

## THE LINK BETWEEN DIFFICULTIES IN MAKING ENDS MEET AND TYPES OF VIOLENT CRIMES IN UASIN GISHU COUNTY, KENYA

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** In Kenya, violent crimes and economic hardship have increased positively during the last ten years and yet little data is available to explicate this connection. Violent crimes pose a threat to the individuals and groups, and impacts negatively on social, economic and political developments of many countries. They also tend to be the most feared than any other criminal typology and the factors associated with it yet remain unclear. Most crimes often end up in violence. The study aimed at establishing whether economic difficulties in making ends meet may be associated with violent crimes.

**Research methods:** Descriptive research design was employed to collect data. From a target population comprising of 501 offenders, 217 prisoners were randomly sampled. Both key informant interview guide and structured questionnaire were administered to the representative sample. Data was collected and presented in percentages and links between variables established by use of Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) and Pearson Correlation analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

**Results and analysis:** The study found that there was a significant relationship between frustration and types of violent crimes ( $p=0.004$ ); level of fear of economic hardship and types of violent of crimes ( $p=0.000$ ) and anger and type of violent crimes ( $p=0.010$ ).

**Conclusion:** The study concluded that economic hardship leads to violence and crime. Economic hardship creates feelings of hopelessness and anger, which may increase aggression and hostility. Economic deprivation also reduces social trust and facilitates frustration-aggression, which in turn leads to violence and crime. The above indicates that economic deprivation may affect community and family processes in such a way that violence increases.

*Key words: Making ends meet, economic hardships, crimes, violence, violent crimes.*

## ***1.0 Introduction***

The influence of economic hardship on types of violent crimes among prisoners in Kenya is an interesting area to study among sociologists and criminologists as a way of finding solutions to ameliorate the effects. This would need a thorough establishment of the level of violent crimes much more in counties. For this study, prisoners in Uasin Gishu County became a focal point of the study. Data on the correlation between economic hardship and violent crimes are elaborate across jurisdictions, especially on the specific pointers of economic hardship that amplify violent crimes (Fajnzyber, Lederman & Loayza, 2002). Besides, data, in particular, reveal the types of violent crimes that intensify in times of economic hardship. In Kenya, violent crimes have increased in recent days and range from assault to severe cases of murder. This has been impelled by a sharp increase in death and injuries occurring as a result of violent crimes. Traditionally, according to Reid, Herzog, and Patterson; crime has been thought of as a lower-class phenomenon in which the poor who are unable to obtain their desired goods and services through the conventional means resort to illegal means to obtain them or engage in expressive crimes as a means of articulating their frustrations and annoyance against society (Reid, 2007, Herzog, 2005 and Patterson, 1990).

Further, close empirical relationships have been reported between crime and human capital acquisition (Lonnie, 2002), accessibility of firearms (Lafree, 2009), economic inequality (Lafree, 2009), ineffective families, substance abuse, and regional values (Siegel, 2007). Vold and Snipes, (2002) emphasized the association between economic hardship which places individuals on various social classes, and the likelihood of violent offending. Indeed, levels of violent crimes and levels of development of any nation are linked. Moreover, economic success cannot be realized if the wellbeing of Kenyans and their material goods are in jeopardy. Yet, these relations are complex and vary from country to country and also from one region to another even within the same country. Therefore, there is a need to comprehend why economic hardship boosts violent crimes more than other crime typologies, principally during periods of economic hardship.

Economic prosperity cannot be realized if the safety of Kenyans and their properties are in jeopardy. The causes of crime are as complex as the society itself (Neal, 2012). This study found it important in this background a real need to identify types of violent crimes and establish whether they are linked to economic hardship and how they can be addressed. East Africa region as a whole is a region of high crime rates due to several factors. Currently, Kenya is rated by the U.S Department of the state as critical in terms of both terrorism and crime hence making the U.S Embassy in Nairobi the fourth largest in the world. United Nations (2002) surveys in Kenya revealed that over half of the population worries about crime constantly and roughly 75% feel unsafe while at home (Aronson, 2010).

