.

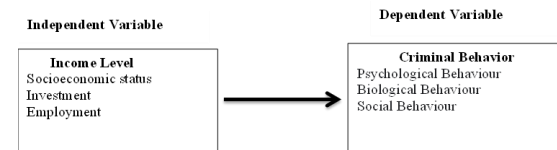
Agnew (2020) exemplifies the benefits and drawbacks of the strain hypothesis. The strength of the generic strain hypothesis lies in its ability to analyze how structural factors and cultural values interact to create variations in crime and delinquency across different groups. This is particularly helpful in understanding group disparities in criminal behavior. However, strain theory does not fully account for white-collar crime, which provides criminals with opportunities to achieve their goals through legal and legitimate means. Crimes motivated by gender inequality cannot be explained by strain theory.

After analyzing crime statistics in the United States by class, Merton (1938) found that people from lower socioeconomic levels were more prone to commit acquisition-related crimes like theft. The two main social goals for most people are material wealth and

success, but achieving these goals can be challenging due to class inequality that arises in society (Agnew, 2020). The tendency of those on the margins of society to engage in criminal activity is explained by their preference for illegitimate goals, but people must fight to accomplish these goals through legal means. This theory helped the researcher determine the goals that the study's participants hope to accomplish and the methods they used to do so, which makes it essential to this study.

Finally, strain theory suggests that abnormal conduct arises naturally from people's pain when opportunities to fulfill culturally valued goals are taken away from them. For example, even though a small proportion of the population is wealthy, Western society places a high value on economic achievement. The ability of the generic strain theory to account for how institutional arrangements and cultural attitudes interact to predict offending rates across groups is one of its benefits for comprehending group disparities in criminal activity. This approach is supplemented by behavioral criminal theory.

1.1.6 Conceptual Framework



II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

2.1.1 Study Location

The study was carried out in Embakasi Central constituency, one of the seventeen constituencies in Nairobi County. Embakasi Central comprises five voting wards: Kayole North, Kayole Central, Kayole South, Komarock, and Matopeni/Spring Valley. This dynamic constituency is home to a diverse population, representing various ethnic groups and socioeconomic backgrounds, and grapples with substantial challenges, including poverty, unemployment, and crime. These factors make it a critical focus for research on youth behavior, particularly criminal activity. The constituency is home to numerous NGOs and community organizations dedicated to addressing issues related to youth welfare, education, and crime prevention, highlighting its relevance for studies

exploring the impact of socioeconomic determinants on youth criminal behavior.

**2.1.2 Study Design and Data Collection Techniques**  
 Pandey and Pandey (2021) define research design as an exploratory strategy for obtaining answers to research questions and controlling variance. A research design serves as a detailed blueprint that guides a research project toward its objectives. This study adopted a descriptive research approach to evaluate the impact of socioeconomic determinants on criminal behavior among juveniles in urban areas, specifically focusing on Embakasi Central in Nairobi County. The choice to use a mixed-methods approach was based on the need to gain a thorough understanding of the complex relationship between socioeconomic factors and youth criminal behavior. Combining both qualitative and quantitative methods allowed this study to collect detailed, rich insights alongside statistical data. As highlighted by Harrison, Reilly, & Creswell (2020), a mixed-method study involves gathering and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data within the same research framework (Truong et al., 2020).

This mixed-methods approach enabled the collection of diverse data on key variables such as income level, poverty, work status, and education, allowing for a detailed exploration of how these factors impact youth involvement in criminal behavior. Quantitative data were gathered through questionnaires distributed to selected youths in Embakasi Central, offering measurable insights into the prevalence and trends of criminal activity. At the same time, qualitative data were obtained through interviews with directors of NGOs and youth welfare associations, providing contextual perspectives and real-life experiences. This combination of data types strengthens the validity and depth of the findings, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the issues being studied.

The study utilized a comprehensive data collection procedure, employing both primary quantitative and qualitative methods. Primary data was obtained through structured questionnaires and Key Informant Interviews (KII), as detailed in APPENDIX F and APPENDIX G. Questionnaires were selected as the primary instrument due to the study's focus on individual perspectives regarding the independent and

dependent variables, allowing for the collection of quantitative data from 209 respondents. In parallel, qualitative insights were gathered from five key informants through KII, enriching the data set with in-depth perspectives.