There is a strong connection between economic inequality and homicide rates (Lafree, 2009, Akers, 2000). In 2011, the Kenya police noted an increase in reported cases of crimes in the following categories; breakings, robbery, homicide, and other offenses at 14%, 15%, 18%, and 1% respectively (Kenya Police Annual Crime Report, 2011). The current economic hardship in Kenya such as difficulties in making ends meet, unemployment and underemployment, low wages and salaries, high cost of living among others may be linked to the many incidences of violent crimes such as murder and non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. These violent crimes are ever-increasing. The Kenya Police Annual Crime Report, (2014) ranks Uasin Gishu County at 12 out of 47 Counties with 1872 incidents (cases) with a 209 crime index per 100,000 people. A few guidelines or frameworks exist to guide policymakers and program managers in developing and implementing the comprehensive response necessary to address criminal justice consequences of violence and to reduce the determinants of violent behavior within communities. Crime plays a negative role as far as the

development of a nation is concerned (Cullen, Wright and Belvins, 2006). This study sought to establish the link between difficulties in making ends meet and violent crimes, principally during periods of economic hardship in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.

## 2.0 Research Methods:

The descriptive research design was employed in which violent crime offenders formed the basis of analysis. According to Gay *et al.*, (2006), a descriptive research design entails the collection of the quantitative data to test the hypothesis or to answer questions regarding the subjects of the study. It is characterized by the systematic collection of information from the given population by administering questionnaires and interviewing. This design was appropriate because it is used when collecting information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits, or any of the variety of social issues (Kombo and Tromp, 2009). The study aimed at describing the influence of economic hardships on the types of violent crimes among the violent crime offenders at Eldoret G.K Prisons and Ngeria Farm Prisons. The study was conducted in Uasin-Gishu County which is located in the North Rift region of the former Rift valley province of Kenya. The target population is the entire set of possible cases for which the survey data is used to make inferences and it comprises of the eligible group that is included in research work (Kothari, 2013). Kombo and Tromp, (2006) defined the target population as the entire group a researcher is interested in; the group about which the researcher wishes to conclude. The study focused on adult violent crime offenders at Eldoret Main G.K and Ngeria Farm G.K Prisons in Uasin Gishu County of Kenya. The target population comprised a total of 501 offenders at the Eldoret G.K Prisons (n=383) and Ngeria Farm Prisons (n=118) as shown in table 1 below. Key informants including magistrates, prosecutors, and officers in charge of the prison facilities were used to support the responses given by the violent crime offenders. The population was suitable for the study since it comprised of violent offenders who provided the most relevant information for the study.

**Table 1 Target Population**

Respondents	Target Population	Gender	
		Men	Women
Eldoret G.K prison	1658	1426	232
Ngeria Farm GK prison	513	513	0
Total	2171	1939	232

**Source: Prison Records (February, 2015)**

Gupta, (2000) asserts that there are various methods of determining sample size. The sampling frame of the study consisted of violent crime offenders drawn from convicted offenders at Eldoret G.K Prisons and Ngeria Farm Prisons. From prison records a list of violent offenders in Eldoret G.K prisons and Ngeria farm G.K prisons respectively were drawn which formed the sampling frame. The study obtained 501 violent crime offenders from both prison institutions. Sampling technique is the procedure a researcher uses to gather people, places, or things to study (Kombo & Trump, 2006). First, Uasin Gishu County, Eldoret, and Ngeria Farm G.K prisons and key informants were purposively selected. Secondly, stratified sampling of offenders was done to obtain the violent crime offenders followed by a stratified sampling of male and female violent offenders. This was done to ensure that these subgroups in the population were represented in the sample in proportion to their numbers in the target population (Kombo and Tromp, 2009). Finally, simple random sampling was employed to select the respondents who participated in the study using the lottery method to select both men and women who participated in the study (Kothari, 2006). This was conducted by having a frame of all men and women violent crime offenders. Numbers of men and women were written

using the inmate's register. Men and women violent offenders from each institution were then requested to pick chips of paper written 'Yes' or 'No' as per their proportion required of each and those who picked chips of paper written 'Yes' were selected for the study. This means that all cases in the population stood a chance of being selected and would be available for inclusion and participation. The sample size of the study was calculated using the formula below as recommended by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) formula for determining the sample size in social research. The formula is used as follows;

$$n = \frac{X^2 N p(1-p)}{d^2(N-1) + X^2 p(1-p)}$$

$X^2$ =Table values of chi-square at  $df = 1$  for desired confidence level ( $0.5=3.841$ )