To ensure smooth data collection, the researcher first obtained the required research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) and secured permission from the university. This ensured compliance with ethical standards and institutional guidelines. The researcher then prepared by purchasing A4 paper to print the questionnaires, which were organized into file binders for easy distribution.

To optimize response rates, the researcher implemented a systematic follow-up strategy. After distributing the questionnaires, the researcher scheduled two weeks for completion. To encourage timely responses, reminders were sent three days after distribution via friendly email and text messages, gently prompting respondents about the approaching deadline. This proactive communication helped to maintain engagement and ensure a higher completion rate.

After two weeks, the researcher conducted a drop-and-pick procedure to collect the completed questionnaires, ensuring that the data was gathered efficiently and securely. This multifaceted approach not only enhanced the reliability of the data collection process but also provided a rich dataset that could be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively, leading to more nuanced findings in the study.

### 2.1.3 Target Population, Sample Size, and Sampling and Data Collection Techniques

The target population refers to the complete group of individuals or entities from which researchers aim to draw conclusions or make inferences. In research, it is crucial to define the characteristics of this population, as well as any relevant subgroups, to ensure that the findings are applicable and meaningful. The target population's characteristics, as well as those of any subgroups, must be thoroughly stated when cost-effectiveness research is being conducted (Taherdoost, 2016).

A sub-group can be chosen from a population to participate by sampling (Kim et al., 2018). A simple random sampling method was employed to collect quantitative data from youths aged 18-35 years. Additionally, a purposive sampling technique was used to select key informant interview (KII) respondents who provided qualitative data. Because the study was looking at particularly sensitive crime topics, the researcher may explore utilizing purposive sampling for KII respondents. Certain individuals or groups of individuals may refuse to cooperate. Low, Bentley, and Ghosh (2020) argue that the sample size should accurately represent the population being studied to generalize the findings, while also being small enough to meet budgetary and economic constraints.

Population is any group of institutions, individuals, or items that exhibit similar traits, according to Taherdoost (2016). The study's target population was 300 respondents who were interviewed in this study. In this study, only those respondents above the age of

$$n = \frac{350000(0.5)^2}{0.52 + (91 - 1)0.052} = \frac{22.75}{0.25 + (90)0.225} = \frac{22.75}{0.475} = 300$$

#### 2.1.4 Data Analysis

The data analysis process for this study was structured to ensure the integrity and reliability of the findings. Following the guidelines set by Low, Bentley, and Ghosh (2020), a response rate exceeding 30% or 40% of the total sample size was deemed sufficient for generalizing the study's results. Once all disseminated questionnaires were returned, the researcher undertook a thorough review of the data to identify and rectify any errors, such as typos, omissions, exaggerations, or biases. Questionnaires that contained errors were excluded from further analysis to uphold the integrity of the dataset.

The cleaned and error-free data were then organized and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.0. Descriptive statistics were applied to offer a comprehensive summary of the quantitative data. This included calculating frequencies, means, and standard deviations, which were presented in well-organized tables. These visual representations made it easier to interpret the data and

18 were interviewed. To guarantee that every respondent had an equal opportunity to be selected, both stratified and simple random sampling methods were used to choose a sample from Embakasi Central.

According to Taherdoost (2016), the sample size should be representative of the population in the study to allow for generalization of the findings, while also being small enough to meet budgetary and economic limitations. A target sample size of 300 respondents was randomly selected. This is determined by using the mathematical approach developed by Nassiuma in 2000 (Kadam & Bhalerao, 2010).

$$n = \frac{NC^2}{C^2 + (N-1)e^2}$$

Equation (3.1)

Where n = sample size;

N = population size;

C = coefficient of variation which is 0.5 and

e = error margin which is 0.05.

highlighted important trends and patterns relevant to the research questions.

In addition to the quantitative analysis, qualitative data were analyzed using a thematic approach. This method involved identifying, examining, and reporting patterns or themes within the qualitative responses gathered from the Key Informant Interviews (KII). The thematic analysis allowed the researcher to delve into the contextual factors influencing youth criminal behavior, capturing the nuances of participants' experiences and perspectives. The qualitative data were systematically coded, organizing responses into coherent themes that provided deeper insights into the factors affecting youth involvement in crime.