$N$ = Population size

$p$ = Population proportion (assumed to be 0.5)

$d$ =degree of accuracy (expressed as a proportion)

$n$  = sample size

Substituting for  $N=501$ , we have,

$$n = \frac{3.841 * 501 * 0.5(1 - 0.5)}{0.0025(250 - 1) + 0.025(1 - 0.5)}$$

$$= 217$$

The sample size for this study was therefore 217 respondents.

**Table 2 Sample Size and Sampling Procedures**

Respondents	Violent Offenders	Sampling Procedure	Sample Size
Eldoret G.K prison	383	$383/501 \times 217$	166
Ngeria Farm prison	118	$118/501 \times 217$	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>		<b>217</b>

**Source: Prison Records as at 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2015**

The study was conducted through surveys and key informant interviews. The survey was used to collect data through the officers in charge of prisons where the data collection instruments were administered to the offenders. Key informant interview was used to collect data from violent crime offenders since they did not have time to fill the questionnaire and that in the prison setting small items like pens are given precautions they deserve. The study adopted content validity which entails ensuring that indicators reflect the meaning of an idea brought forward by the researcher (Drost, 2004). This was done by asking the opinions of supervisors on how research questions should be formulated. The study employed the use of test re-test method to test reliability. This was done by administering questionnaires to two different respondents at different times. Twenty violent crime offenders were used to administer the test re-test method. This involved identifying a group of respondents to administer the first test, then afterward another group was administered the same questionnaire. Pearson Product Moment Correlation of  $r=0.86$  was obtained and showed a strong relationship between the two sets of 50 questions in the questionnaires. A correlation of between 0.5 and 1.0 represents a

strong association between scores (Hopkins, 2000; Kombo and Tromp, 2009). This ensured that questionnaires measured what they were supposed to measure.

Data analysis in the study relied on descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages presented in tables and cross-tabulations. It was analyzed by the use of Chi-square and Spearman's Rank Order Correlation analyses at 0.05 level of significance to determine associations between categorical and ordinal variables of the study respectively. This was run using the SPSS program. Lastly, cross-tabulation was used to establish patterns among variables. The analyzed data was presented in tables. Due to the sensitivity of the information collected from some respondents, confidentiality was assured. The researcher assured all the respondents that their responses were purely for academic purposes. The respondents were given numbers hence anonymity was maintained throughout the research process. A research permit was sought and given from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI), and the Commissioner of Prisons. No force in collecting the data was used and a good rapport was maintained with respondents throughout the process. There were informed consent and voluntary participation.

### 3.0 Results & Analysis

#### 3.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The study sought to find out the demographic characteristics of respondents. These factors included gender, age, education level and marital status of the respondents.

##### 3.1.1 Gender of the Respondents

The study sought to establish the gender of the violent crime offenders. The study results were as shown in table 3 below

**Table 3: Gender of Respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Men	186	86
Women	31	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Research Data (2015)**

The study found that 86% and 14% of the violent crime offenders were men and women respectively. This suggests that more men than women are more likely to be violent crime offenders. Elsewhere, males have been observed to be dominant actors with respect to violence (Hatty, 2005 in Hale *et al.*, 2006). Traditionally, men are providers in families and therefore feel the most tension when they experience shortage in their households, joblessness and stumpy incomes. Thus, powerlessness to provide may disturb and eventually compel men to use alcohol in order to cope with the hardship but frequent use of alcohol amplifies dependence and abuse of other drugs. Moreover, greater addiction on these drugs drains the already meager resources, worsens conflicts, loneliness and anger, which enhances violence to freshen the thoughts of disappointment connected to these social problems.

##### 3.1.2 Age of the Respondents

The study sought to establish the age of the violent crime offenders. The study results were shown in table 4 below

**Table 4: Age of Respondents**

Age bracket	Frequency	Percentage
18-28	99	45.6
29-39	77	35.3
40-49	32	14.7
50-59	6	2.8
60-69	3	1.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Research Data (2015)**

The study found that age categories of offenders that ranged between 18-28, 29-39, 40-49, 50-59 and 60-69 years comprised of 46%, 35%, 15%, 3% and 1% respectively as shown in table 4. This implies that violent crime offenders were generally younger males with over 70% often being under the age of 40 years. Majority, 54% were in their prime reproductive years and leaned towards larger families and yet most of the offenders are unemployed and involve chiefly persons with less experiences in dealing with economic hardship while the much older persons have probably mastered the skills of surviving with joblessness, inflation and lower incomes. Offending ages out with time and is highest among the middle and the younger age groups, particularly in rural areas. During this age category, offenders are inclined to have larger families with many dependents to feed, educate and to care for, which augments crimes among younger males of this age category. Equally, crimes are common elsewhere among younger males (Shoemaker, 1996).

**Table 5: Age Gender Patterns of the Respondents**

Age * Gender Cross Tabulation		Gender		Total
Age		Male	Female	
18-28 Years		85	14	99
		85.90%	14.10%	100.00%
29-39 Years		68	9	77
		88.30%	11.70%	100.00%
40-49 Years		27	5	32
		84.40%	15.60%	100.00%
50-59 Years		4	2	6
		66.70%	33.30%	100.00%
60-69 Years		2	1	3
		66.70%	33.30%	100.00%
<b>Total</b>		186	31	217
		85.70%	14.30%	100.00%

The study results revealed that of those respondents who were aged 18-28 years, 86% were male while 14% were female, 29-39 years, (88% male and 12% female), 40-49 years, (84% male and 16% female), 50-59 years, (67% male and 33% female) and 60-69 years, (67% male and 33% female) as indicated in table 5 above. This implies that the level of violent crimes is dominant among the younger population irrespective of their gender. As both men and women grow older there is a tendency to be less involved in illegal activities.

### 3.1.3 Educational Level of the Respondents

The study sought to establish the education levels of the violent crime offenders. The study results were shown in table 6.

**Table 6: Educational Levels of Respondents**

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	111	51.2
Secondary	78	35.9
College	19	8.8
University	7	3.2
Others	2	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Research Data (2015)

The study found that 51% and 36% of violent offenders had attained primary and secondary education respectively while college and university education comprised of 9% and 3% respectively as shown in table 6. Those with less education are less likely to neither secure permanent employment nor earn consequential incomes to meet their financial requirements. This might trigger them to employ other alternative means of attaining basic needs which at times ends up in committing violent acts.

**Table 7: Education Gender Patterns of the Respondents**

Education * Gender Cross Tabulation		Gender		Total
Education		Male	Female	
		Primary	94 84.7%	
Secondary	69 88.5%	9 11.5%	78 100.0%	
College	17 89.5%	2 10.5%	19 100.0%	
University	4 57.1%	3 42.9%	7 100.0%	
Others	2 100.0%	0 0.0%	2 100.0%	
<b>Total</b>		186 85.7%	31 14.3%	217 100.0%

Source: Research Data (2015)

Study findings revealed that of those who had attained primary education 85% and 15% were male and female respectively while for secondary education 89% male and 11% female, college education 90% male and 10% female, university education, 57% male and 43% female and on other levels of education all were males as shown in table 7. This shows that irrespective of the gender, the lower the level of education, the higher the likelihood that a person will commit a violent crime.

### 3.1.4 Marital Status of the Respondents

The study sought to establish the marital status of the violent crime offenders. The study results were as shown in table 8.