By triangulating the quantitative and qualitative data, the analysis enriched the overall findings of the study. This multifaceted approach not only enhanced the robustness of the research but also offered a comprehensive interpretation of how socioeconomic determinants impact youth criminal behavior. The integration of both data types allowed for a more

nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between various factors, ultimately contributing to more informed conclusions and recommendations for future research and policy interventions.

III. FINDINGS

3.1.1 Consequence of Income Level on Criminal Behavior Among Youths

The first study objective sought to investigate the consequences of income level on criminal behavior

among youths in Embakasi Central in Nairobi County. Initially, respondents were asked to evaluate specific statements about the impact of income level on youth criminal behavior. They rated these statements on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represented Strongly Agree, 2 for Agree, 3 for Neutral, 4 for Disagree, and 5 for Strongly Disagree. The results are summarized in Table 4.3.

Table 4.1: Consequence of Income Level on Criminal Behavior Among Youths

STATEMENTS	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
Poor socioeconomic status promotes criminal behaviors among young people	14 (6.7%)	80 (38.3%)	78 (37.3%)	31 (14.8%)	6 (2.9%)	1.44	.500
Youths with strong economic activity in a big way succeed in shunning societal vices	72 (34.4%)	76 (36.4%)	11 (5.3%)	43 (20.6%)	7 (3.3%)	1.56	.500
Lack of investment among the youths allows them to idle and engage in unwelcomed vices	70 (33.5%)	85 (40.7%)	18 (8.6%)	33 (15.8%)	3 (1.4%)	1.32	.470
Young people who have investments spend most of their time in the business premises and thus least indulge in criminal acts	84 (40.2%)	82 (39.2%)	5 (2.4%)	15 (7.2%)	23 (11.0%)	1.54	.501
Lack of formal employment creates an opportunity for young people to be involved in criminal activities	88 (42.1%)	72 (34.4%)	35 (16.7%)	11 (5.3%)	3 (1.4%)	1.48	.502

Source: Field Data 2023.

Table 4.3 above presents results on the consequences of income level on criminal behavior among youths. In responding to whether poor socioeconomic status promotes criminal behaviors among young people, a bigger percentage of respondents, 38.3% (80) agreed and was closely followed by 37.3% (78) who decided to remain neutral on the matter. Those who strongly agreed were 6.7% (14) while 2.9% (6) strongly disagreed whereas 14.8% (31) of the participants disagreed poor socioeconomic status promotes criminal behaviors among young people. This simplifies that low socio-economic status promotes crime rates among the youth. The findings indicating that low socioeconomic status promotes youth criminality align closely with prior research. Nadimpalli et. al., (2020) highlighted that impoverished urban areas, often characterized by inadequate social amenities and informal settlements, show a notable link between low parental income and youth offending. In these environments, limited economic opportunities push many toward criminal

activities as a means of survival. This relationship underscores the broader impact of socioeconomic factors on youth behavior, where lack of social and economic resources in families either advantage or constrain young people’s futures.

In addition, 36.4% (76) of the respondents agreed that youths with strong economic activity in a big way succeed in shunning societal vices, while 34.4% (72) strongly agreed. Those who remained neutral were 5.3% (11) while 20.6% (43) disagreed. A smaller percentage of 3.3% (7) strongly disagreed. In responding to a statement, lack of investment among the youths allows them to idle and engage in unwelcomed vices, 33.5% (70) strongly agreed, 40.7% (85) agreed, 8.6% (18) were neutral, 15.8% (33) disagreed while 1.4% (3) strongly disagreed. The study findings were in support of Adeyemi et al., (2021) and Manhica et al. (2021) reinforce that low socioeconomic status during childhood significantly predicts criminal and substance use behaviors later in life. Addressing such disparities requires considering

the community-wide socioeconomic context and implementing interventions focused on improving access to education, employment, and social support. This broader approach can yield long-term positive effects on reducing youth involvement in crime.