**Table 8: Marital Status of the Respondents**

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	96	44.2
Single	97	44.7
Separated	17	7.8
Divorced	5	2.3
Widow/ widower	2	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Research Data (2015)**

With regard to marital status, the married, single, separated, divorced and widowed or widower parents comprised of 44%, 45%, 8%, 2% and 1% respectively as indicated in table 8. A high number of single parents imply greater difficulties in making ends meet in their households, especially if they have more dependents and less social ties and economic networks. Women who are separated or divorced or cohabiting report a higher lifetime prevalence of all forms of violence (WHO, 2005).

**Table 9: Marital Status Gender Patterns of the Respondents**

Marital Status * Gender Cross Tabulation		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Marital Status	Married	79 82.3%	17 17.7%	96 100.0%
	Single	85 87.6%	12 12.4%	97 100.0%
	Separated	15 88.2%	2 11.8%	17 100.0%
	Divorced	5 100.0%	0 0.0%	5 100.0%
	Widow/Widower	2 100.0%	0 0.0%	2 100.0%
<b>Total</b>		186 85.7%	31 14.3%	217 100.0%

The study results indicated that of those who were married 82% and 18% were male and female respectively, single 88% male and 12% female, separated 88% male while 12% female and for divorced and widowed all were males as shown in table 9. This shows that male counterparts who are not in stable marriages (widowed, divorced and separated) are more likely to commit violent crimes as compared to those who are married and single unlike females in the same state. This may be attributed to lack of socio economic support from marital partners resulting in financial difficulties and the fear, anger and frustration associated with loneliness.



**Table 10: Occupation Status of Violent Offenders**

Type of Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Employed	25	11.5
Self –Employed	192	88.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Terms of Engagement</b>		
Permanent and Pensionable	5	20
Annual Contracts	5	20
3 month Contract	3	12
Casual	13	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Research Data (2015)**

The study observed that 12% and 88% of the offenders were employed and self-employed respectively in various organizations such as public and private sectors as shown in table 10. Those who were employed were working in both government and private sector where they earn salaries. Self-employment entailed farming, small scale businesses and transport among others. Since a high level of offenders were either unemployed or in self-employment, they earned low incomes and therefore experience greater challenges in meeting their daily demands in their households, especially those of foodstuffs, school fees, clothing and medical bills among others. With limited incomes, frustration that results can trigger anger, hostility and violence during hard times, more especially among those abusing alcohol and other drugs.

**3.2 Difficulties in Making Ends Meet and Types of Violent Crimes**

The study sought to investigate whether difficulties in making ends meet are linked to the types of violent crimes. Difficulties to make ends meet were measured by the educational status, occupation and level of household income. These variables were cross-tabulated and tested against types of violent crimes to evaluate their relationships. The study results were presented as follows;

**Table 11: Difficulties in making ends meet and Murder**

		Cross Tabulation		
		Murder		
Household Income	LESS THAN 10,000	YES	NO	Total
				17
		12.30%	87.70%	100.00%
	10,001 - 20,000	7	50	57
		12.90%	87.10%	100.00%
	20,001-30,000	0	14	14
		0.00%	100.00%	100.00%

**Source: Research Data (2015)**

The study results on the relationship between difficulties in making ends meet and murder revealed that 12% of those who earned less than Kshs10,000 had committed murder while kshs10,001-20,000 and Kshs50,000-100,000 were 13% and 67% respectively as shown in table 11. This confirms that a positive relationship exist between household incomes and commission of murder. People ends up committing murder as they fight over scarce resources such as land,

during robbery and this happens mostly when the offenders were under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

**Table 12: Difficulties in making ends meet and Robbery**

		Robbery		
		YES	NO	Total
<b>Household Income</b>	LESS THAN 10,000	16 12.30%	119 87.70%	135 100.00%
	10,001 - 20,000	7 12.90%	50 87.10%	57 100.00%
	20,001-30,000	0 0.00%	14 100.00%	14 100.00%
	50,000-100,000	2 66.70%	1 33.30%	3 100.00%

**Source: Research Data (2015)**

Study findings on the relationship between difficulties in making ends meet and robbery revealed that 12% of those who earned less than Kshs 10,000 were convicted of robbery while Kshs 10,000-20,000, Kshs 50,000-100,000 were 6% and 67% respectively as shown in table 12. This indicates that a significant relationship exists between difficulties in making ends meet and levels of robbery. Offenders rob their victims of valuables and money to satisfy their unlimited needs.

**Table 13: Difficulties in making ends meet and Rape**

		Rape		
		YES	NO	Total
<b>Household Income</b>	LESS THAN 10,000	10 7.40%	125 92.60%	135 100.00%
	10,001 - 20,000	2 3.20%	55 96.80%	57 100.00%

**Source: Research Data (2015)**

The study results on the relationship between difficulties in making ends meet and rape revealed that 7% and 3% of those who earned less than Kshs 10,000 and kshs 10,001-20,000 respectively were convicted of rape as shown in table 13. Thus, a positive relationship exists between the level of household income and the likelihood of committing rape.

**Table 14: Difficulties in making ends meet and Assault**

		Assault		
		YES	NO	Total
<b>Household Income</b>	LESS THAN 10,000	45 33.30%	90 66.70%	135 100.00%
	10,001 - 20,000	7 12.90%	50 87.10%	57 100.00%
	20,001-30,000	0 0.00%	14 100.00%	14 100.00%
	50,000-100,000	2 66.70%	1 33.30%	3 100.00%

**Source: Research Data (2015)**

Study findings on the relationship between difficulties in making ends meet and assault revealed that 33% and 13% of those who earned less than Kshs 10,000 and Kshs 10,001-20,000 respectively committed assault as shown in table 14. This implies that majority of the

respondents who committed assault were earning less than Kshs 10,000 pointing at a positive relationship between the difficulties in making ends meet and the types of violent crimes. This is further evident by the fact that with increase in income, the tendency to commit any crime reduces.

The study further found that 29% of the offenders had no children while another 29%, 18%, 18% and 6% had 1-2, 3-4, 5-6 and 7-8 children respectively. These findings imply that majority of the respondents have children to support and therefore strained their meager income and budget hence they may resort to violent acts in order to make the ends meet. The study also found that 48% and 38% of the respondents lived in their owned and rental houses respectively, hosted by a friend or relative 12% and 5% could not clearly indicate their residence. This implies that majority of the offenders are of middle and lower classes resulting to various socio-economic challenges which at times trigger violent offences.

**Table 15: Relationship between difficulties in making ends meet and the levels of violent crimes**

<b>Chi-Square Tests</b>			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	411.468 <sup>a</sup>	209	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	220.518	209	0.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	78.187	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases	217		

a. 240 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

The hypothesis of the study was;

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant relationship between difficulties in making ends meet and the levels of violent crimes

The study results indicated that there was a significant relationship between difficulties in making ends meet and the levels of violent crimes ( $p=0.000$ ) as shown in table 15. The researcher therefore rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternate hypothesis which showed that there was a significant relationship between difficulty in making ends meet and the levels of violent crimes. Difficulties in making ends meet included challenges in provision of food, paying rent, settling of medical bills and difficulty in paying school fees among others as shown in table 16.

**Table 16: Relationship between Economic Stress and Strain and Violent Crimes**

<b>Chi Square Test</b>			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square			
Difficulty in provision of food	32.106a	16	0.010
Difficulty in paying rent	33.787a	20	0.028
Unable to make ends meet	31.148a	16	0.013
Difficulty in settling medical bills	39.329a	16	0.001
Difficulty in paying school fees	40.579a	16	0.001