Moreover, 40.2% (84) of the respondents strongly agreed that young people who have investments spend most of their time in the business premises and thus least indulge in criminal acts close to that percentage, 39.2% (82) agreed, those who remained neutral were 2.4% (5), 7.2% (15) disagreed while 11% (23) strongly disagreed. Among those who responded, 42.1% (88) strongly agreed that lack of formal employment creates an opportunity for young people to be involved in criminal activities. 34.4% (72) agreed with the fact while 16.7% (35) were neutral. Those who disagreed with this matter were 5.3% (11) and 1.4% (3) strongly disagreed. The findings concurred with Adeyemi et al. (2021) who found that economic opportunities for youth, such as business, labor-market initiatives, and job training, directly reduce crime by providing young people with sustainable alternatives. This research supports policy approaches that invest in employment programs as effective means of combating youth crime. Juárez et al. (2022) further noted that communities with higher teenage unemployment experience more crime, emphasizing that access to job opportunities is a significant factor in crime prevention. Similarly, Research by Berger and Van Helvoirt (2018) also links poverty directly with crime, suggesting that poverty-driven stress leads individuals toward criminal activity. Limited access to quality education, employment, and secure livelihoods in impoverished regions exacerbates youth involvement in crime as illegal activities become a means of economic survival. Therefore, the study's findings underscore the need for comprehensive socioeconomic interventions to reduce crime rates and improve overall social well-being among the youth.

Security personnel, senior police officers, and chiefs/assistant chiefs were asked to identify the socio-economic factors driving youth involvement in criminal activities in Embakasi Central Sub County. *They stated that the absence of a stable income was a significant factor pushing youth toward criminal activities. Young individuals without financial resources were more vulnerable to recruitment into*

*criminal gangs and radicalization [Respondent D4, 2023, Embakasi Central Sub-County].*

This can be ascertained by one of the respondents who said:

*"Multiple factors were driving criminal behavior. Unemployment, low income, and gang affiliations were key reasons pushing young people toward crime. In some cases, jobless youth were radicalized within gangs, leading them to engage in assaults and other terror-related activities. Consequently, a significant number of young men chose to participate in criminal activities" [Respondent D3, 2023, Embakasi Central Sub-County].*

Study findings imply that the economic well-being of the young people keeps them engaged hence least engaging in criminal activities. This was supported by Berger and Van Helvoirt (2018), who illustrated that poverty can limit access to quality education, employment, and better opportunities hence ease of engagement in crime. The findings of the study align closely with the Strain Theory of Crime, which posits that societal pressures and the inability to achieve culturally approved goals can lead individuals to engage in criminal behavior.

### 3.1.2 Discussions

## IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The first objective aimed at investigating the consequences of income level on criminal behavior among youths in Embakasi Central in Nairobi County. The study revealed a significant correlation between income levels and criminal behavior among youths, indicating that lower income and unstable job opportunities often lead to higher rates of delinquency. Young individuals lacking stable economic engagement tend to have more idle time, which can be diverted into criminal activities such as theft, drug trafficking, and robbery. Those actively involved in income-generating activities are less likely to engage in crime, as their focus remains on productive pursuits. The absence of formal employment emerges as a crucial factor driving youth into criminal acts, compounded by job scarcity and low earnings. Qualitative insights from community leaders and law



enforcement corroborate these findings, highlighting the urgent need to address socioeconomic factors that contribute to criminal behavior.

#### Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines and standards to ensure the integrity and protection of all participants involved. Ethical approval was obtained from [Insert Name of Ethical Review Board], and all procedures adhered to institutional and national research ethics regulations. Participants provided informed consent before their inclusion in the study, ensuring voluntary participation, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw at any time without consequences. All data collected were anonymized to protect individual identities, and findings were presented with transparency and integrity. No vulnerable populations were involved in this study, and no potential harm was posed to any participant.

#### Abbreviations

KII: Key Informant Interviews, NACOSTI: *National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation*, SES: Socioeconomic Status, and SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

#### Competing Interests

The authors declare no competing interests or conflicts of interest in relation to this study. No financial, personal, or professional relationships have influenced the research outcomes, interpretations, or conclusions presented in this manuscript.

#### Author Contributions

Annita Mutuku: The study was done by the author who conducted the study in Embakasi Central constituency, Nairobi County, Kenya

Dr. Solomon Muhindi: Supervision, editing, and final manuscript approval.

All authors have read and approved the final manuscript and contributed significantly to the study.

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