The study findings indicated that violent crimes are statistically associated with difficulties in provision of food ( $p=0.01$ ), paying rent ( $p=0.028$ ), incapability to make ends meet ( $p=0.013$ ), settling medical bills ( $p=0.001$ ) and payment of school fees ( $p=0.001$ ) as shown in table 16. Other factors statistically associated with violent crimes included; losing a job ( $p=0.001$ ), quarrelling over land ( $p=0.004$ ), high inflation (0.037), hopelessness due to poverty ( $p=0.014$ ) and poor harvest ( $p=0.018$ ) as shown in table 17. This implies that there is greater complicatedness in attainment of basic needs; there is additional frustration, anger, antagonism

and consequently further violence in such homes. Members in such homes are therefore more likely to resort to various means including theft and deviant and illegal means to cope with the devastating impact of economic hardship, hopelessness and despair. But it may be that during periods of economic downturns, others are experiencing intricacies while others may find these as simple. It may be this variation that heightens anger and resentment among those who distress that may be responsible for intensified aggravation, anger and enmity that increase violent offending during adversity. These findings further revealed that worsening economic situation may lead to high interest rates, unemployment and loss of employment, inflation, all of which may in turn erode living standards that may increase difficulties in making ends meet in households. Households that may experience the greatest difficulties are those whose members have lost employment, unemployed or earning low wages. Hence, such households are more likely to experience difficulties in the purchase of foodstuffs, medical bills, school fees and other expenses. Economic hardship enhances adoption of illegitimate means to provide for basic needs. Difficulties in making ends meet is further significantly associated with increased rates of recidivism among the offenders as indicated in table 17.

**Table 17: Difficulties in making ends meet and the Number of Recidivism**

Indicators of Difficulties in Making ends meet		No. of Times Sentenced
Difficulty in settling medical bills	Pearson Correlation	.237**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008
Difficulty in paying school fees	Pearson Correlation	.217*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.016
Lost employment	Pearson Correlation	.246**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006
Hopelessness due to poverty	Pearson Correlation	.208*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.021
Degrading of the general living standards	Pearson Correlation	.200*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.028
	N	217

\*\* correlation is significant at the 0.01 (2-tailed)

\* correlation is significant at the 0.05 (2-tailed)

Spearman's rank order correlation analyses revealed that recidivists who are unable to cope with the difficulties in making ends meet are more likely to be violent offenders, especially if they lost their jobs ( $p=0.006$ ), incapable to meet medical bills ( $p=0.008$ ), paying school fees ( $p=0.016$ ), feeling desperate ( $p=0.021$ ) and experiencing declining living standards ( $p=0.028$ ) as shown in table 17. These findings confirm that during periods of difficulties in making ends meet, those households whose members lose employment, are poor and whose living standards decline feel more hopeless and strained and are therefore more likely to be those experiencing difficulties in the purchase of foodstuffs, medical bills and in the payment of school fees. Offenders who experience these difficulties are more likely to be violent and to be imprisoned time and again. Offending may increase in situations in which people are hopeless and have unclear prospects for their future. It also means that regardless of whatever programmes, these offenders repeat their offenses if the economic situation in their homes has not improved and their lifestyles have not changed. There is therefore need to assess the programmes in prisons and also ensure that the economic situation of offenders in their home have changed for the better.

#### 4.0 Conclusion:

The study concluded that economic hardship leads to violence and crime. Economic hardship creates feelings of hopelessness and anger, which may increase aggression and hostility. Economic deprivation also reduces social trust and facilitates frustration.

Economic hardship and the associated socio-economic inequalities may lead some individuals both employed and unemployed to experience strain or frustration which may bring them to greater involvement in violent crimes. Because employment is perceived as conventional behavior and serves to reinforce social bonds and activate social control, it also acts to reduce involvement in criminal behavior. Unemployment leads to economic hardship which leads to the breakdown of positive social bonds. This, in turn, may increase the probability of people resorting to criminal activity due to difficulties in making the ends meet.

Economic stress and strain are more likely to increase the levels of violent crimes. Those with lower incomes are more likely to be frustrated and to offend when faced with economic stress. During periods of difficulties in making ends meet, those households whose members lose employment, are poor and whose living standards decline feel more hopeless and strained and are therefore more likely to be those experiencing difficulties in the purchase of foodstuffs, medical bills, and the payment of school fees. Offenders who experience these difficulties are more likely to be violent and to be imprisoned time and again.

## 5.0 References

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